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LANDSCAPE MAPPING AND TREE DIVERSITY ASSESSMENT OF PANGI VALLEY: A REMOTE TRIBAL AREA OF HIMACHAL PRADESH IN WESTERN HIMALAYA, INDIA

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Abstract

Pangi valley in Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh is one of the remote tribal areas in Indian western Himalaya. The plant resources in its landscapes are flourishing under least anthropogenic conditions. For social upliftment of the tribals in this area, a number of developmental activities are being implemented by the government. A study was conducted for mapping of its landuse/landcover using satellite remote sensing to identify major forested landscapes in the region. It was followed by a detailed random stratified sampling of the forested landscapes for phytosociological estimation of its tree species. The 21.97 % of study area was estimated under forests followed by Scrublands and Grassy meadows (18.24 %). Majority of area (54.05 %) was Snow and Scree slopes. Among the forests, maximum area was occupied by Mixed Broad Leaved Forest LSE type (36.08%) followed by Cedrus deodara (26.94%) and Betula utilis (18.07%) forest LSE types. These species, owing to immense medicinal properties and value for their economic utilization, feature in threatened and endangered category list of plants. It is, therefore, recommended that the developmental activities may be implemented in scientific way, which may not pose threat to bioresources in this region.