

PHYSICO-CHEMICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND PHYTOPLANKTON DIVERSITY IN SOME FRESH WATER BODIES OF GOA, INDIA

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ABSTRACT

The freshwater bodies on the surface of globe are environmental assets. They harbour organisms that generate oxygen in the surrounding environment which is utilized by members of all trophic levels. These aquatic assets also provide habitats to a large number of diverse aquatic organisms. Rapid industrialization and urbanization has greatly decreased the available water resources in India. This paper describes physico-chemical characteristics of four fresh water bodies viz., Syngenta Lake, Khandola Pond, Lotus Lake and Curtorim Lake in Goa, India along with their phytoplankton diversity. Seventy one algal species belonging to five classes were identified from the study sites. Seasonal variations were observed in most of the physico-chemical parameters and they were above environmentally acceptable limits. Excepting Khandola Pond, the sites were affected by pollution.

Key Words : Eutrophication, Fresh water bodies, Phytoplanktons, Pollution, Urbanization

INTRODUCTION

Lakes are ecological security zones and true indicators of sustainable urban development. They provide opportunities for recreation, study of local aquatic life and ornamental purposes. As a result of increasing land use conflicts and effluent disposal, water bodies and their catchments in the urban regions have become the ultimate casualties¹. Yet conservation of water bodies is in the interest of mankind in ecological, cultural and tourism values. As they are so important, it is imperative and challenging to assess their present condition. In the present paper, physico-chemical characteristics and phytoplankton diversity of four fresh water bodies are presented.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Two water bodies each from North Goa (Syngenta Lake and Khandola pond) and South Goa (Lotus Lake and Curtorim Lake) were selected for the study from Jan-Oct 2014. Water samples were collected in the early hours as daily vertical migrations of organisms occur in response to sunlight and nutrient

concentrations from the surface near the landward margins. Monthly analyses of water samples from all the selected water bodies were carried out for a period of ten months using standard procedures². In the phytoplankton study one litre of water sample was collected in sterile plastic bottles and Lugol's solution (0.7 ml/100 ml of sample) added immediately for sedimentation. The bottles were subsequently left undisturbed for 24 h. The phytoplankton fixed and settled at the bottom of the containers after decanting the supernatant fluid were collected and preserved in bottles containing 4% formaldehyde preservative. The remaining sample was concentrated by centrifugation at 1500 rpm and the total volumes made to 10ml. Algal samples were examined immediately after fixation using a light microscope. Dimensions were measured using a micrometry technique and photomicrographs were taken using Nikon DS Fi 2camera. Identification was carried out using standard bibliographies and monographs³⁻⁸.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Phytoplankton ecology plays an important role for indicating the eutrophication. Their distribution is majorly forced by seasonal

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fluctuations in physico-chemical parameters. Factors such as seasonality, period of sunshine, wind patterns, depth of lake, temperature, pH, turbidity, dissolved oxygen, nutrient enrichment like phosphate ultimately influence the occurrence of phytoplankton in the lake⁹.

The results of the phytoplankton diversity recorded during the study are shown in **Table 1**. In all 71 algal species belonging to five classes viz., Cyanophyceae (15 spp.), Dinophyceae (1 sp.), Bacillariophyceae (17 spp.), Eugleno-

phyceae (5 spp.) and Chlorophyceae (33 spp.) were identified from the study sites. Some of the genera known to be indicators of organic pollution viz., *Scenedesmus*, *Chroococcus*, *Melosira* and *Navicula* were recovered from Syngenta, Lotus and Curtorim Lakes. Khirsagar¹⁰ determined water quality of river Mula and reported that *Scenedesmus*, *Pediastrum*, *Oscillatoria*, *Melosira*, *Navicula* and *Nitzschia* are indicators of organic pollution. Palmer¹¹ stated that presence of *Scenedesmus* indicates eutrophic water.

Table 1 : Phytoplankton diversity in the study sites

S/N	Species	Study sites			
		Syngenta Lake	Khandola Pond	Lotus Lake	Curtorim Lake
1.	<i>Euglena acus</i> (Muller) Ehrenberg	+	-	+	+
2.	<i>Euglena minuta</i> Prescott	+	-	+	+
3.	<i>Euglena oxyuris</i> Schmarida	+	-	+	+
4.	<i>Ankistrodesmus falcatus</i> (Corda) Ralfs	+	-	+	+
5.	<i>Tetralantus lagerheimii</i> Teiling	-	-	+	-
6.	<i>Cruciginia quadrata</i> Morren	-	-	+	+
7.	<i>Pinnularia gibba</i> Ehrenberg	+	-	+	+
8.	<i>Pinnularia graciloides</i> Huste	+	-	+	+
9.	<i>Sehroederia indica</i> Philipose	+	-	+	+
10.	<i>Melosira islandica</i> Muller	-	-	+	+
11.	<i>Nostoc muscorum</i> Agardh ex Bornet and Flahault	+	-	+	+
12.	<i>Closteridium diane</i> Ehrenberg	+	-	+	+
13.	<i>Trachalomonas volvocina</i> Ehrenberg	-	-	+	+
14.	<i>Oocystis gigas</i> Archer	+	-	+	+
15.	<i>Phacus asymmetrica</i> Prescott	+	-	+	+
16.	<i>Cymbella chandolensis</i> Gandhi	+	-	+	+
17.	<i>Chroococcus limnaticus</i> Lemmermann	+	-	+	+
18.	<i>Chroococcus minor</i> (Kutzing) Nageli	+	-	+	+
19.	<i>Closterium diana</i> var. Minus (Schroder) Willi Krieger	+	-	+	+
20.	<i>Closterium baillyanum</i> (Breb.) Breb.	+	-	+	+
21.	<i>Gomphonema parabolium</i> Kutzing	+	-	+	+
22.	<i>Oscillatoria princeps</i> Vaucher ex Gomont	+	-	+	+
23.	<i>Oscillatoria tenuissima</i> (Smith and Sowerby) C. Agardh ex Forti	+	-	+	+
24.	<i>Merismopedia punctata</i> Meyen	+	-	+	+
25.	<i>Scenedesmus quadricauda</i> (Trupin) Brebisson	+	-	+	+
26.	<i>Actinastrum hantzschii</i> var. elongatum G. M. Smith	+	-	+	+
27.	<i>Pediastrum tetras</i> (Ehrenberg) Ralfs	+	-	+	+
28.	<i>Scenedesmus bernardii</i> G. M. Smith	+	-	+	+
29.	<i>Anabaena circinalis</i> Rabenhorst ex Bornet	+	-	+	+

	and Flahault				
30.	<i>Navicula halophila</i> (Gurnow) Cleve	+	+	+	+
31.	<i>Navicula rediosa</i> (Kuetz.)	+	+	+	+
32.	<i>Cosmarium ceylanicum</i> West and G. S. West	+	-	+	+
33.	<i>Cosmarium cucurbitinum</i> A.M. Scott and R.Gronblad	+	-	+	+
34.	<i>Pinnularia dolosa</i> Gandhi	+	+	+	+
35.	<i>Bulbochaete setigera</i> C. Agardh ex Hirn.	+	-	+	+
36.	<i>Euastrum ansatum</i> Ehrenberg	+	-	+	+
37.	<i>Netrium digitus</i> (Ehrenberg) Itzigsohn and Rothe	+	-	+	+

Variations in physico-chemical characteristics of the selected water bodies are presented in **Table 2** to **Table 5**. The pH of water ranged from 5.9 to 7.8. Maximum range was recorded in Lotus Lake, from 5.9 to 7.8. The phytoplankton diversity also showed variations

that may be attributed to the changes in pH values. Physico-chemical and biological characteristics of water bodies are known to influence each other¹² and pH range of 5 to 8.5 was reported to be ideal for phytoplankton growth¹³.

Table 2 : Physico-chemical analysis of water samples of Syngenta Lake (Jan. – Oct. 2014)

Parameter	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.
pH	6.10 ±0.05	5.90 ±0.11	6.20 ±0.02	6.20 ±0.02	6.30 ±0.01	6.40 ±0.01	6.80 ±0.17	6.40 ±0.00	6.23 ±0.01	6.09 ±0.00
Temp. (°C)	25.00 ±1.2	28.00 ±0.20	28.00 ±0.20	30.00 ±0.45	31.00 ±0.8	30.80 ±0.72	28.40 ±0.06	27.40 ±0.40	28.40 ±0.06	29.00 ±0.10
TDS (mg L ⁻¹)	620.00 ±8.76	745.00 ±32.90	685.00 ±12.90	634.00 ±4.10	645.00 ±0.42	621.00 ±8.43	687.00 ±13.56	606.00 ±13.43	616.00 ±10.10	604.00 ±14.10
DO (mg L ⁻¹)	8.11 ±0.06	6.80 ±0.50	6.80 ±0.50	6.08 ±0.73	6.01 ±0.76	6.89 ±0.46	9.60 ±0.42	10.54 ±0.74	12.06 ±1.25	10.20 ±0.63
Nitrates (mg L ⁻¹)	0.20 ±0.09	0.72 ±0.08	0.82 ±0.10	0.31 ±0.05	0.54 ±0.02	0.33 ±0.05	0.41 ±0.02	0.50 ±0.006	0.53 ±0.01	0.48 ±0.00
Phosphates (mg L ⁻¹)	0.10 ±0.02	0.12 ±0.02	0.23 ±0.01	0.10 ±0.02	0.24 ±0.02	0.27 ±0.03	0.25 ±0.02	0.19 ±0.03	0.20 ±0.00	0.15 ±0.01

Legend : values are mean of three replicates. ± = Standard deviation

Table 3 : Physico-chemical analysis of water samples of Khandola Pond (Jan. – Oct. 2014)

Parameter	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.
pH	7.14 ±0.24	6.10 ±0.07	6.00 ±0.10	6.10 ±0.07	6.00 ±0.1	6.80 ±0.14	6.40 ±0.01	6.20 ±0.04	6.40 ±0.01	6.40 ±0.01
Temp. (°C)	25.00 ±0.22	28.00 ±0.76	28.00 ±0.76	30.00 ±1.43	31.00 ±1.76	30.80 ±1.70	30.80 ±1.70	28.40 ±0.90	27.40 ±0.56	28.40 ±0.90
TDS (mg L ⁻¹)	41.20 ±1.08	49.60 ±1.71	40.23 ±1.40	43.70 ±0.24	51.54 ±0.00	38.70 ±1.91	32.60 ±3.94	47.60 ±1.04	50.21 ±1.91	49.30 ±1.61
DO (mg L ⁻¹)	7.20 ±0.59	7.40 ±0.52	8.60 ±0.10	7.90 ±1.08	8.00 ±0.310	7.20 ±0.59	9.32 ±0.20	10.95 ±0.64	11.97 ±0.98	11.44 ±0.81
Nitrates (mg L ⁻¹)	0.27 ±0.12	0.23 ±0.04	0.56 ±0.05	0.47 ±0.02	0.36 ±0.03	0.50 ±0.031	0.58 ±0.042	0.34 ±0.01	0.38 ±0.00	0.31 ±0.08
Phosphates (mg L ⁻¹)	0.01 ±0.02	0.02 ±0.02	0.01 ±0.02	0.04 ±0.01	0.02 ±0.02	0.02 ±0.02	0.30 ±0.2	0.25 ±0.05	0.15 ±0.02	0.15 ±0.02

Legend : values are mean of three replicates. ± = Standard deviation

The water temperature throughout the sites varied from 25 to 31°C, maximum in May (late summer and early rainy season) and minimum in January (the late rainy and winter season). Water temperature plays an important role in controlling the occurrence and abundance of phytoplanktons¹⁴.

The Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) were least at Khandola Pond (32.60 to 51.45 mg L⁻¹), greater at Syngenta Lake (604 to 745 mg L⁻¹), greater still at Lotus Lake (616 to 1078 mg L⁻¹)

and highest at Curtorim Lake (922 to 1389 mg L⁻¹). Beeton¹⁵ attributed an increase in TDS in St. Lawrence Great Lakes to cultural eutrophication and suggested the separation of Oligotrophic and Eutrophic lakes based on TDS values. Oligotrophic lakes have TDS less than 100 ppm, while eutrophic lakes have TDS more than 100 ppm. This increase in TDS above 100 ppm in Syngenta, Lotus and Curtorim lakes indicate cultural eutrophication.

Table 4 : Physico-chemical analysis of water samples of Lotus Lake (Jan. – Oct. 2014)

Parameter	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.
pH	7.80 ±0.46	6.60 ±0.06	6.46 ±0.02	6.00 ±0.10	5.90 ±0.14	6.00 ±0.10	6.73 ±0.10	6.00 ±0.10	6.50 ±0.03	6.00 ±0.10
Temp. (°C)	25.50 ±1.10	29.00 ±0.14	29.00 ±0.14	30.00 ±0.38	31.00 ±0.72	30.00 ±0.38	30.00 ±0.38	26.20 ±0.86	28.40 ±0.10	29.00 ±0.14
TDS (mg L ⁻¹)	616.50 ±83.15	673.20 ±64.15	782.00 ±27.88	968.00 ±34.10	997.00 ±43.77	962.00 ±32.10	1078.00 ±70.77	910.00 ±14.77	825.00 ±13.55	845.00 ±6.88
DO (mg L ⁻¹)	6.07 ±0.63	6.60 ±0.44	6.79 ±0.38	8.12 ±0.04	5.68 ±0.76	9.22 ±0.41	10.30 ±0.77	9.44 ±0.48	9.35 ±0.45	8.14 ±0.05
Nitrates (mg L ⁻¹)	1.43 ±0.14	1.58 ±0.33	1.66 ±0.30	1.76 ±0.26	1.81 ±0.20	2.16 ±0.14	4.55 ±0.64	3.16 ±0.24	3.38 ±0.24	4.45 ±0.61
Phosphates (mg L ⁻¹)	0.01 ±0.20	0.03 ±0.20	0.10 ±0.17	0.25 ±0.010	0.25 ±0.10	0.30 ±0.10	2.41 ±0.58	1.92 ±0.41	0.78 ±0.03	0.60 ±0.02

Legend : values are mean of three replicates. ± = Standard deviation

Table 5 : Physico-chemical analysis of water samples of Curtorim Lake (Jan. – Oct. 2014)

Parameter	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.
pH	6.80 ±0.09	6.90 ±0.06	6.70 ±0.10	6.90 ±0.06	6.72 ±0.10	7.60 ±0.14	7.68 ±0.17	7.52 ±0.14	7.68 ±0.03	6.40 ±0.05
Temp. (°C)	25.50 ±1.10	29.00 ±0.14	29.00 ±0.14	30.00 ±0.38	31.00 ±0.72	30.00 ±0.38	30.00 ±0.38	26.20 ±0.86	28.40 ±0.10	29.00 ±0.14
TDS (mg L ⁻¹)	1124 ±17.66	1207 ±45.33	1308 ±79.00	1240 ±56.33	1285 ±71.33	1389 ±106.00	1317 ±82.00	1210 ±46.32	1118 ±15.65	922.00 ±49.65
DO (mg L ⁻¹)	8.95 ±0.20	8.14 ±0.47	8.51 ±0.34	8.94 ±0.20	7.98 ±0.52	8.55 ±0.33	9.19 ±0.10	11.76 ±0.72	11.03 ±0.47	12.77 ±1.06
Nitrates (mg L ⁻¹)	0.80 ±0.28	1.27 ±0.10	1.50 ±0.06	1.78 ±0.03	2.57 ±0.28	1.32 ±0.01	2.27 ±0.17	2.76 ±0.34	1.43 ±0.08	1.27 ±0.10
Phosphates (mg L ⁻¹)	0.01 ±0.00	0.02 ±0.10	0.01 ±0.00	0.04 ±0.10	0.12 ±0.07	0.15 ±0.06	1.72 ±0.45	0.49 ±0.14	0.55 ±0.06	0.30 ±0.01

Legend : values are mean of three replicates. ± = Standard deviation

Dissolved oxygen (DO) ranged between 6.01 mg L⁻¹ and 12.06 mg L⁻¹ at Syngenta Lake, 7.20 to 11.97 mg L⁻¹ at Khandola Pond, 5.68 to 10.30 mg L⁻¹ at Lotus Lake and 8.14 to 12.77 mg L⁻¹ at Curtorim Lake. Dissolved oxygen acts as a regulator of metabolic activities of organisms and thus governs metabolism of biological community as a whole. It is also used as an indicator of trophic status of the

water¹⁶. Increased amount of dissolved oxygen observed during monsoon is known to be due to increased solubility of oxygen¹⁷, lower levels of dissolved oxygen in summer is due to higher temperature and low solubility of oxygen in water¹⁸.

The nitrate levels showed variations in the water bodies and ranged from 0.20 to 0.54 mg L⁻¹ in Syngenta Lake, 0.23 to 0.58 mg L⁻¹ in Khandola

Pond, 1.43 to 4.55 mg L⁻¹ in Lotus Lake and 0.80 to 2.76 mg L⁻¹ in Curtorim Lake. Phosphate concentrations also showed variations and ranged from 0.10 to 0.25 mg L⁻¹ in Syngenta Lake, 0.01 to 0.30 mg L⁻¹ in Khandola Pond, 0.01 to 2.41 mg L⁻¹ in Lotus Lake and 0.01 to 0.55 mg L⁻¹ in Curtorim Lake. The study has revealed that during monsoon season, pollutants like nitrates and phosphates are entering the water bodies from the surrounding area, especially from farmlands, resulting in elevated concentrations of nitrates and phosphates. Eutrophic conditions are observed during pre- and post-monsoon seasons at Syngenta, Lotus and Curtorim Lakes, supporting the growth of phytoplankton. Increased levels of nitrates and phosphates indirectly harm the environment by causing bacterial growth and huge algal blooms¹⁹. Studies suggest that due to continuous runoff of high-mineral content into the water form the quality of water-dwelling organisms in lakes²⁰. Higher concentrations of nitrates are useful in irrigation, but entry into water resources increases the growth of nuisance algae and triggers pollution due to increases in algal density²¹⁻³².

CONCLUSION

Results of the physico-chemical profile of the water bodies present an enigmatic picture with certain parameters indicating an oligotrophic regime, others pointing towards eutrophy. The analysis of water quality suggests that most of the parameters are above the required limits. The Lotus and Curtorim lakes are influenced by domestic activities, sewage flow, cattle washing by rural communities and small scale industrial effluents, while the Syngenta Lake is affected by organic pollution. Khandola Pond however, is not affected by any of the above anthropogenic stresses. Studies on continuous monitoring of these water bodies to collect further data on physical, chemical and biological characteristics needs to be undertaken. Conservation of water bodies is imperative for ecological, cultural and touristic values, as are important to mankind in various ways.

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