

INDIA 2050

NAVIGATING THE ROADMAP TO GROWTH SUSTAINABILITY AND INCLUSION

(A MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH)

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Traditional Cuisine: An Approach to Sustainable Cultural Identity with Special Reference to Bodo Society

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Introduction:

As traditional cuisine are rooted in the principles of resource conservation and biodiversity, they are inherently more sustainable than modern day industrially processed food. Food habit reflects one of the cultural lifestyles of every society that sustains people in providing a sense of direction and distinct identity for its members. Food is more than just a means to satisfy hunger but it is a manifestation for expressing physical cultural identity. Food behaviors are not universal or natural nor are they static. It is closely linked to our changing surrounding food environments. Globalization of food, urbanization, information technology, social and lifestyle changes all contribute to molding food choices.

The Indigenous food cuisine of Bodo is an integral part of cultural identity contributing to their physical, spiritual and economic well-being. These food systems consist of harvesting, foraging, hunting, fishing and gathering of plant and animal foods, and are often shaped by diverse eating practices, ecological features, geographical variations as well as historical experiences. Indigenous people of Bodo who form distinct social and cultural groups having strong links with their territories and surrounding natural resources, are often the sole custodians of traditional food systems and the ancestral ecological knowledge associated with them. The food systems of Bodo people have sustained them for thousands of generations, generating food in harmony while preserving the local biodiversity. These foods, include wild, domesticated or cultivated plant, animal fish, fungi species, etc. that are derived from surrounding natural environment, and act as a crucial source of nourishment.

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