

## **CYCLONE AFFECT ON THE FLORA AND FAUNA OF THE CHILKA LAKE IN ORISSA, INDIA**

**S.K. SHARMA**

GRI, 24 National Road, Dehradun 248001, India

E-Mail: SKS105@rediffmail.com

The pear shaped Chilka lake, spreading over an area of about 3500 Sq. Km. in Orissa, the eastern State of India, is a shallow gulf between latitudes 19 degrees 28' and 19 degrees 56', now practically cut-off from the sea (Bay of Bengal) by a sandy bar. The average depth of the lake is less than 3 meters and has a narrow outlet to the sea through which tides flow in. Because of calmness, serenity and availability of estuarine / marine fishes, the fishing industry provides the main livelihood to local people and hotel business. The recent storm / cyclone in 1997 disrupted the calm life of the fishes and other flora of the lake putting the entire hotel and local people life at stake. The paper deals with the geological framework of the lake, geochemical analysis of its water before and after the cyclone, the changes observed, affect of such changes on the flora and fauna of the lake and suggestions to conserve and manage the lake in more meaningful way.