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Forest covers upgradation and degradation in Maharashtra state: A statistical analysis

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Introduction: Maharashtra is one of the all over developed state in India. It is western part of India with a long coast along Arabian Sea. It has an area of 307713 sq. km which is 9.36% of the country's total area. It lies between latitude 15° 35' and 22° 02' North and longitude 72° 36 and 80° 54' East physiographically, the state can be divided into five distinct region, namely, Deccan plateau, Central highlands Eastern Chhotanagpur plateau, Eastern Ghats and coastal plains, Krishna, Bhima, Godavari, Tapi-Purna and Wardha-Wainganga are important rivers of the State. This paper attempt to the statistically analyze up-gradation and degradation of forest cover on the land of Maharashtra. The state has a tropical monsoon climate with mean annual temperature ranging between 25 °C and 27.5 °C and average rainfall between 1600 mm and 2000 mm. The total geographical area is 36, 07,713 sq. km, 6 revenue division,36 District, 355 tehsils, and 5 towns as per the Census of 2011. The total population of the state is 96.87 million of which the rural population constituted 57.6 %. The population density is 365 persons per Sq Km. the scheduled tribes constitute 8.9 % of the population. The state has livestock population of 35955000, which has marginally increased since the census of 1971. The recorded forest area of the state is 61573.03 Sq Km reserved forests constitute 83.10%, protected forests 10.84% and unclassed forests 6.04% of the total forest area. In terms of forest canopy density classes, the state has 8712 Sq Km very dense forest 20747 Sq Km moderately dense forest and 21169 Sq Km open forest as per the ISFR 2013 & 2015. Forest area decreased from 63,544 Sq Km to 61,724 Sq Km as per the census of 1960-61 and 2016-17, it means mostly degradation of forest day by day from the decade of 1961 to 2017 (Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2017-18).

Methodology: The study was carried out during November 2006 to June 2007. Primary Data was collected by field evaluations, site inspection, interviews, group discussion with affected farmers and plotting the information on GIS. Secondary data consisted of information from the records of Forest Department and district census books. In Maharashtra, a survey was carried out of all descent points from plateau to the coastal plains over the Western Ghats escarpment and three potential descent points were identified. Data on compensation cases from both the districts were obtained from the forest department. The information generated from above methods was analyzed using GIS to understand the spatial and temporal dynamics of elephants in Maharashtra.

Biography

Deepak Kamble has completed his BA/BSc and MA/MSc (Geography) in the Department of Geography, Shivaji University, Kolhapur, (Maharashtra) India and the degrees was awarded in the year 1987 and 1989, respectively. He has completed his PhD degree in Urban Geography from Shivaji University, Kolhapur, Maharashtra, India. In addition, he is in possession of the Associate Professor in Geography. Since 1989, he is working as a Head of the Department of Geography, in D. K. A.S. C. College, Ichalkaranji, Kolhapur, Maharashtra, India. He is a Member of the Standing Committee of Shri Swami Vivekanand Education Society, Kolhapur. He is also coordinator of IIRS/ISRO, Deharadun in the institute of college. To his credit, he has published 15 research papers and attended 63 National and International conferences, seminar, symposia, workshops participation, paper presentation, publications and training programs on various aspects. He has guided for MPhil and PhD students.

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