

Deforestation of Forests in Iran

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of forestry and rang department specialists in Iran regarding effective factors in deforestation of forests. The population of this study included 250 forest specialists in Iran. A stratified random sample of 135 specialists was selected. The research design used for this study utilized descriptive survey research methodology. A questionnaire was developed to assess the effective factors in protection of forests. Major conclusions were that should be provided vehicles for protection personnel; that Monitoring on the cooperatives and there are Lack of near cooperation between forest sector with judicial and disciplinary power. Therefore necessary that we work on the effective factors that impact on the deforestation of forests.

KEY WORDS: Deforestation, Forest, rangeland, protection.

INTRODUCTION

Tropical deforestation and degradation of forests in many parts of the world are negatively affecting the availability of forest goods and services. While forest area in developed countries has stabilized and is slightly increasing overall, deforestation has continued in developing countries. The estimated net annual change in forest area worldwide during the past decade was -9.4 million hectares; representing the difference between the estimated annual rates of deforestation of 14.6 million hectares and the estimated annual rate of forest area increase of 5.2 million hectares (FAO, 2001).

The causes of forest degradation are varied. Some, such as overexploitation of forest products, can be avoided or minimized by sound forest planning and management, whereas the effects of others, such as natural disasters, can be mitigated by contingency planning. Factors responsible for this loss are the conversion of forestland to produce food for a burgeoning world population, especially in developing countries (FAO, 2000; Swanson, 1997), as well as logging for timber and fuel. These are legitimate human needs and uses of forestland. But, lack of knowledge, and legal and social systems often encourage excessive, non-sustainable land clearing resulting in long-term adverse social and environmental impacts (Jones, 1997).

The forestry situation in Iran is no different than other vulnerable areas in the world. There are an estimated 12 millions hectares of forest in Iran, while there are 18 millions hectares forests in 1950. At present only %11 of this forests are commercial. Statistics show that in one year decrease about 12245 hectares forest in Iran (Anonymous, 2001).

This forest threatened by unsound forest management activities including inappropriate productivity (too much) by government companies private sector and cooperative, intensive agricultural operations, indiscriminate forest activities and timber use, Lack of vehicles for foresters, Smuggling of wood, Lack of near cooperation between forest sector with judicial and disciplinary power, Lack of adequate protection personnel, Changing forestlands to agricultural fields, Presence of livestock in forests, Continuous changes in policies, legislation and programs, Lack of education level among personnel, Threat of pests and diseases to plantations, Making roads inside forests, Lack of participation by forest dwellers in protection of forests, Lack of politicians serious belief on the protection of forest, cutting trees by forest dwellers, changing forestlands to agricultural fields, happening of fire and other factors (Anonymous, 1996; Khosrowshahi and Ghavamie, 2008; Farhadian, 2000; Abedi, 2004).

Overview of the process of destruction of forests in the country shows by the indiscriminate harvesting, timber smuggling, flood, drought, fire, uncontrolled grazing livestock, landfills in the forests, poor quality construction and protection of the main causes rapid destruction of the field Iran is forested. (khabbaz, 2010)

According FAO (2000), most forests in the developing world are on land on which indigenous groups and rural communities depend for their livelihood. Therefore, it is essential that they be involved in forest management programs. In a similar vein, Sharma (1999) emphasized that attitude of people influence how they manage and use forests. In a Report of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Forestry Development and Key Events presented to the Twelfth Session of the Near East Forestry Commission, it was stated that while forests in different regions of the country important, those of the Caspian Sea Region (Mazandaran and Gilan provinces) are the only economically productive forests in Iran.

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PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of forestry and rang department specialists in Iran regarding effective factors in Deforestation of forests. Specific objective of the study were to: Determine factors perceived by forestry and range department specialists that contribute deforestation.

Population

The population of this study included 250 forest specialists in Sari Township. A stratified random sample of 135 specialists was selected.

Research Design and Data Analysis

The research design used for this study utilized descriptive survey research methodology. A questionnaire was developed to assess the effective factors in protection of forests. The questionnaire covered two areas: these areas including effective factors in protection of forests, effective factors in deforestation of forests. In these two areas a 5-point likert-type scale was used to assess expert's self-perceived knowledge.

Content and face validity was determined by faculty and graduate students in the department of agricultural extension and education at Tarbiat Modarres University. The instrument was pilot tested with 10 forestry specialists in the forestry and range organization under ministry of agriculture two weeks prior to the study, and needed modifications were made. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients ranged 0.83.

RESULTS

Objective

Table 1 shoes the rank important of 18 factors that important contributors to deforestation as perceived by specialists. The top tree factors that important contributors to deforestation were lack of vehicles for foresters, inappropriate productivity (too much) from forest by cooperatives and struggling of wood. Happening of flood, lack of careful programming for productivity of forests and lack of politician's serious belief on the protection of forests were considered to be the least important factors.

Table1: Rank of factors contributing to deforestation as perceived by specialists

Rank	Factors	Mean	sd
1	Lack of vehicles for foresters	4.06	1.00
2	Inappropriate productivity (too much) from forest by cooperatives	4.02	1.03
3	Smuggling of wood	4.01	1.09
4	Inappropriate use of forests by rural people that living in near of forests	3.60	1.10
5	Lack of controlling factories that relate to wood	3.59	1.14
6	Lack of stable policy in executive and developmental task	3.59	1.17
7	Need of forest dwellers for wood fuel	3.58	1.10
8	Cutting tree brach for feed livestock	3.50	1.20
9	Inappropriate productivity (too much) from forest by private sector organizations	3.49	1.06
10	Happening of fire	3.49	1.06
11	Lack of appropriate accessing executional sectors to forests	3.46	1.16
12	Lack of knowledge regarding pastures, appropriate land use and grazing among forest dwellers with livestock	3.42	1.16
13	Threat of pests and diseases to plantations	3.35	1.14
14	Making roads inside forests	3.31	1.04
15	Lack of plans adoption with forest dwellers needs	3.31	1.22
16	Lack of politicians serious belief on the protection of forest	3.20	1.19
17	Lack of careful programming for productivity of forests	3.17	1.18
18	Happening of flood	3.15	1.09

likert-type scale: 1= absolutely opposite 2= opposite 3= rather agree 4= agree 5= absolutely agree

Conclusion

An adequate number of protection personnel are needed that protect forests. Also should be provided vehicles for protection personnel. This conclusion is supported by the finding that specialists viewed lack of vehicle foresters and lack of adequate protection personnel. Assessing human power is Sari Township showed that there are in lieu of 3000 hectares just one forest specialist? Also there are in this region about 363 protection personnel which this amount contain 29% total of specialists in sari. region in other words there are in lieu of 1770 hectares forests just one protection personnel (reporting of)

Monitoring on the cooperatives and other company which practice in ground of forest is also necessary and important in forest protection and conservation. This conclusion is supported by the finding that specialist felt that an effective factor which contributes deforestation of forests is to inappropriate productivity (too much) from forest by cooperatives.

Legal and organizational considerations are impacting forest protection and conservation. This conclusion is supported by the finding that specialists perceived that making foresters live in the forest area, and lack of near cooperation between forest sector with judicial and disciplinary power would be effective measures in protecting forests.

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