



Ecological Niche Modeling of *Salacia* Species in Western Ghats

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Abstract: Occurrence and distributional studies of *Salacia beddomei*, *S. macrosperma* and *S. gambleana* were carried out in six districts of Central Western Ghats of Karnataka region. Various bio-climatic variables such as mean temperature, annual precipitation *etc.*, were used to identify the potential geographical distribution of *Salacia* using DIVA-GIS application. Study identified 23, 22 and 25 populations of *S. beddomei*, *S. macrosperma* and *S. gambleana* respectively in Central Western Ghats. The crest line and high rainfall Western hilly slopes of Western Ghats were predicted to be highly suitable for the species, suggesting a high habitat-specificity and restricted distribution of *Salacia*. These predicted areas could be taken as best ecological niche for the conservation of species through species recovery programme.

Keywords: Geographic distribution, Niche modeling, Western ghats
