

## Forest Biomass and Tribal Economy: A case study of Daitari Hill Ranges of Keonjhar District, Odisha, India.

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**Abstract:** A case study was carried out in six tribal dominated villages of Daitari hill ranges of Keonjhar district, Odisha to assess the dependence of tribals on forest biomass in the form of minor forest products during study period 2013-14. The study shows that the local tribes collect different types of minor forest products from the nearby forest during the harvest season. An analysis by the data reveals that the minor forest products play a significant role in tribal economy.

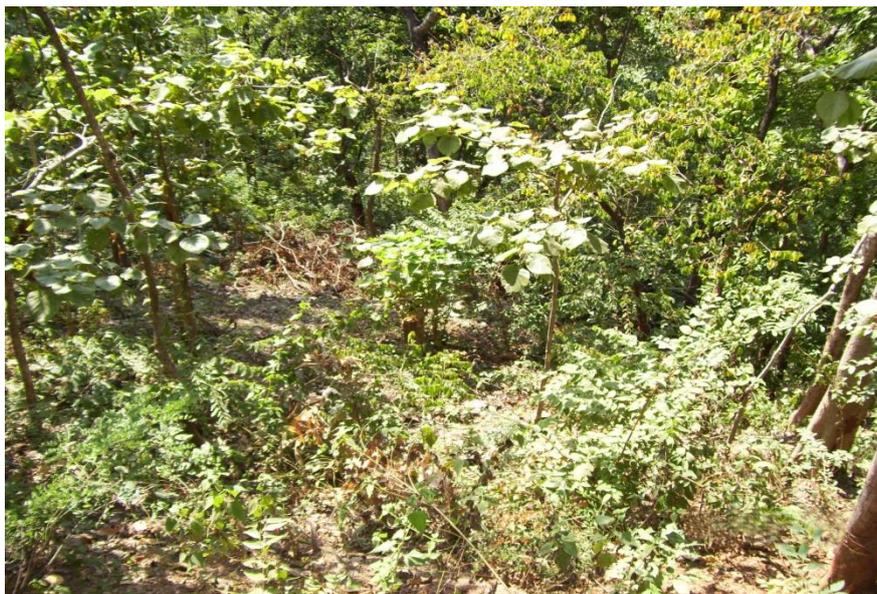
**Keywords:** Forest biomass, Minor Forest product, Tribal economy

### INTRODUCTION:

The state of Odisha is rich with natural forests of varied flora and fauna. The forest is the ultimate source of energy to pull on the forest based ecosystem full filling the basic needs such as food, fodder, fuel and minor forest products. The minor forest products of different types are the chief source of economy of the state. Forest and tribals have been linked to each other since time immemorial and the economy of the tribals mainly depends on forest and forest products.

### STUDY AREA

The study area includes six tribal dominated villages of Daitari Hill ranges located between 21°5'-22°10' N latitude and 85°45'-85°50' E longitude which fall within Deogan and Sukinda ranges of Rabana Reserve Forest of Keonjhar district of Odisha. The forest type is mainly tropical dry deciduous where the soil is mainly redish brown in colour and sandy loam in texture with annual rain fall during the year 2013-14 is 1487.7mm. The climate is characterised by very hot summer and cool winter.



### MATERIAL AND METHOD:

The study of forest biomass in the form of minor forest products and the economy of forest dwellers of six tribal villages i.e. Mundasahi, Majhisahi, Champanagar, Hurlabahali, Daharsahi and Bandhasahi of Daitari hill ranges was carried out during July 2013 to August 2014 by using methods adopted by Nisanka and Misra (1990 a and 1990 b).

A suitable questionnaires cum scheduled was prepared. The village wise annual production, consumption, import and export of minor forest products data was collected by taking the weight of the material during the harvest season. The collected data analysed and the per capita income from minor forest product can be calculated by taking the standard price fixed by the government of Odisha for minor forest products.



## RESULT AND DISCUSSION:

The minor forest products are mostly collected by women and children from nearby forest during the harvest season (Table-I) both inside and outside the system boundary free of cost besides the labour involved in collection and carriage. Which were exported partly or completely after minor processing. The total annual production of minor forest product was 82.15 kg cap<sup>-1</sup> and the total annual income from minor forest product was Rs. 411.32 cap<sup>-1</sup>. (Table-II).

The minor forest products mostly include Mahua Flower, Mahua Seeds, Tamarind Fruits, Siali Leaves, Siali Fibres, Sal Leaves, Hill Broom, Beleric myrobalam, Chebalic myrobalam, Goose berry, Kendu leaves, Honey, Fruits and Vegetables.

The per capita productivity of different minor forest products was highest in Mundasahi i.e. Mahua flower(19.64kg), Mahua seeds(6.35kg), Tamarind fruit(9.88kg), Chebalic myrobalan (2.58kg), Beleric myrobalan (2.35kg), Goose berry (4.47kg), Sal leaves(9.88kg), Fruits and Vegetables (24.94kg) where as Siali leaves (7.47kg), Siali fibres (5.45kg), Hill Broom (7.47kg), Kendu leaves(5.74kg), andHoney (0.74kg), was the

highest per capita productivity was observed in Daharsahi.

The per capita productivity was observed lowest in Bandhasahib i.e. Mahua flower(10.62kg), Mahua seeds(3.21kg), Tamarind fruit(5.00kg), Chebalic myrobalan (1.04kg), Beleric myrobalan (1.18kg), Goose berry (1.25kg), Sal leaves (5.62kg), Fruits and Vegetables (14.86kg) Siali leaves (4.51kg), Siali fibres (3.26kg), Hill Broom (4.02kg), Kendu leaves(3.81kg), andHoney (0.34kg) respectively.

## CONCLUSION:

Minor forest products play an important role in economic status of the tribals as well as the economy of the state. The production of minor forest products were directly involved in energy dynamics of the ecosystem. Minor forest products can fulfil various necessities in our day to day life. Therefore conservation and maintenance of existing forests and raising economically important plant species in the unused lands are highly essential to conserve the forest ecosystem as well as the tribal economy.

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