



RESEARCH ARTICLE

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## Assesing the household fuel wood extraction and consumption situation in rural Kashmir, India

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**ABSTRACT :** The study examined the extraction and consumption pattern of fuel wood, socio-economic and forest resource characteristics and their relationship with extraction and consumption of fuel wood in rural Kashmir. Sample villages and representative households were selected using multi-stage random sampling for field study through structured interviews and personal observations. Correlation and multiple regression analysis was carried out to establish the relationship between socio-economic and forest resource parameters and fuel wood consumption. Results show that the total extraction of fuel wood in the sample villages was 224.64 tons annum<sup>-1</sup>, which is mostly consumed in cooking (45.60 %). Of the total extraction, 26.17 per cent was secured from forests and rest (73.83%) from other sources. All the independent variables put together had contributed to 78.60 per cent ( $R^2 = 0.786$ ) variation on the fuel wood consumption and the key variables viz., family composition, size of land holding, housing status, frequency of forest visits and extent of agroforestry/ homestead plantation had significant contribution in influencing the fuel wood consumption. The fuel wood flow from forests to the sample villages is excessive as compared to the national estimates, creating threats to the biodiversity conservation and ecological stability of the adjoining forests of the area. The over-utilization of forest biomass by the local populace is leading to a depletion of forest resources and diminished biomass productivity, which in turn induce socio-economic and livelihood stress. Therefore, some alternative interventions are required to be implemented efficiently to keep pace with the current development and future challenges.

**KEY WORDS :** Fuel wood, Extraction, Consumption, Socio-economic characteristics, Forest resource characteristics

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