Title: Assessing the Influence of Tribal Cultural Landscapes on Forest Cover in Hoshangabad Forest Division, Madhya Pradesh

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Overview of the project:

The project aims to explore the dynamic relationship between tribal cultural practices and forest cover in the Hoshangabad region. Drawing on Carl Sauer's concept of "cultural landscape," the research emphasizes the significant role that tribal communities play in shaping and enhancing forest ecosystems. The study seeks to understand how the cultural heritage, traditions, and livelihood practices of these communities' influence forest cover amidst the challenges posed by urbanization, industrialization, and socio-economic changes.

Research Methodology:

The study utilizes a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative techniques to examine the influence of tribal cultural practices on forest cover. A comprehensive field survey will be conducted across 25 villages in 8 strategically selected sites within the Hoshangabad region. These sites were chosen for their proximity to forests and the communities' reliance on forest resources. Stratified purposive sampling, informed by a pilot survey, will guide the selection of villages and participants. Approximately 500 samples, including households and key respondents such as village heads and senior citizens, will be collected to capture diverse perspectives. Data will be gathered using Kobo Surveying software and subsequently analyzed using MS Excel and Arc-GIS to uncover spatial patterns and assess the impact of cultural practices on the forest landscape.

Deliverables: The project is expected to deliver the following outcomes:

- Literature Review and Conceptual Framework: A comprehensive review of existing literature, leading to a well-defined conceptual framework for understanding the relationship between tribal cultural landscapes and forest cover.
- Field Survey Data: Detailed primary data from 25 villages, providing insights into the cultural practices and their effects on forest ecosystems.
- Data Analysis and Interpretation: Rigorous analysis of survey data, with findings that elucidate the connections between cultural practices and forest cover.
- Final Report: A comprehensive report detailing the research process, findings, and recommendations for integrating cultural practices into forest conservation strategies.
- Contribution: The key findings and recommendations, facilitating knowledge dissemination and potential policy impact.