Promoting sustainable livelihoods: evidence from the tribal regions of Marayoor, Kerala

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The success of tribal farmers and rural youths in adopting advanced cultivation and processing techniques for lemongrass in Marayoor, Idukki district, Kerala, as part of the United Nations Development Programme and Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants collaboration is discussed in the present study. The project, implemented across four tribal clusters from 2020 to 2022, focused on re-evaluating and enhancing lemongrass essential oil production technology. Results showed a three to four-fold increase in tribal farmer's income and year-round job opportunities for rural youths in the aromatic industry. Improved cultivation and processing methods led to self-sufficiency among tribal farmers and rural youths, reducing reliance on forest resources.

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conservation into mainstream policies by identifying gaps in current frameworks and institutional set-ups. In this preview, lemongrass cultivation is a major source of income for tribal communities, complementing their other means of livelihood[1]. Actively promoting lemongrass cultivation in fragile ecosystems and on rocky slopes could significantly enhance the economic status of the tribals in Marayoor. This practice not only offers a stable and sustainable income but also contributes to ecological security by stabilizing soil and promoting biodiversity in these sensitive areas. Encouraging this agricultural activity can lead to improved financial stability for the tribal population while simultaneously fostering environmental conservation.

The collaboration between the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), aims to launch the initiative 'Enhancing sustainable livelihoods and bi[illegible]