

### More Introduction on the Chapter

Natural vegetation is the gift from Nature. It refers to the plants that exist naturally without the interference of mankind. They grow in the wild and adapt to the constraints of natural environment without any human aid. Thus, cultivated crops and fruit orchards form a part of vegetation but not of natural vegetation.

The quantity and variety of natural vegetation depends on the climatic conditions, the topography of the land, the type of soil and the amount of rains the region receives. India is bestowed with a variety of geographical conditions and climate. As a result, India is one of the 12 mega bio-diversity countries of the world. In possessing plant diversity, India occupies tenth place in the world and fourth in Asia. India has about 47,000 plant species. There are about 15,000 flowering plants in India, which account for 6 per cent in the world's total number of flowering plants. Ferns, algae and fungi and many other non-flowering plants abound in the country. India also has approximately 90,000 species of animals, as well as, a rich variety of fish in its fresh and marine waters.

The term virgin vegetation refers to that part of natural vegetation which has remained undisturbed by the humans. In India, virgin vegetation can be found in the Thar desert, the Sunderbans and the inaccessible regions of the Himalayas. The virgin vegetation which is indigenous to the country is known as endemic and the other which comes from outside India is known as exotic vegetation.

