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Folk Knowledge, Sustainable Development and Tribal Culture: An Anthropological Perspective

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ABSTRACT The essential criteria that differentiate tribal society from other societies are the distinctiveness of the tribal culture itself. It gives them the status of being a tribe. The uniqueness of tribal culture results from living isolated within hills and forest areas. One of the crucial characteristics adopted for identifying a group as a tribe is their close association with nature. It is due to their culture, which contributes more to managing their habitat and helps in developing a harmonious relationship with nature through their belief system. It is well known that living close to nature makes life more sustainable. This way of life gives rise to such knowledge types called folk knowledge. It includes a knowledge system related to forest produce collection, hunting, animal husbandry, agriculture, craft, and medicinal use of flora and fauna. This paper highlights how tribes use their folk knowledge in managing and sustainably conserving natural resources.