

Assessment of Forest Resource Exploitation in the Rural Communities of District Jhelum

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Abstract : Forest resources are deteriorating and experiencing decline around the globe due to unsustainable use and over exploitation. The present study was an attempt to determine the relationship between human activities, forest resource utilization, extraction methods and practices of forest resource exploitation in the district Jhelum of Pakistan. For this purpose, primary sources of data were used which were collected from 8 villages through structured questionnaire and tabulated in Microsoft Excel 365 and SPSS 22 was used for multiple linear regression analysis. The results revealed that farming, wood cutting, animal husbandry and agro-forestry were the major occupations in the study area. Most commonly used resources included timber 26%, fuelwood 25% and fodder 19%. Methods used for resource extraction included gathering 49%, plucking 34% trapping 11% and cutting 6%. Population growth, increased demand of fuelwood and land conversion were the main reasons behind forest degradation. Results for multiple linear regression revealed that Forest based activities, sources of energy production, methods used for wood harvesting and resource extraction and use of fuelwood for energy production contributed significantly towards extensive forest resource exploitation with p value <0.5 within the study area. The study suggests that effective measures should be taken by forest department to control the unsustainable use of forest resources by stringent management interventions and awareness campaigns in Jhelum district.

Keywords : forest resource, biodiversity, exploitation, human activities

Conference Title : ICFB 2022 : International Conference on Forestry and Biodiversity

Conference Location : Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Conference Dates : November 10-11, 2022