



Importance of non-timber forest produce for subsistence and income generation in the life of local people. Case of Bandhavgarh National Park, India.



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Purpose of Study

Considering the importance that non-timber forest produce (NTFP) play in the life of the people in rural areas, especially in the tropics and the sub tropics, the term, minor forest produce, which is often used for NTFP, is a misnomer. In a country like India, which has more than half its population in rural areas and a large tribal population reliant on forest produce for their sustenance, NTFPs play a major role. This study attempted to assess the degree and importance of NTFP use and its role in the survival of the people through a case study of people living in Bandhavgarh National Park (BNP), India. A field study was conducted in BNP in 2000-2001 in all the villages lying inside the National Park. A total of 155 households comprising 31% of the total Park population were sampled through the use of household questionnaires, PRA exercises and group discussions.

Bandhavgarh at a glance

Bandhavgarh National Park is located in the central state of Madhya Pradesh and presently covers an area of 448.84 km². Because the area was initially the private hunting ground of the princely state of Rewa, it was protected from poaching and illicit felling until the abolition of princely states in 1947. It is not only an area of historical significance, but also the area with the highest density of tigers in the world. Tala, an area covering 105 km² was first declared a National Park in 1968 (Old park area) and extended to cover an additional 343.84 km² (extension area), in 1982. A total area of 1,161.471 km², encompassing the Park, was given the status of Tiger Reserve under Project Tiger, in 1993.



■ Old Park area
■ Extension areas

The old Park area contained one village, which was relocated in 1972, while six villages and one illegal settlement are located within the extension area of the Park (Khitauli, Magdhi and Kallwah):

- The seven settlements are made up of 503 households with a total population of 2309 (1991 census).
- The population is predominantly composed of tribals (62 percent).



Sources of fuelwood collection

Source	Number of Sampled Households (n=154)	Percentage
Collected exclusively from the Park	152	98.70
Bought from others in the village	1	0.64
Collected from own land	1	0.64

Contribution from different sources of income to average household income in the Park in 2000 (US \$)

Name of Activity	Income Contribution from Sale	Percentage and Rank	Income Contribution from Sale and Self Consumption	
			from Sale and Self Consumption	Percentage and Rank
Agricultural Produce	1.94	1.94 (5) ²	87.52	19.71 (2)
NTFP	44.11	25.97 (1)	54.22	13.79 (3)
Livestock Rearing	35.18	20.71 (2)	206.57	46.53 (1)
Work for the Forestry Department	44.11	25.97 (1)	44.11	9.93 (4)
Work Outside the Park	12.96	7.63 (4)	12.96	2.91 (6)
Other Alternative Sources of Income	31.51	18.55 (3)	31.51	7.09 (5)
Total Income	169.81		443.89	

Source: Field Survey, 2000-2001.

¹The value of self consumption is computed at market prices.

² Rank of different activities in income contribution of households.

Non Timber Forest Products and its importance for the people

Other than timber, all other products available in the Park, including fruits, nuts, berries, honey, seed, grasses, gums, medicinal plants, flowers and fuelwood are collectively referred to as non-timber forest produce (NTFP). Currently, NTFP collection is banned from the Tala range (old Park area), and except for *tendu patta* (leaf used for making Indian cigarettes), allowed only for self-consumption in the rest of the Park. However, the survey showed that households also collected NTFP for sale.

≈97% of the surveyed households collected different NTFPs from the Park.



Different NTFPs collected by the people

Local/ English Name of NTFP collected	Scientific name
Tendu patta	<i>Diospyros melanoxylon</i>
Mahua	<i>Madhuca indica</i>
Amla	<i>Emblica officinalis</i>
Char	<i>Buchanania Lanzas</i>
Tendu fruit	Fruit of <i>Diospyros melanoxylon</i>
Jamun	<i>Syzygium cumini</i>
Mango	<i>Mangifera indica (L.)</i>
Ber	<i>Zizyphus mauritiana</i>
Dori	Seed of <i>Madhuca indica</i>
Sal seeds	Seed of <i>Shorea robusta</i>
Medicinal Plants	-
Honey	-

≈Wood is used for cooking as well as heating purposes.

≈Wood is also used as crop protection measure.

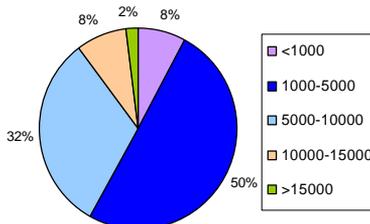
≈All households make agricultural implements from wood and for house construction and repair

≈Sale of NTFP constituted the most important income source for the people.

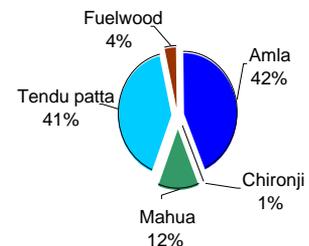
≈Sale of NTFP constitutes the most important source of income for the surveyed households along with working for the forest department.



Estimated fuelwood consumption per household in 2000 (in kg) and percentage (households)



Percentage income contribution from sale of different sources of NTFP to total NTFP income



Conclusion

As the extension area is a proposed national park, NTFP collection was banned from it in 1990. The government was, however, forced to repermit the collection of NTFP for self consumption in the area in view of the importance of NTFP for people living in and near the Park. The field study revealed that NTFP is not only an important food source for people and their livestock but also contributes substantially to household cash income. The majority of the sampled households (97%) collected NTFP. All the households collecting NTFP also sold it, though there is a ban on sale of NTFP. Overall, sale of NTFP constitutes the most important source (26%) of cash income for the households, and the third most important source of total income (13.8%). On average each household made US\$ 44 from the sale of NTFP in 2000. This points towards a heavy reliance of the people on the Park and its resources for their survival. Any efforts on the part of the government to lessen people's reliance on the Park and its resources, should be attempted only after provision of alternatives to the current resource use.

The information provided in the poster forms part of a PhD thesis titled 'People- Park Interaction. A case of Bandhavgarh National park, India'.

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