Characterizing impacts of fire on forested landscape of Odisha

Thesis submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Jayshree Das



SPATIAL ANALYSIS AND INFORMATICS LABORATORY SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY NEW DELHI-110067, INDIA



जवाहरलाल नेहरु विश्वविद्यालय JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES NEW DELHI - 110 067, INDIA

9th April, 2024

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the research work embodied in this thesis entitled 'Characterizing impacts of fire on forested landscape of Odisha' is submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The work is original and has not been submitted in part or in full for any other degree or diploma to any other University/Institution.

Jayshree Das (Candidate)

Prof P. K. Joshinshi (Supervisor)

(Dean, SES)

Telephone: 011-26704302 (Direct), 4303, 4304 | E-mail: dean-ses@mail.jnu.ac.in

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation would not have been possible without the personal and professional support from many people who in different ways made my work easier and improved my research. It gives me immense pleasure to thank them here and acknowledge their support during my research work.

First and foremost, I acknowledge with profound gratitude my indebtedness to my supervisorProf. P.K. Joshi, School of Environmental Science, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi,India for guiding me during the entire course of study. I have been amazingly fortunate to havean advisor who gave me the freedom to explore on my own and at the same time the guidance to recover when my steps faltered on academic and personal fronts. His insightful criticism, extensive feedbacks and punctuality have been substantial in shaping this dissertation and provided me with an opportunity to draw upon his rich and wide experience. He taught me how to question thoughts, express ideas and make the best out of a situation.

I would like to thank Asst. Prof. Dr. Narayan Panda, College of Agriculture, Odisha University of Agriculture & Technology, Odisha, for his support towards technical and financial requirements and informative discussion during my research work.

I would like to acknowledge the financial and knowledge support from various institutions which helped in my research work. I would acknowledge the support from University Grants Commission (UGC) for their financial support throughout the research period. The financial assistance from the short-term forest fire research work organized by Khariar Forest Division and Angul Forest Divison of Odisha, helped in developing the research work. Formal and informal discussions and meetings with forest officials, experts and young researchers across the state as part of these projects have provided new outlooks and platforms to discuss new ideas and skills. I would like to thanks Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (PCCF), Forest Department, Government of Odisha and Regional Chief Conservator of Forest (RCCF) for their technical and logistic support during my research field work.

i

The equipment from the Sustainable Natural Resource Use in Arctic and High Mountains Areas

(SUNRAISE) and Urban Resilience and Adaptation for India and Mongolia (URGENT) projects,

co-funded by Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union are duly acknowledged. The learnings

from the international summer schools on 'Engaging Science for Resilient and Livable Cities'

(ENGAGE), organized by the Institute of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Estonian

University of Life Sciences was enriching, interactive and knowledge gaining platform.

I would like to express my special thanks to my friends Akshita, Sonali, Manjul, Swastik, Piyush,

& Satish for their unwavering support and encouragement throughout the study, as well as for

reminding me that I had a life outside of my PhD. My labmates MM Anees and Susanto Mahato

inspired and guided me through my difficult moments directing me in the right direction. I am also

thankful to Ashish, Varun, Pooja and other friends for their support. Special thanks to Mani Sharma

for her support which made a significant influence on my work and helped me to progress. Thank

you to all of you for always being there for meand for having my back.

I would like to express my heart-felt gratitude to my mother Mrs Subhalaxmi Das, for her

unconditional love, trust, concern, motivation and unwavering support. Her constant remindersto

eat, proceed to lab in time, and other small things were all important parts of this journey. None of

this would have been possible without the love and patience of my family: my father Shri D. K.

Das, and my uncle. My family has been a consistent source of love, strength, support, and

motivation and for supporting me throughout the years, financially, practically and with moral

support.

My acknowledgement would not be complete without expressing my sincere thanks to the people

of Odisha, with whom I conversed, shared home-cooked meals, and learned. Thank you for

inviting me into your homes and sharing your knowledge and experience with me.

Date: 9th April 2024

Jayshree Das

Place: New Delhi

ii

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACŀ	KNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
TAE	BLE OF CONTENTS	iii
LIST	T OF FIGURES	v
LIST	T OF TABLES	vii
LIST	T OF ABBREVIATIONS	viii
1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Background	
1.2	Forest fire landscape	
1.3	Forest fire susceptibility modeling	
1.4	Forest fire and society	
1.5	Research hypothesis	
1.6	Aim, objectives and research questions	13
1.7	Outline of the thesis	14
2	LITERATURE REVIEW	16
2.1	Forest fire landscape	16
2.2	Forest fire susceptibility modeling	19
2.3	Ecosystem characterization	22
2.4	Social impacts of forest fire	25
2.5	Research gaps	26
3	STUDY AREA	28
3.1	Odisha	28
3.2	Kandhamal district	36
3.3	Sundargarh district	38
4	FOREST FIRE SUSCEPTIBILITY MODELLING	39
4.1	Introduction	39
4.2	Forest fire inventory and contributing factors database	41
4.3	Materials and methods	43
4.4	Results	57
4.5	Learning outcome and research implications	71

5	FOREST FIRE IMPACT ON PHYTODIVERSITY	72
5.1	Introduction	72
5.2	Structural diversity sampling	73
5.3	Materials and methods	75
5.4	Results	79
5.5	Learning outcomes and research implications	90
6	FOREST FIRE IMPACT ON SOIL CHARACTERISTICS	91
6.1	Introduction	91
6.2	Materials and methods	92
6.3	Results	99
6.4	Learning outcomes and implications	105
7	FOREST FIRE AND SOCIETY	107
7.1	Introduction	107
7.2	Materials and methods	109
7.3	Results	111
7.4	Learning outcomes and implications	121
8	DISCUSSION	122
8.1	Forest fire susceptibility modeling	122
8.2	Forest fire impact on ecosystem	125
8.3	Forest fire and society	128
8.4	Forest fire management plan	130
8.5	Policy and programs	132
8.6	Limitations	133
9	CONCLUSION	135
9.1	Main findings and research contributions	135
9.2	Methodological advantages and contributions	138
9.3	Framework for transferability and applications	138
9.4	Future research possibilities	141
10	REFERENCES	142
APP	PENDIX – I	171
APP	PENDIX - II	174
APP	PENDIX - III	177

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Criteria for selection of sampling site
Figure 2. The map displays forest fires recorded using MODIS sensor data within the studyarea,
along with the distribution of forests across the sampling sites
Figure 3. Methodology followed for development of forest fire susceptibility map44
Figure 4. Steps followed to prepare forest fire responsible layers
Figure 5. Forest fire responsible layers
Figure 6. Forest fire susceptibility maps using (a) FR, (b) CF, (c) NRF, (d) Wi, (e) Wf, (f)AHP
and (g) LR
Figure 7. Fire susceptibility map generated using data mining modeling (a) BRT (b) CART(c)
GBM (d) MARS (e) RF (f) SVM
Figure 8. Percent increase in Mean Square Error (%IncMSE) and Increase in Node Purity
(IncNodePurity) values against each predictor variable67
Figure 9. ROC and AUC value of weighted models
Figure 10. ROC and AUC value of data mining models
Figure 11. Coefficient of Variation (CV) map69
Figure 12. Susceptibility distribution along the forest type of Odisha
Figure 13. District wise forest fire distribution
Figure 14. Design of the sampling plot for floral diversity analysis
Figure 15. Total tree density in fire frequency classes
Figure 16. Total shrubs, herbs and seedlings density across fire
Figure 17. Methodology followed for soil sample analysis
Figure 18. Changing chemical properties of macro nutrients soil characteristics with increasing fire
frequencies: (a) pH (b) EC (c) OC (d) Available P (e) Available N (f) K
Figure 19. Changing chemical properties of micro nutrients soil characteristics with increasing fire
frequencies: (a) S (b) Cu (c) Fe (d) Zn (e) B (f) Mn
Figure 20. Changing microbial biomass nutrients of soil characteristics with increasing fire
frequencies: (a) MBC (b) MBN
Figure 21. Methodology flowchart for questionnaire survey
Figure 22. Questionnaires survey format. Close ended questions with ordinal option (Very low,
Low, Moderate, High, and Very high) coloured with yellow. Open ended questions with blue colour

Figure 23. Response according to each social system about purpose of visit to forest by dw	vellers
	112
Figure 24. Importance of forest for dwellers. Outer circle: According to environment and h	nealth,
Middle circle: According to basic needs, and Inner circle: According to income	113
Figure 25. Consumption rate of forest produce for dwellers, according to forest dwellers	(FD),
forest officials (OF), and other stakeholders (OS)	114
Figure 26. Rating causes of forest fire	115
Figure 27. Ranking beneficial effects of forest fire	116
Figure 28. Ranking adverse effects of forest fire	117
Figure 29. Rating necessity of forest conservation	119
Figure 30. Awareness activities carried by forest department and NGOs	120
Figure 31. Hinderances faced by forest officials in implementing fire protection measures	120
Figure 32. Paradigm of Forest Fire Management Plan for the state of Odisha and similar	agro-
climatic zones	131
Figure 33. Framework for characterizing forest fire and attempts for the sustainable fore	st fire
management	139

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Popularly used definitions of forest and their sources	. 4
Table 2. Major soil groups found in Odisha	.31
Table 3. Collection and preparation of responsible variable layers used as input to model	.46
Table 4. Multicollinearity statistics computed for responsible variables	.48
Table 5. Selected variables class distribution details	.49
Table 6. Weighted calculated for each variable class through weighted models	.62
Table 7. Relative influence value for the variables calculated using BRT, CART and GBM	. 66
Table 8. Tree species distribution in each fire frequency zone with their phytological characteristics.	istics
	.81
Table 9. Abundance/Frequency (A/F) value of tree species in each fire frequency zones	.83
Table 10. Herbs species density across fire frequency	.86
Table 11. Shrubs species density across fire frequency	.86
Table 12. Tree seedlings density across fire frequency	.87
Table 13. Tree species diversity indices across varying fire frequency plots	.88
Table 14. Total tree biomass distribution across fire frequency classes	.88
Table 15. Mean \pm SD value of available soil chemical properties along 0-15 and 15-30 pr	ofile
depth across varying fire frequency classes plot (n = 100). Means of soil properties with *total transfer of the soil properties with the soil pro	mark
indicates Tukey post-hoc significant difference (Significance codes: 0 '**, 0.001 '*, 0.01 '*,	0.05
·.'0.1 ' ' 1)	101

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FAO Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

CEEW Council on Energy, Environment and Water IPCC Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

UNCCD United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

UNFCCC United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

IUFRO International Union of Forest Research Organizations

FSI Forest Survey of India

UNCBD United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity

COP Conference of Parties

MoEFCC Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change of India

GFRA Global Forest Resource Assessment

WRI World Resource Institute

ISFR India State of Forest Report

VIIRS Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite

CRED Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters

MLTs Machine learning techniques

MEA Millennium Ecosystem Assessment

SDG Sustainable Development Goals

ROC-AUC Receiver Operator Characteristic – Area Under Curve

CV Coefficient of Variation

FAST Forest Fire Alerts System

ASTER Advanced Spaceborne Thermal Emission and Reflection Radiometer

GDEM Global Digital Elevation Model

MODIS Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer

OSM Open Street Map

VIF Variance Inflation Factor

TOL Tolerance

FR Frequency Ratio

CF Certainty Factor

NRF Natural Risk Factor

AHP Analytical hierarchy process

LR Logistic regression

BRT Boosted Regression Tree

CART Classification and Regression Tree

GBM Gradient Boosted Machine

MARS Multivariate Adaptive Regression Spline

RF Random Forest

SVM Support Vector Machine

DBH Diameter at breast height

AGH Above ground biomass

BGH Below ground biomass

IVI Importance Value Index

STFR Soil Test and Fertilizer Recommendation

NTFP Non-timber forest produces

NGO Non-governmental organizations







Last Page

The appended material is based on research carried out at the partner institution of URGENT Project, and has potentially utilised the equipment support, inputs based on course revised/developed and training programs (*lecture series, research seminar and webinars*) through the URGENT Project.

The document is part of thesis part of PhD/MSc/MA research work carried out at the Jawaharlal Nehru University. Purposefully limited pages are shared to avoid copyright and other issues. However, the full thesis can be shared on request.

The complete thesis can be obtained from Prof P K Joshi (<u>pkjoshi27@hotmail.com</u> or <u>pkjoshi@mail.jnu.ac.in</u>).