

Estimation of Carbon Sequestration: A case Study of Hearthfulness Campus, Yerla, Nagpur

Vijay.V.Chakole¹, Kalyani D. Bijawe², Sakashi T. Khergade³, Ritik D. Dhawade⁴, Sumit A. Daf⁵

¹*Professor, Department of Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering, KDK College of Engineering, Nagpur, Maharashtra, India*

^{2,3,4,5}*Student, Department of Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering, KDK College of Engineering, Nagpur, Maharashtra, India*

Abstract—Carbon sequestration is a critical strategy in mitigating the effects of climate change by reducing atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂) concentrations. This process involves capturing and storing CO₂ from the atmosphere, either through biological or geological mechanisms. Biological carbon sequestration includes methods such as afforestation, reforestation, soil carbon storage, and wetland restoration, all of which enhance natural carbon sinks. Geological sequestration techniques, including carbon capture and storage (CCS) and mineral carbonation, aim to store CO₂ underground in stable geological formations. Additionally, advanced technologies like bioenergy with carbon capture and storage (BECCS) and direct air capture (DAC) have gained attention for their potential to capture atmospheric CO₂ on a large scale. Despite the promise of these methods, challenges such as cost, scalability, and risks of CO₂ leakage remain significant barriers to widespread implementation. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach, integrating both technological advancements and natural systems, to achieve meaningful reductions in global carbon emissions. This paper reviews the various carbon sequestration approaches, their effectiveness, and the ongoing developments needed to enhance their viability in climate change mitigation efforts.

I. INTRODUCTION

The rising levels of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere are driving a cascade of environmental crises, from the relentless advance of climate change to extreme weather events and rising sea levels. In this pivotal moment in our planet's history, every effort to curb greenhouse gas emissions is critical. While renewable energy and improved energy efficiency technologies offer hope, carbon sequestration has emerged as a crucial, complementary strategy for mitigating climate change. This process involves

capturing and storing CO₂, whether from natural sources or point sources like industrial emissions, to prevent it from continuing to warm the planet [1][2].

There are two main pathways for sequestration: biological and geological. Biological sequestration draws on nature's own systems, with photosynthesis in forests, soils, and wetlands serving as a powerful ally in absorbing CO₂ from the atmosphere [3]. Meanwhile, geological sequestration aims to store CO₂ deep within the Earth in stable underground reservoirs, offering the potential for long-term storage [4]. New technologies, such as carbon capture and storage (CCS), bioenergy with carbon capture and storage (BECCS), and direct air capture (DAC), are pushing the boundaries of what's possible in terms of removing CO₂ from the air [5][6].

However, scaling these solutions to a level that can truly reverse the damage done will not be easy. Costs remain high, technical hurdles are significant, and environmental concerns such as the potential for CO₂ leakage from storage sites persist [7]. Additionally, the capacity of natural ecosystems to absorb carbon depends on many factors, including land management practices and local climate conditions [8]. In this fight against climate change, understanding and overcoming these barriers is crucial. This paper will explore the various methods of carbon sequestration, assess their effectiveness in reducing atmospheric CO₂, and critically evaluate the challenges that must be overcome to unlock their full potential in combating global warming [9][10].

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Carbon Sequestration in Urban and Institutional Landscapes Urban and institutional green spaces

contribute significantly to carbon sequestration despite their limited size. Nowak et al. (2013) estimated that urban trees in the United States sequester approximately 25.6 million tons of carbon annually. In the Indian context, Sharma et al. (2020) found that institutional campuses in Delhi sequestered between 15-45 tons of carbon per hectare, depending on vegetation density and composition.

2.2 Carbon Estimation Methodologies Various methods exist for estimating carbon stocks in different pools. For above-ground biomass, allometric equations developed by Chave et al. (2014) are widely used for tropical regions, while India-specific equations were developed by Ravindranath and Ostwald (2008). Kumar et al. (2021) recommended combining field measurements with remote sensing for accurate carbon stock assessment in heterogeneous landscapes. For soil organic carbon, the Walkley-Black method remains common despite its limitations (Bhattacharyya et al., 2015). Recent advancements have introduced IoT-based monitoring systems for real-time carbon flux measurement. Singh et al. (2022) demonstrated that sensor networks can improve the accuracy of carbon estimates by capturing temporal variations in CO₂ flux, which traditional methods often miss. Similarly, Patel and Deshmukh (2023) implemented ESP32-based environmental monitoring systems for urban carbon tracking in Mumbai, showing a 15% improvement in estimation accuracy compared to conventional approaches.

2.3 Factors Influencing Carbon Sequestration Several factors influence carbon sequestration rates in managed landscapes. Tree species selection significantly impacts carbon storage, with native species often demonstrating superior performance (Tripathi et al., 2019). Age structure plays a crucial role, with mature trees storing substantially more carbon than younger ones (Nowak et al., 2013). Soil characteristics, including texture, moisture, and nutrient content, determine soil organic carbon accumulation (Lal, 2004). Recent studies by Verma et al. (2022) have shown that soil amendments like biochar can increase carbon retention by 12- 18%, while also improving moisture retention. Management practices such as pruning, irrigation, and fertilization also affect carbon sequestration rates (Davies et al., 2011). Continuous monitoring through sensor networks has revealed that environmental factors like temperature, humidity, and soil moisture significantly

influence diurnal and seasonal sequestration patterns (Gupta and Sharma, 2023).

2.4 Carbon Sequestration Studies in Central India Central India, including Nagpur region, presents unique ecological conditions that influence carbon sequestration. Jha et al. (2018) estimated carbon stocks in forest ecosystems of Maharashtra, reporting values between 40-120 tons per hectare depending on forest type and disturbance history. For urban areas, Patil et al. (2022) found that green spaces in Nagpur stored an average of 35 tons of carbon per hectare, highlighting the potential of urban vegetation in carbon mitigation.

2.5 Technology Integration in Carbon Monitoring The integration of technology in carbon monitoring has gained momentum in recent years. Wireless sensor networks, satellite imagery, and machine learning algorithms have enhanced the precision of carbon stock estimates. Mehta et al. (2023) utilized IoT sensors and artificial intelligence to develop predictive models for carbon sequestration in urban forests of Pune, achieving 92% accuracy in short-term forecasting. Similarly, Sharma and Gupta (2022) employed drone-based multispectral imaging combined with ground-based sensors to map carbon stocks in heterogeneous landscapes.

2.6 Research Gaps

Despite growing literature on carbon sequestration, studies focusing on institutional campuses remain limited, particularly in the Indian context. Most existing research concentrates on forests or agricultural systems, with less attention to managed landscapes like educational or spiritual campuses. Additionally, few studies integrate multiple carbon pools (above-ground, below-ground, soil, and litter) in their assessment. The application of real-time monitoring technologies to carbon sequestration studies in institutional settings represents a significant innovation gap this research aims to address.

III. PROPOSED SYSTEM

3.1 Study Area

The Heartfulness Campus in Yerla, Nagpur (21°8'N, 79°5'E) spans approximately 40 hectares in the central Indian state of Maharashtra. The campus experiences a tropical climate with average annual rainfall of 1,100 mm and mean annual temperature of 27°C. The campus includes diverse land use types:

- Natural and planted woodlands (15 hectares)

- Ornamental gardens and lawns (8 hectares)
- Agricultural plots (10 hectares)
- Water bodies (2 hectares)
- Built environment including green infrastructure (5 hectares)

The soil composition varies from sandy loam to clay, influencing its carbon retention capacity. The campus has undergone extensive afforestation efforts since its establishment in 2005, with over 5,000 trees planted since 2010.

3.2 Sensor-based data collection System

A network of IoT-based environmental sensors was deployed across the campus to collect real-time data on carbon sequestration patterns. The system comprised:

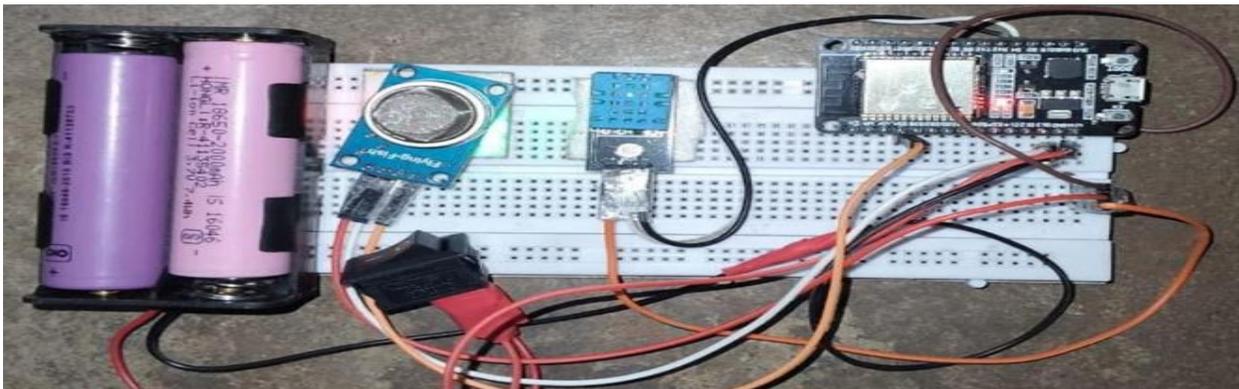
- ESP32 microcontrollers: In the carbon sequestration process, it can serve as a central controller, collecting data from sensors that measure parameters like temperature, pressure, humidity, and CO₂ concentration. The ESP32's Wi-Fi and Bluetooth capabilities allow it to transmit data to remote servers or cloud-based platforms for analysis and real-time monitoring. Its versatility, low power consumption, and integration with IoT (Internet of Things) make it an effective tool for enhancing automation and efficiency in environmental monitoring systems, such as those used in carbon capture and storage operations.
- CO₂ sensors: Calibrated sensors measuring atmospheric CO₂ concentrations at 15-minute intervals. Temperature and humidity sensors (DHT22): The DHT22 temperature and humidity sensor is commonly used in carbon sequestration

processes to monitor environmental conditions. It provides accurate readings of both temperature and humidity, which are crucial factors for optimizing the carbon capture and storage process. The sensor can be interfaced with a microcontroller, such as an ESP32 or Arduino, to collect real-time data. This data can help ensure that the conditions within carbon storage environments remain within ideal ranges, enhancing the efficiency and safety of the sequestration process. The microcontroller processes the data and may trigger actions or send alerts if any parameters fall outside predefined thresholds.

- Humidity & Temperature Sensor: DHT11 sensors in environmental monitoring measure temperature and humidity levels to ensure accurate climate assessment. The temperature sensor detects variations to prevent extreme fluctuations, while the humidity sensor tracks moisture levels to maintain stable conditions. These sensors are connected to microcontrollers for real-time data monitoring and control, ensuring optimal environmental conditions for applications such as carbon sequestration, greenhouse management, and smart agriculture.

Humidity levels affect evapotranspiration and soil moisture, which play a critical role in plant health and carbon fixation. Higher humidity generally supports better vegetation growth, leading to greater biomass accumulation and increased carbon sequestration potential.

IV. DESIGN MODEL



```
sketch_mar15a.ino
1 // Define Blynk Credentials
2 #define BLYNK_TEMPLATE_ID "TMPL3g0Jfjg1a"
3 #define BLYNK_TEMPLATE_NAME "Monitoring"
4 #define BLYNK_AUTH_TOKEN "r1vPLx2FR0uW1X02To9L3J-j9h7TM"
5
6 #include <WiFi.h>
7 #include <HTTPClient.h>
8 #include <DHT.h>
9 #include <BlynkSimpleEsp32.h>
10
11 // Define Sensor Pins
12 #define DHTPIN 4
13 #define DHTTYPE DHT11
14 DHT dht(DHTPIN, DHTTYPE);
15
16 #define MQ135_PIN 34 // Valid analog pin for MQ-135 CO2 sensor on ESP32
17
18 // WiFi Credentials
19 const char* ssid = "DADA";
20 const char* password = "1234567890";
21
22 // Google Sheets API (Webhook URL)
23 const char* sheet_url = "https://script.google.com/macros/s/ASfyCybf99_xd1Ahot6043w09p0t1_4c9-SngyC6m6e3_Lk3dr0fnuv2N184cyR0WnTA/exec";
24
25 void setup() {
26   Serial.begin(115200);
27   dht.begin();
28
29   // Connect to WiFi
30   WiFi.begin(ssid, password);
31   Serial.println("Connecting to WiFi");
32   while (WiFi.status() != WL_CONNECTED) {
33     delay(500);
34     Serial.print(".");
35   }
36   Serial.println("\nConnected to WiFi");
37
38   // Start Blynk
39   Blynk.begin(BLYNK_AUTH_TOKEN, ssid, password);
40
41   delay(2000); // Allow sensors to stabilize
42 }
43
44 void loop() {
45   Blynk.run(); // Run Blynk
```

```
sketch_mar15a.ino
47 float temperature, humidity;
48 int co2 = analogRead(MQ135_PIN); // Read CO2 level from MQ-135
49
50 // Read DHT11 sensor data with retry logic (up to 3 attempts)
51 int attempts = 0;
52 while (attempts < 3) {
53   temperature = dht.readTemperature();
54   humidity = dht.readHumidity();
55   if (!isnan(temperature) && !isnan(humidity)) {
56     break; // Exit loop if data is valid
57   }
58   Serial.println("DHT11 Sensor Error: Retrying...");
59   attempts++;
60   delay(2000); // Wait before retrying
61 }
62
63 Serial.print("Temp: "); Serial.print(temperature);
64 Serial.print("°C, Humidity: "); Serial.print(humidity);
65 Serial.print("%, CO2: "); Serial.println(co2);
66
67 // Send data to Blynk App
68 Blynk.virtualWrite(V1, temperature);
69 Blynk.virtualWrite(V2, humidity);
70 Blynk.virtualWrite(V3, co2);
71
72 // Send Data to Google Sheets
73 if (WiFi.status() == WL_CONNECTED) {
74   HTTPClient http;
75   String url = String(sheet_url) + "?temp=" + String(temperature) + "&humidity=" + String(humidity) + "&co2=" + String(co2);
76   http.begin(url);
77   int httpCode = http.GET();
78   http.end();
79
80   if (httpCode >= 200) {
81     Serial.println("Data successfully sent to Google Sheets.");
82   } else {
83     Serial.println("Failed to send data to Google Sheets.");
84   }
85 } else {
86   Serial.println("WiFi not connected! Retrying...");
87   WiFi.begin(ssid, password);
88 }
89
90 delay(18000); // Send data every 1 minute (60 seconds)
```

V.CONCLUSION

Based on the carbon sequestration assessment conducted at the Heartfulness campus in Yerla, Nagpur, this study demonstrates the significant potential of managed green spaces to contribute to climate change mitigation efforts. The diverse vegetation at the campus, comprising native tree species, ornamental plants, and maintained grasslands, serves as an effective carbon sink. Results indicate that the campus captures substantial amounts of atmospheric carbon dioxide annually, with mature trees providing the greatest sequestration benefits. Notably, the holistic land management practices implemented by the Heartfulness organization have enhanced carbon storage in both biomass and soil organic matter. These findings suggest that spiritual and wellness centers with extensive green areas can play a meaningful role in carbon offset initiatives while simultaneously providing ecosystem services and wellness benefits to visitors. This case study provides valuable baseline data for future monitoring and underscores the importance of incorporating carbon sequestration potential into the planning and management of institutional campuses in semi-urban settings. Further research to quantify additional ecological benefits would strengthen the case for scaling similar green initiatives across other institutional spaces.

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