

WTP Vs WTA FOR ASSESSING RECREATIONAL BENEFIT OF URBAN FORESTS: A CASE FROM A MODERN AND PLANNED CITY OF A DEVELOPING COUNTRY

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ABSTRACT

Urban forests provide various environmental, social and educational benefits to human society. The non-market benefits of such areas are often incorrectly valued or only partially incorporated into cost-benefit analysis of developmental projects and decision making on resource allocation - particularly in developing countries. The economic value to users of a city's urban forests in a developing country like India has yet to be estimated. Therefore, Chandigarh, one of the planned cities of India, was selected for the estimation in the form of the "economic use value" of the non-market benefits of its forests. The mean willingness to pay (WTP) for the betterment of existing green landscape features and for creating new parks/gardens on the part of each family residing and earning in the city was estimated. The response to willingness to accept (WTA) compensation question was found to be very low because the people of the city reject the idea of receiving compensation in lieu of not visiting green areas of the city for their different purposes. Therefore, WTP is likely to be more appropriate than WTA in order to assign a reasonable monetary value to the recreational aspect of an environmental amenity like urban parks or landscapes in the literate society of a developing country.

Key words: Chandigarh, Contingent Valuation Method, India. Urban forests, Willingness to pay, Willingness to accept compensation

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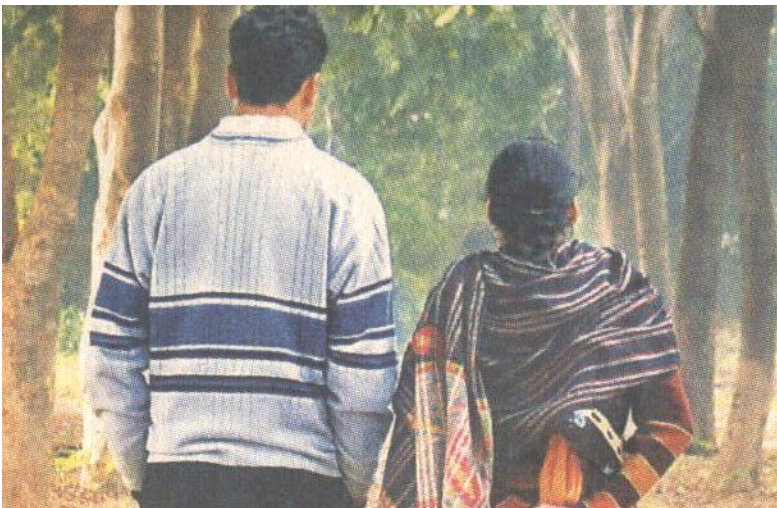
http://www.foreststreesandlivelihoods.co.uk/forthcoming_articles.htm



Landscaped traffic roundabouts



A view of Terraced garden



A couple moving in urban woods