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Human effect on deforestation
– a case study in the Arasbaran forests, Northwest of Iran

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Key words: Arasbaran, Village, Family, Culture, Deforestation, Education.

Abstract: This case study wants to show deforestation rate and economic impacts in a forest area in North West of Iran. Iran has five major forest ecosystems one of which is *Arasbaran*, which has a unique fauna and flora. This site includes 13 basins. In this study we use a change detection map made from satellite data from 1989-2002 in order to show the degradation sites in one of the basins. We did also an inventory of the study area according to two parameters, one is the education level and the second one is the economic condition in families and inflation rate. Another parameter is the management method. The inventory site is the whole basin. We studied ten villages, geographically dispersed with a random sampling method and a questionnaire for each family. Data analysis shows that there are 15, up to 35 families in each village, with populations from 71 up to 193 inhabitants. The annual average income of the families ranges from 1200 up to 3900 USD and the deforestation percent from 10 up to 21%. Results explain that deforestation rate has a significant relation with education levels, economic condition and management methods. Also the results show that the education level has a significant relation with economic condition and average income. Finally we can explain that the forest can be affected directly by poor people and families, so deforestation rate may be growing in the future.

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