

**CHAPTER-2**  
**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

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### **2.1. CO<sub>2</sub> emission a global problem:**

Over the last century the atmosphere and biosphere of the earth has been experiencing remarkable changes in climate [1, 2, 3] caused by the anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases. Agricultural activities have also contributed by about 20% to the present GHG concentration in the atmosphere [4]. As per the measurements of Mauna Loa observatory, atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentration has crossed 400 ppm which has increased by about 24% since 1950 [5, 6]. As predicted by Intergovernmental panel on climate change (IPCC) the atmospheric concentration might get doubled towards the end of the next century [7, 8].

After the disclosure of increasing trend of CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations in the atmosphere [9], the analysis on global warming process through greenhouse effect has received attention of the world community. The role of human activities on causing this global climate change is undisputable [10]. Although the measurements indicating rise of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentration per year are very precise and reliable [11, 12, 13] but those estimates cannot be used for global level comparison due to unavailability of the quantified uptake rate of land and ocean [14, 12, 15]. Estimation of natural sinks with high precision and accuracy is necessary to understand the process which is causing the difference between anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> emission and atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentration level [12]. The Kyoto protocol has given importance on identification and accurate quantification of sources and sinks of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> [16]. It is very much essential to picturize the variation and distribution of terrestrial carbon cycle to address the “missing sink” in global carbon cycle [17, 18, 19].

### **2.2. CO<sub>2</sub> as greenhouse gas:**

The major greenhouse gases whose increasing concentrations are considered to be the major threat to the earth's atmosphere are carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O). Over the last 100 years the estimated global warming potential of CH<sub>4</sub> and N<sub>2</sub>O relative to CO<sub>2</sub> are 28 and 298 respectively [8]. CO<sub>2</sub> contributes about 77% to the total anthropogenic greenhouse gas emission and is reported to have the highest contribution on climate change [3, 7]. The causes of increasing CO<sub>2</sub> concentration in the atmosphere are well known now, among which burning of fuels to power

advanced industrial economics and clearing of forest cover and woodlands are being often discussed [10, 20]. About half of the anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> emitted remains in the atmosphere and the rest amount is absorbed by natural sinks like terrestrial biosphere and ocean [14, 15, 21].

### **2.3. Greenhouse gases and climate change:**

Increasing concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere is a matter of concern for global scientific community and the policy makers because of the ability of greenhouse gases to trap the outgoing longwave radiation which increases earth's surface temperature [22, 23]. Some of the potential major consequences of increasing atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentration are earth's surface warming, polar ice caps melting, rising of the sea level and change in physiological activity of plant and ecosystem [24, 25, 26, 27]. Over the years oceanic warming was reported to be one of the key consequences of anthropogenic climate change [28]. Observational efforts are essential to understand the response of ecosystems to the warming process [29].

### **2.4. Sources and sinks of CO<sub>2</sub>:**

The global carbon cycle is the combination of three major components [30] which includes (i) Land (vegetation, soil and geological objects) (ii) Atmosphere and (iii) Ocean.

#### **2.4.1. Emission of CO<sub>2</sub> from fossil fuels and Industry:**

Combustion of fossil fuels has been considered as one of the major anthropogenic sources responsible for increase in atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentration [31]. Globally CO<sub>2</sub> emission from fossil fuel and industry can be divided in to following sources: fossil fuel combustion at national level, gas flaring from industry and wells, production of cement, oxidation process of hydrocarbons and fuels used by international bunkers [7, 32]. Emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> from fossil fuel and industry are about 90% of total CO<sub>2</sub> emitted from human activity [33]. In city area, CO<sub>2</sub> emission is contributed by fossil fuel burning for transportation, to fulfill the house hold energy demand as well as in different industries. In the fastest growing transport sector, burning of gasoline or diesel fuels can result in direct emission of CO<sub>2</sub> to the atmosphere. The rate of production and uses of cement is growing every year [34], which is a significant source of CO<sub>2</sub> emission by carbonate decomposition. Production process of one ton of cement could release 900 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> to

the atmosphere [35]. Production of cement releases CO<sub>2</sub> to the atmosphere by two ways, first by the chemical reaction in production of the necessary components, which could contribute about 5% of the anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> emission [36]. Large amount of CO<sub>2</sub> is also released in the combustion process of fossil fuels in energy generation for heating the raw ingredients during cement production [37]. Thus, cement industry can contribute about 8 % of global carbon dioxide emission [38].

#### **2.4.2. Emission of CO<sub>2</sub> from land use change:**

CO<sub>2</sub> emission from land use change can be considered as second largest source of anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Land use change contributes to increasing atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentration by changing the structure of terrestrial ecosystems and by soil CO<sub>2</sub> emission [39]. The processes like deforestation, burning of biomass, conversion of any natural ecosystem to agricultural ecosystem and soil cultivation can lead to increase in atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> level [40]. Along with the land use change both the vegetation type and management practices gets altered [41], which in turn can change above ground biomass, microbial properties of soil, organic matter present in soil and microenvironment responsible for plant growth [42]. The CO<sub>2</sub> added to the atmosphere due to the change of land use and land cover is the most uncertain flux in the global carbon budget because of uncertainties in deforestation or afforestation rates and due to uncertainties in carbon densities of lands undergoing change [43]. It was reported that 1.6–1.7 Pg C/year was emitted in to the atmosphere due to deforestation and conversion of tropical rain forests to agricultural ecosystems [44]. On annual basis an amount of  $1.3 \pm 0.7$  Pg C year<sup>-1</sup> has been estimated due to tropical land use change [21]. In a study Wang et al., [45] reported about the increase in annual soil respiration by 3-22% after the transformation of a grassland ecosystem to woodland. It was reported that in tropical zone the deforestation process is getting lower than earlier which contributed about 10 % to the total anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> emission [46]. The CO<sub>2</sub> emissions due to land use change are getting lower as a result of strict legal action taken against deforestation in different parts of the country [47].

#### **2.4.3. Soil as a source of CO<sub>2</sub>:**

The role of soil in global carbon cycle is very important as it can absorb and release CO<sub>2</sub> [48, 49]. Carbon dioxide can be released to the atmosphere by the process of soil respiration. Soil respiration is mainly combination of two processes heterotrophic

respiration and autotrophic respiration [50]. Soil respiration depends on temperature and moisture content of soil [51]. On annual basis approximately 70 Gt of carbon was reported to be respired back to the atmosphere by soil which is nine times greater than the global annual fossil fuel emissions [52, 53]. Accurate estimation of soil respiration in different ecosystems is very important for forecasting future CO<sub>2</sub> concentration in the atmosphere [54]. Soils of agricultural ecosystem can also act as source of CO<sub>2</sub> depending on management, climate and C saturation [55]. A small change in soil respiration may have a large impact on the carbon cycle of the forest and a carbon sink may turn in to source [56].

#### **2.4.4. Ocean as a sink of CO<sub>2</sub>:**

Significant amount carbon released from anthropogenic activities can be absorbed by the ocean. Ocean absorbs about one third of the CO<sub>2</sub> released from fossil fuel burning and deforestation activities [57]. It was reported that from year 1800 to 1994 approximately  $118 \pm 19$  Pg C had been removed from the atmosphere by ocean [58], this value is nearly equal to 50% of the CO<sub>2</sub> emitted to the atmosphere by fossil fuel burning [59, 60]. Ocean has the higher CO<sub>2</sub> storage capacity than the terrestrial ecosystems [61]. Ocean contains nearly 38000 Gt of Carbon and it absorbs around  $1.7 \pm 0.5$  Gt of carbon from the atmosphere annually [62].

#### **2.4.5. Terrestrial biosphere as a sink of CO<sub>2</sub>:**

One of the important strategies to mitigate the ongoing human induced climate change is the carbon sequestration in terrestrial biosphere which includes the management process to increase the carbon stock in biomass and soil [63]. The estimated carbon sequestration potential of the terrestrial system is 5-10 Gt C year<sup>-1</sup> [62]. In a study of European carbon cycle, Janssens et al., [64] reported that about 7-12 % of industrial carbon emission was sequestered by terrestrial ecosystems. Since 1960s terrestrial ecosystems has sequestered about 30% of CO<sub>2</sub> emitted to the atmosphere due to anthropogenic activities [53].

##### **2.4.5.1. Forest ecosystem:**

Forests are considered as important component of global carbon cycle due to its capacity of storing large amount of carbon in forest biomass [65, 66]. The amount of carbon stored in forest ecosystem is twice than the atmosphere [67]. Globally, around 25 % of the land surface is covered by forests [68]. In Northern hemisphere about  $2 \times 10^7$  km<sup>2</sup> of

area are covered by boreal and temperate forests and they are acting as carbon sink by sequestering 0.6 -0.7 PgC per year [69]. Globally, the carbon stock of tropical forest is approximately one fourth of the total forest carbon stock [21, 70]. In an earlier publication forest ecosystem is reported to sequester 359 billion tons of carbon [71]. Old growth forests are also acting as significant sinks of carbon dioxide [72, 73]. In a study Luyssaert et al., [74] reported that forests of age between 15 to 800 years show positive net ecosystem productivity. The carbon sequestration potential of forest ecosystems might get affected by increasing global surface temperature, changes in rainfall pattern and nitrogen deposition [75]. Thus, the change in climate can affect the forest carbon dynamics and may have influence on global carbon cycle. In a study conducted over 23 different forest ecosystems of Europe and USA between 1995 to 2011 by Fernandez-Martinez et al., [76] 1 % increase in annual gross primary production and net primary production has been reported.

#### **2.4.5.2. Soil as sink of CO<sub>2</sub>:**

Out of all terrestrial ecosystems only soil can store carbon for a long period of time [77]. Soil carbon sequestration intensifies the pool of soil organic matter and secondary carbonates of the soil [78]. Globally soil carbon pool has been reported to contain 2500 Gt of carbon including both soil organic and inorganic carbon [79]. The soil carbon pool is 3.3 times bigger than the atmospheric pool and 4.5 times greater than the biotic pool [79]. Soil can store 1500-2000 Gt of organic carbon [80] and the carbon storage capacity of the soils boreal and temperate forest is 33% more than the total carbon stored in tropical forests [81]. The average carbon sequestration potential of the soils of United States was estimated as 288 Tg C yr<sup>-1</sup> [78].

#### **2.5. CO<sub>2</sub> flux measurement by eddy covariance:**

Earlier CO<sub>2</sub> fluxes were measured and reported by various researchers [82, 83, 84, 85] over forest ecosystems using the flux gradient technique, but flux gradient techniques have certain disadvantages and encountered from various practical difficulties. Although CO<sub>2</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>O and energy fluxes were being measured since late 1950s and early part of 1960's, the development of new technology (eddy covariance) for continuous measurement of the above parameters is very recent [86]. The micrometeorological eddy covariance method computes the rate of CO<sub>2</sub> exchange between the interface of canopy and surrounding atmosphere. Earlier this method was used for short time periods to

measure the flux in agricultural fields under ideal measurement conditions. During the last decade eddy covariance has become a standard tool for monitoring the exchange to CO<sub>2</sub> and water vapor between ecosystem and atmosphere in time scales starting from hours to year after year [86, 87, 88].

Fluxnet is a global network and its goal is to measure CO<sub>2</sub>, water vapor and energy fluxes between biosphere and atmosphere continuously. Under the umbrella of Fluxnet, fluxes over diverse of vegetation and ecosystem [1] are being measured viz., broadleaved forest, temperate forest, boreal and tropical forest ecosystem, grasslands, agricultural ecosystem, wetlands, tundra etc. There are several regional networks under Fluxnet with more than 400 towers are in operation around the globe such as CarboEuroflux, Ameriflux, Ozflux, Asiflux etc. Routine EC measurement has been started after 1980s along with the availability and development of sonic anemometer, infrared spectroscopy and digital computers [1].

## **2.6. Global CO<sub>2</sub> flux studies:**

Initially, Verma et al., [89] reported about the computed CO<sub>2</sub> fluxes over deciduous forest on Oak Ridge, Tennessee using eddy correlation technique. From early part of 1990s, EC technique and instrumentation developed further and became more efficient for long term use in the field. First long term measurement of CO<sub>2</sub> fluxes using eddy correlation technique was reported by Wofsy et al., [90] in a mid-latitude deciduous forest of central Massachusetts. The net annual uptake by the forest as reported by them was around 3.7 metric tons of C ha<sup>-1</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup>. In Netherlands Vermetten et al., [91] made a comparative study between the results of observational flux and model estimated results and reported good agreement between the two techniques during summer months.

In a study over Harvard forest of northeastern United States Goulden et al., [92] reported about aggregated carbon sequestration of 2.1 t C ha<sup>-1</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup> in the year 1994. In New England, CO<sub>2</sub> uptake of a deciduous forest was reported to be in the range (1.4 -2.8) metric tons of carbon per hectare between 1991 – 1995 by Goulden et al., [93].

After the above pioneering efforts the process of establishment of more and more flux tower was started. In a study over a deciduous forest of Oak Ridge, TN Greco and Baldocchi [94] reported net annual CO<sub>2</sub> flux of -525 g C m<sup>-2</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup> using EC data from the period April 1993 to April 1994. In a beech forest ecosystem of Italy, Valentini et al.,

[95] monitored the seasonal variation of CO<sub>2</sub> fluxes and reported about the net annual productivity of 472 g C m<sup>-2</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup>. In a study over a temperate forest of Japan Yamamoto et al., [96] reported the results of seasonal and inter annual variation of CO<sub>2</sub> exchanges using three years (1993-1996) flux data. They reported large inter annual variability in CO<sub>2</sub> uptake rate, the net annual CO<sub>2</sub> uptake by the forest was reported to be 1.8 t C ha<sup>-1</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup> which indicated substantial sink capacity of the temperate forest.

Berbigier et al., [97] used two years EC data under the Euro flux over a maritime pine plantation site and recorded average carbon sequestration of about 11.5 t C ha<sup>-1</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup>. Two years CO<sub>2</sub> flux data were used by Granier et al., [98] under Euro flux network over a young beech forest of France. The annual net ecosystem exchange of the forest were reported to be -218 g C m<sup>-2</sup> in 1996 and -257 g C m<sup>-2</sup> in 1997 [98]. In a comparison of two years eddy covariance data by Pilegaard et al., [99] over a beech forest of Denmark under Euro flux network observed contrasting results between two years of observation. Annual sums of ecosystem CO<sub>2</sub> exchange were 223g C m<sup>-2</sup> in 1996-1997 and 144g C m<sup>-2</sup> in 1997-1998 respectively.

In Canada Lee et al., [100] monitored CO<sub>2</sub> exchange between atmosphere and temperate deciduous forest ecosystem and reported net ecosystem productivity of -1 t C ha<sup>-1</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup> to - 2.8 t C ha<sup>-1</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup> during the period 1995 to 1997. In a comparative analysis of net annual CO<sub>2</sub> exchange of 15 European forest site during 1996 to 1998, Valentini et al., [101] reported net uptake and release as 6.6 t C ha<sup>-1</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup> and 1 t C ha<sup>-1</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup> respectively. Their analysis indicated that the most of the European forests are substantial carbon sink with large variability between the forests. Increment in the CO<sub>2</sub> uptake by the ecosystems with decreasing latitude was a significant finding reported by these authors.

Micrometeorological eddy covariance method also used for quantification of CO<sub>2</sub> fluxes over a tropical rain forest of central Amazonia by Malhi et al., [102] for a complete year cycle. Their results depicted active day time photosynthesis rate between 24 -28 μmol m<sup>-2</sup> sec<sup>-1</sup> and respiration between 6-8 μmol m<sup>-2</sup> sec<sup>-1</sup>. In central Sweden Lindroth et al., [103] measured CO<sub>2</sub> fluxes over a boreal forest ecosystem and revealed that the forest acted as a source of CO<sub>2</sub> from June, 1994 to May, 1996. The accumulated CO<sub>2</sub> flux was reported to be in the range 480 g m<sup>-2</sup> to 1600 g m<sup>-2</sup> for the full two years of measurements. From 1997-1999, EC flux measurements were carried out over a scots pine forest in southern Finland and the results were reported by Markkanen et al., [104].



Their estimated annual net ecosystem exchange for 3 consecutive years from 1997 to 1999 ranged between  $-262 \text{ g C m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$  to  $-191 \text{ g C m}^{-2} \text{ yr}^{-1}$ . In Maine of USA,  $\text{CO}_2$  and energy fluxes were measured over a boreal forest dominated by spruce, the forest was found to be a carbon sink [105] which stored about  $2.1 \text{ t C ha}^{-1}$  in 1996. Eddy covariance technique was used above a ponderosa pine forest of central Oregon. The net carbon gained by the forest as reported by Anthoni et al., [106] for the years 1996 and 1997 were  $320 \text{ g C m}^{-2} \text{ year}^{-1}$  and  $270 \text{ g C m}^{-2} \text{ year}^{-1}$  respectively. Eddy covariance technique was used by the researchers [107] of Southern Africa over semi-arid deciduous mopane woodland and found strong influence of seasons on  $\text{CO}_2$  fluxes. During their period of observation from 1999 to 2000, the woodland was nearly carbon neutral with net annual carbon uptake of  $1 \text{ mol C m}^{-2} \text{ year}^{-1}$ . A comparative study of  $\text{CO}_2$  exchanges between an old growth forest and a mature forest has been done by Desai et al., [108] in Midwest (upper) of USA. They reported that the carbon sink strength of the mature forest was significantly higher than the old growth forest. In southwestern China, EC measurements were conducted over a tropical rain forest and the results were compared with biometric measurements [29]. The findings reported by them revealed that the rain forest acted as a sink with annual uptake of  $1.19 \text{ Mg C ha}^{-1} \text{ year}^{-1}$ . In a study of  $\text{CO}_2$  flux over a Scots pine forest of Brasschaat using 8 years EC data, Gielen et al., [109] found annual uptake of  $2.4 \text{ t C ha}^{-1} \text{ year}^{-1}$ . The range of day time  $\text{CO}_2$  uptake of a mangrove forest ecosystem of coastal Florida Everglades were found between  $-20$  to  $-25 \text{ } \mu\text{mol CO}_2 \text{ m}^{-2} \text{ sec}^{-1}$  [110].

### **2.7. Indian study on $\text{CO}_2$ flux:**

Terrestrial ecosystems of India are expected to depict vast spatial and temporal variation on carbon cycle due its monsoon based climate, mixed land use and land cover pattern [111].

In India for the first time a network to monitor  $\text{CO}_2$  and energy fluxes over terrestrial, coastal and oceanic ecosystems was proposed by Sundareshwar et al., [112]. Only few literatures are available from Indian subcontinent quantifying the net  $\text{CO}_2$  exchange of forest or manmade ecosystem. In Betul district of Madhya Pradesh, Jha et al., [113] measured  $\text{CO}_2$ , water vapour and energy fluxes over a teak mixed deciduous forest for summer and winter seasons with the help of Eddy covariance method. They reported strong influence of changing leaf phenology on  $\text{CO}_2$  and energy fluxes due to presence of deciduous vegetation around the study area. Peak  $\text{CO}_2$  (monthly average of -

25  $\mu\text{mol m}^{-2} \text{sec}^{-1}$ ) was found to be sequestered during winter months, whereas very less amount monthly average of  $-2 \mu\text{mol m}^{-2} \text{sec}^{-1}$  was sequestered during summer season [113]. After that, monthly variation of  $\text{CO}_2$  and water vapour fluxes are reported by Watham et al., [114] over a mixed forest plantation located in Nainital district of Uttarakhand. They observed that the ecosystem was a source of  $\text{CO}_2$  during the leafless period and it turned in to a sink from the beginning of leaf onset up to growing period. They recorded maximum uptake and release of  $\text{CO}_2$  by the ecosystem in the month of July. Maximum uptake of  $-29.5 \mu\text{mol m}^{-2} \text{sec}^{-1}$  by the ecosystem from the atmosphere are reported [114]. In a recent study variation of  $\text{CO}_2$  and water vapor fluxes over Indian tropical Mangroves in Sundarbans, India are reported by Rodda et al., [115]. They observed that half hourly  $\text{CO}_2$  flux varied in the range between  $-6 \mu\text{mol m}^{-2} \text{sec}^{-1}$  to  $-10 \mu\text{mol m}^{-2} \text{sec}^{-1}$ . The high point of the study is that the Mangrove ecosystem acted as a net carbon sink over an annual cycle.

## **2.8. Different factors affecting the $\text{CO}_2$ flux:**

The seasonal and inter annual variation in the carbon cycles of the terrestrial ecosystem is the interplay between climate and ecosystem variables [116]. Climate can control the carbon cycles of terrestrial ecosystems by regulating the physiological activity of plants and its phenology [117]. The carbon uptake capacity and the period of carbon uptake of any ecosystem can be affected by climate [118].

### **2.8.1. Heat fluxes and energy balance:**

The absorbed net radiation by any ecosystem gets converted to Latent heat, sensible heat and soil heat fluxes. In energy partitioning analysis over an Indian tick mixed deciduous forest of Madhya Pradesh more energy was reported to be partitioned in to latent heat (LE) during winter whereas in summer inverse partitioning was reported [113]. They observed diurnal peak values of sensible and latent heat fluxes during 1200 to 1300 hours. In Sundarbans over a tropical Indian mangrove forest ecosystem a linear relationship between net radiation and heat fluxes (sensible heat and latent heat) was observed by Rodda et al., [115]. The average annual evapotranspiration over a tropical Indian mangrove forest ecosystem was estimated as  $1.96 \pm 0.33 \text{ mm day}^{-1}$  [115].

The quality check of Eddy covariance data can be done by calculating surface energy balance closure [119, 120]. Most of the sites running under FLUXNET

individually reported and accepted the energy balance closure of their site as a standard measure to assess the quality of their EC data [105, 106, 121, 122, 123, 124]. The total of net radiation ( $R_n$ ) received by any ecosystem for each half hour should be nearly balanced by sum of latent and sensible heat flux ( $LE+H$ ), soil heat flux ( $G$ ) and canopy heat storage ( $C_s$ ) [123].

A comprehensive study of energy balance across 22 different FLUXNET sites indicated lack of energy balance closure at almost all the sites [125]. They reported average imbalance between available net radiation and surface fluxes of around 20 %, which is basically the violation of first law of thermodynamics [126]. Many researchers reported energy imbalance even from the sites which were considered ideal for eddy covariance measurement (homogeneous and flat terrain) and the ecosystems having only small vegetation [120, 127, 128, 129]. From Saskatchewan of Canada Barr et al., [130] reported about the energy balance closure of three boreal forest ecosystems. Energy imbalance of 11%, 14% and 15% are reported over aspen, jack pine and black spruce forest respectively [130]. In Japan Saigusa et al., [131] made a comparative study of energy balance closure calculated from half hourly fluxes and daily averaged fluxes over a cool temperate forest. They reported better energy balance closure using daily averaged fluxes of the parameters.

Eder et al., [132] reported that the observed energy imbalance on the eddy covariance sites was mainly caused by the underestimation of latent heat and sensible heat fluxes. The energy imbalance in the sites having sloping terrain is explained as the net radiation measured by the radiometer does not represent the radiative energy experienced by the surface [133, 134]. To get some new ideas on energy imbalance of eddy covariance sites, Sanchez et al., [135] analyzed eddy covariance data of a boreal forest in Finland. They reported that the closure improved by 6 % after including the heat storage term in the energy balance equation. Exclusion of storage term in the energy balance equation is the major cause of energy imbalance of flux stations [136, 137].

Many of the sites reported that the energy balance closure improved with the increase in friction velocity [125, 135, 138]. Energy balance closure is reported to improve after considering the data of only unstable conditions [135].

### **2.8.2. Net radiation:**

Forests ecosystems are known to be optically dark compared to other short vegetation as a result it can trap more solar energy which can enhance evaporation process and primary productivity [139, 140, 141]. Several researchers have reported that day time CO<sub>2</sub> uptake between biosphere and atmosphere are regulated by solar radiation [142, 143, 144, 145, 146]. Using data from 20 FLUXNET sites Niu et al., [147] reported radiation as the one of the main drivers responsible for seasonal variation in CO<sub>2</sub> flux.

### **2.8.3. Photosynthetically active radiation (PAR):**

PAR is the incident photosynthetically active radiation and its wave length lies between 400 nm- 700nm [148], plants use this energy for photosynthesis [149]. In Uttarakhand of India, Watham et al., [114] reported daily mean of PAR in the range 302.78  $\mu\text{mol m}^{-2} \text{sec}^{-1}$  to 492.16  $\mu\text{mol m}^{-2} \text{sec}^{-1}$ . It was reported in previous studies that CO<sub>2</sub> uptake rate increases along with the increase in incident light intensity until it reached a saturation point [150]. In a study on tropical forest of south-west Amazonia Grace et al., [151] tried to work out a relationship between PAR and CO<sub>2</sub> flux and found that CO<sub>2</sub> uptake rate of the ecosystem had a hyperbolic relationship with PAR, several other researchers also reported rectangular hyperbola to be the best fit between the two parameters [115, 144, 152, 153, 154].

### **2.8.4. Leaf area index:**

Leaf area index is defined as the ratio between areas of one side of the leaf to ground surface area [155, 156]. Leaf area index is a quantitative indicator of the present leaf amount and it determines the biological productivity of plants [157]. Leaf area index of plants determines photosynthate assimilation ability and stomatal density [158]. The seasonal phenology of LAI in interpreting the fluxes of the carbon, water vapor and energy between biosphere and atmosphere is basic and crucial [159, 160, 161]. Increase in LAI also increases the carbon uptake ability of plants from the atmosphere [162]. The leaf area of canopy plays the most vital role in photosynthesis, transpiration, exchange of energy with the atmosphere and in many other ecosystem processes [162, 163, 164]. Change in LAI affects the light capturing ability and the nitrogen supply to the plants which can affect net photosynthesis of any ecosystem [165]. The ecosystem productivity of a forest was reported to be modulated by the timing of leaf emergence and senescence

[131, 160, 166]. Studies over deciduous boreal and temperate forests ecosystem showed strong correlations between leaf phenology and CO<sub>2</sub> uptake [167, 168, 169].

#### **2.8.5. Air temperature:**

The plant metabolism rate and phenology depends on temperature, which in turn affects the photosynthesis of the plants [166, 170, 171]. Increasing air temperature may raise the vapour pressure deficit of the air which may regulate stomatal openings responsible for the exchange of CO<sub>2</sub> and water between biosphere and atmosphere [170]. The relationship between air temperature and photosynthesis in different ecosystems was found to be nonlinear [172]. In a study of CO<sub>2</sub> exchange in Japan between temperate forest ecosystem and atmosphere Yamamoto et al., [96] observed that inter annual variability of annual CO<sub>2</sub> uptake was a function of summer air temperature. Studies over tropical rain forest by Grace et al., [151], boreal forest ecosystems by Lindroth et al., [103] and temperate deciduous forest by Goulden et al., [93] indicated high sensitiveness of ecosystem CO<sub>2</sub> flux with temperature. According to Lindroth et al., [103] boreal forest ecosystem could change to a net source of CO<sub>2</sub> with the change of temperature. The carbon cycle of savanna ecosystem in China is reported to be strongly affected by the increase in air temperature [173].

#### **2.8.6. Rainfall:**

Rainfall plays an important role in controlling seasonal variations in terrestrial carbon cycle [174, 175, 176]. In the years having higher rainfall, the ecosystems receive low radiation which might decrease the photosynthesis rate [177]. Precipitation rate can regulate soil water content and thus influences the carbon gaining capacity of plants [147, 178]. Precipitation played a significant role in carbon exchange processes of boreal and temperate ecosystems [116]. Precipitation controls the status of root zone soil water, which in turn effects the productivity of plants and thus effects the CO<sub>2</sub> fluxes [179, 180]. Soil in wet condition can release more CO<sub>2</sub> to the atmosphere [81, 181] due the higher microbial activities [182]. Over a broad-leaved savanna woodland ecosystem in Southern Africa Veenendaal et al., [107] reported the occurrence of CO<sub>2</sub> release events after rainfall. The carbon dynamics of the ecosystems in Mediterranean climate is mostly affected by the amount of rainfall received during the growing season than the total annual rainfall [183].

### **2.8.7. Vapour pressure deficit:**

The deficit between the vapour pressure at saturated stage and the real vapour pressure can be termed as vapour pressure deficit (VPD). VPD controls the interaction mechanisms between biosphere and atmosphere through stomata [113, 184]. It was reported that in sunny conditions the rate of photosynthesis in leaves depends on the amount of moisture present in the atmosphere [185, 186]. In a study of net ecosystem exchange (NEE) over a mixed temperate forest of Belgian, the authors reported about the better correlation of net CO<sub>2</sub> flux with vapour pressure deficit than the air temperature [167].

### **2.8.8. Soil carbon dynamics:**

The role of forest soil in global carbon cycle is very critical as forest soil covers a large area of the earth [187, 188]. Both plant biomass and soil is responsible for carbon capture and storage. The determination of carbon storage capacity of forest soils is a very important research activity. It is very much essential to understand biological principles involved in carbon exchange process between land surface and atmosphere [189]. Literatures related to soil carbon dynamics are reviewed below.

#### **2.8.8.1. CO<sub>2</sub> efflux:**

Soil carbon has been reported to be the largest organic carbon stocks in terrestrial ecosystems [190] which is about two-thirds of terrestrial C [191] out of which 75 Pg C year<sup>-1</sup> is respired back to atmosphere [192]. Minor changes in CO<sub>2</sub> efflux from soil can have significant impact on increasing atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentration and temperature [192, 193]. The release of CO<sub>2</sub> (efflux) from soil is a complex process which includes respiration from roots of the plants, soil fauna and microorganisms as well as soil organic matter decomposition [194, 195]. The CO<sub>2</sub> efflux is a result of the oxidation process of soil organic matter during the litter decomposition by heterotrophic microorganisms and respiration from roots [196]. Bacteria to fungi ratio in soil and their community composition can be altered by the precipitation and changes in soil moisture [197, 198]. Hence, the population of soil microorganisms in soil along with abiotic factors related to soil like temperature, moisture and soil organic matter etc. plays a vital role in emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> from soil [199, 200]. Soil CO<sub>2</sub> efflux is also contributed by photo degradation [201] or carbonate weathering [202] in some ecosystems. Sometimes magnitude and

direction of net ecosystem exchange (NEE) may vary with the variability in soil respiration [101, 203]. Although soil respiration is a common process of all the ecosystems but its magnitude and speed may vary considerably among various ecosystems depending upon geographical location, climate and vegetation and soil characteristics [204]. In a study conducted over various forests of China revealed that soil respiration is highly sensitive to temperature in forests of high latitude and altitude [205]. Significant impact of soil temperature and precipitation on controlling the microbial populations in the natural Oak forest in the northeastern Himalayan region of Manipur, India are reported by Pandey et al., [196]. Presence of fungal population as main driver of soil CO<sub>2</sub> flux in the natural Oak forest has been highlighted in the above study. In a recent study by Jeong et al., [204] over a temperate deciduous forest of Korea the annual average of soil respiration was estimated as 405.1 mg CO<sub>2</sub> m<sup>-2</sup> h<sup>-1</sup>. The relative contributions of soil, stem and leaves on CO<sub>2</sub> efflux is reported to be about 56, 8 and 36% respectively in a mediterranean beech forest of Italy [206].

#### **2.8.8.2. Soil organic carbon (SOC):**

A portion of the total carbon fixed by the ecosystems through the process of photosynthesis is generally transferred below ground and can stay for long period of time in the soil organic carbon pool [207]. The SOC sequestration mainly depends on the amount of carbon input, stabilization process in the soil, and inputs from the roots and rhizosphere [208]. The depth wise distribution of SOC inside the soil varies depending on climate, vegetation and soil types [209]. Soil organic carbon is the largest terrestrial reservoir of carbon which plays an important role in carbon cycle and is an important part of global climate models [210, 211, 212]. The SOC pool is about 50 % of the total forest carbon pool and in boreal and temperate forests the SOC pool is greater than the carbon content in the forest biomass [63]. The role of SOC is very important in controlling the biological productivity of soil [213]. It is very much essential to understand the variation of SOC and its feedback to the atmosphere in different ecosystems as well as its natural controls in different time frames and different zones [214]. Significant variation of SOC pools in space and time was observed as it depends on the net available carbon resulted from the balance between primary production and respiration due to organic matter decomposition, respiration from roots, leaching of dissolved soil carbon and soil erosion [215]. The estimation of SOC pool is generally done with the help of total organic carbon content, bulk density of soil, rock content and

the depth of soil [208]. Soil microbes are very important organisms in ongoing global climate research, due to their important role in controlling soil carbon dynamics [208]. Also abiotic factors can regulate gaseous diffusion process as well as metabolic activity of soil microorganisms which in turn can control the metabolic activity of microorganism within the sites [216]. The rate of decomposition of SOC mainly depends on its chemical composition [217]. Small change in decomposition rate of SOC might have significant influence on the atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentration [218]. In Austrian pine forest, Sevgi and Tecimen [219] found higher soil organic carbon in the natural forest ecosystem as compared to other ecosystems which indicates the presence and decomposition of higher amount of litter in natural ecosystems. In Uttarakhand, India, Salim et al., [220] conducted a comparative study among different ecosystems to observe the seasonal change in soil nutrients and SOC and reported presence of higher organic carbon in winter as compared to other seasons. Negative correlation between SOC and soil CO<sub>2</sub> emission has been observed by Dutta et al., [221] in a paddy field of Northeast India. SOC accounted for about 55 to 70 % of total ecosystem carbon among different temperate forest types of Northern China [222].

#### **2.8.8.3. Bulk density of Soil:**

Bulk density (BD) is one of the most essential parameters which can be used along with soil organic carbon (SOC) and soil organic matter (SOM) for estimation of soil carbon pools [223, 224, 225]. BD is the ratio between the total mass of the material and its total volume, considering the mass of both air and water [226]. The change in BD of soil can alter the dielectric properties of both wet and dry soils [227]. Bulk density of soil can influence nutrient storage, gas exchange rate and water holding capacity [228]. Several researchers reported about the negative correlations between SOC and BD [229, 230].

#### **2.8.8.4. Soil C/N ratio:**

The biological productivity of soil depends on the status of carbon and nitrogen in soil [213]. The atmospheric concentration of C and N can be regulated by the amount of carbon and nitrogen present in the soil [231, 232]. Soil is a major reservoir of terrestrial nitrogen, which can store approx. 133–140 Pg N in top layer [233]. Thus a small change in soil nitrogen can cause significant changes in global biogeochemical cycle [234]. The amount of carbon and nitrogen present in soil is an indicator of soil fertility which can have profound impact on global climate change [235]. The understory vegetation of any



ecosystem plays a significant role in the regulation of the carbon and nitrogen status of soil [236]. Understory vegetation of any ecosystem can also regulate soil moisture and temperature status of soil [237], microbial properties [238, 239] and C/N ratio [240, 241]. In a study over Eucalyptus plantations in south China Wu et al., [242] reported that removal of understory vegetation decreased the root biomass and organic matter input to the soil which together altered the structure of microbial community. Both carbon and nitrogen content of soil are modulated by the change of seasons, hence it is very important to understand the seasonal variation of the carbon cycle with respect to the changes in soil carbon and nitrogen for accurate prediction of future climate change [243]. Xie et al., [244] reported strong influence of seasons on soil carbon and nitrogen status in a temperate forest ecosystem.

#### **2.8.8.5. Soil temperature:**

Soil temperature is an important abiotic factor which controls the variation of soil respiration [245]. Positive correlations between soil respiration and temperature is reported from a Taiwanese forest plantation [246]. Using global dataset, Hursh et al., [247] also reported that soil temperature along with soil water content to be the most important drivers of the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the soil. Increase of temperature can stimulate the process of soil respiration by accelerating autotrophic respiration and by rapid heterotrophic decomposition of soil organic matter [248]. In some studies neutral or in fact negative impact of soil temperature on respiration has been observed which indicated the existence of multiple drives of soil respiration other than soil temperature, such as soil moisture [249, 250], change in microbial composition of soil [251, 252], C substrate availability and nutrient status [253]. The temperature dependence of respiration varies significantly in different ranges of temperature, in very warm condition the temperature sensitivity of soil respiration was found to be low [254]. Thus, still there are lots of prevailing uncertainties on the response of soil respiration with the ongoing climate warming [255, 256].

#### **2.9. Partitioning of net ecosystem exchange (NEE):**

Net ecosystem exchange is a terrestrial flux which represents the net exchange of CO<sub>2</sub> between atmosphere and biosphere [257]. The net CO<sub>2</sub> flux measured over an ecosystem is primarily the interplay between gross CO<sub>2</sub> uptake by an ecosystem (GPP) for photosynthesis and the ecosystem respiration (Re) [258]. The direct measurement of net

CO<sub>2</sub> flux over any ecosystem is possible with the help of eddy covariance method or it can be assessed from repeated inventories and can be estimated with the help of different models [259]. It is impossible to directly partition NEE into GPP and Re as during daytime both the fluxes mask each other in net CO<sub>2</sub> flux [260]. Therefore, many indirect methods have evolved for partitioning of NEE, out of which the flux partitioning algorithms proposed by Lasslop et al., [258] and Reichstein et al., [261] are the most common method and being used by global FLUXNET community.

### **2.9.1. Gross primary production:**

Gross primary production (GPP) is the basic and most important parameter which determines the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> assimilated by an ecosystem from the atmosphere through the process of photosynthesis [262]. Ecosystem researchers highlighted terrestrial GPP as the largest global CO<sub>2</sub> flux and its approximate magnitude has been reported as 123±8 Pg C year<sup>-1</sup>. In recent study by Ma et al., [263] the global annual GPP of the forests is estimated as 53.71± 4.83 Pg C yr<sup>-1</sup>. The GPP of forest ecosystems is higher compared to other ecosystems [264]. Therefore, accurate GPP estimation of forest ecosystems is necessary for accurate prediction of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentration [265]. The influence of terrestrial GPP on the atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentration level has been documented by some researchers [266, 267]. The available photosynthetically active radiation and leaf area index of the canopy influences the gross primary productivity of a forest ecosystem [268]. GPP is primarily a function of irradiation during the growing season along with presence of suitable temperature for plant growth [167]. Water availability in the ecosystems was also reported as one of the key drivers of the GPP [174]. Inter annual variations in climate parameters can cause significant changes in the gross primary productivity of forest ecosystems [269]. In the year 2003, the GPP over Europe was reported to reduce by about 30% as an effect of the heat wave occurred in that year [270]. In East Asia annual GPP values were reported to be modulated by average air temperature [271]. The productivity of temperate forest was reported to be positively affected by moderate increase of temperature [272]. In a study by Janssens et al., [273] over 18 European forest ecosystems reported mean annual gross primary productivity (GPP) of 1380 ± 330 g C m<sup>-2</sup> year<sup>-1</sup>. A distinct seasonal relationship between GPP and absorbed photosynthetically active radiation (APAR) over a cool temperate deciduous forest of Japan is reported by [131].

### **2.9.2. Ecosystem respiration:**

The amount of CO<sub>2</sub> released to the atmosphere by ecosystems is considered as the second largest flux after the ecosystem gross primary production [8]. Ecosystem respiration is about 70 to 85 % of annual GPP [274]. Ecosystem respiration is the key flux which controls the variation of net ecosystem exchange in forest ecosystems [101]. The accurate understanding of carbon dynamics of any ecosystem is possible only after identification of the biotic and abiotic processes which controls the CO<sub>2</sub> efflux of an ecosystem [275]. Respiration from soil is the principal component of total ecosystem respiration [167]. The total ecosystem respiration is the combination of soil respiration and aboveground autotrophic respiration [276]. The amount of CO<sub>2</sub> absorbed by the plants during photosynthesis stays inside the plants only for a small period of time and about 25-70 % of the captured carbon is immediately returned to the atmosphere by the process of autotrophic respiration [277]. Soil respiration or CO<sub>2</sub> efflux is the combination of belowground autotrophic respiration and heterotrophic respiration [50, 81]. The increase of total ecosystem respiration with temperature can give positive feedback to the global warming [217]. Ecosystem respiration of any forest ecosystem was reported to be a function of temperatures of soil and air [167, 278]. Many researchers found temperature and moisture conditions to be the major driver of soil and ecosystem respiration [279, 280, 281]. Studies from East Asia have revealed an existence of a clear exponential relation between mean annual air temperature and annual ecosystem respiration [271]. Carbon loss from an ecosystem can occur throughout the year and soil respiration is the dominating component [273]. Some studies revealed a close relationship between ecosystem respiration and gross primary production [273, 282]. In European forest ecosystems net ecosystem exchange of CO<sub>2</sub> is primarily determined by ecosystem respiration [101]. Sink strengths of different ecosystem are modulated by ecosystem respiration [108]. In Northern hemisphere the carbon cycle during the winter season is reported to be regulated by the ecosystem respiration [228]. Guidolotti et al., [206] carried out a study on carbon balance of Mediterranean beech forest of Italy and reported about strong seasonal variability of ecosystem respiration. They also reported about significant reduction in ecosystem respiration during summer drought.

### 2.9.3. Net ecosystem productivity:

Net ecosystem productivity (NEP) is the difference between gross primary productivity (GPP) and ecosystem respiration (Re) [283]. In an ecosystem for short time period NEP is approximately equal to negative of net ecosystem exchange (NEP = -NEE) [115]. The seasonal variation in the amplitude and phase of the net carbon flux of an ecosystem is determined by the interplay between assimilation and respiration [167]. Conventionally positive NEP represents carbon gain by an ecosystem whereas negative NEP is an indicator of carbon loss by the ecosystem [115]. The role of forest ecosystems in the regulation of global and regional carbon dynamics is very important due to its large carbon storage capacity and higher productivity [284]. Climatic impact, length of the growing season, species composition and age might change a forest from a carbon sink to carbon source [74, 285, 286]. In a comparative analysis of annual NEP among different forest ecosystems of East Asia, Yamamoto et al., [287] reported annual NEP in the range 2 to 8 t C ha<sup>-1</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup>. According to Yamamoto et al., [287] the difference in annual NEP among different forests was caused by variation in mean annual temperature and tree species. In southern England Thomas et al., [288] estimated cumulative NEP over broadleaved deciduous woodland and reported as 1.2 Mg C ha<sup>-1</sup> year<sup>-1</sup>. Ross et al., [289] reported that change in rainfall pattern could lead to the change in productivity of the forest ecosystems of northern hemisphere. In a study over 26 different forests of Canada, Coursolle et al., [290] found that NEP of matured forests were mainly controlled by climate whereas in young forests NEP was a function of canopy leaf area index and climate. They also reported that mature forests act as nearly carbon neutral. The inter annual variability of NEP was reported to be influenced by various factors such as amount of rainfall during spring season [291], phenology of the land surface [292], temperature of air [293], drought during summer season [294], various disturbances in the forest [285] and variability in CO<sub>2</sub> flux phenology in autumn [295]. In Canada Zha et al., [296] made a study over 18 different temperate and boreal forests stands to study and interpret the variations of NEP among different forest types. They found strong influence of species on the net productivity of the ecosystems. The annual net productivity of boreal forests were approximately half as compared to temperate stands and NEP is reported to be controlled by absorbed photosynthetically active radiation, LAI, soil nitrogen, annual air temperature and annual rainfall amount [296]. Highest NEP of 328 g C m<sup>-2</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup> by a Korean pine plantation ecosystem followed by 311.9 g C m<sup>-2</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup> by an

old growth forest ecosystem has been observed by Cai et al., [222] in a study of NEP among different temperate forest types of Northern China. In a recent study over tropical Indian Mangrove forest, annual NEP of  $249 \pm 20 \text{ g C m}^{-2} \text{ year}^{-1}$  is reported by Rodda et al., [115].

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