

FORESTS FOR PROSPERITY: IMPROVING FOREST DATA AND ANALYTICS IN NEPAL FOR INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY REDUCTION

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Government of Nepal
Ministry of Forests and Environment



Government of Nepal
National Statistics Office



GLOBAL PROGRAM
ON SUSTAINABILITY
Making Nature Count for People & Planet

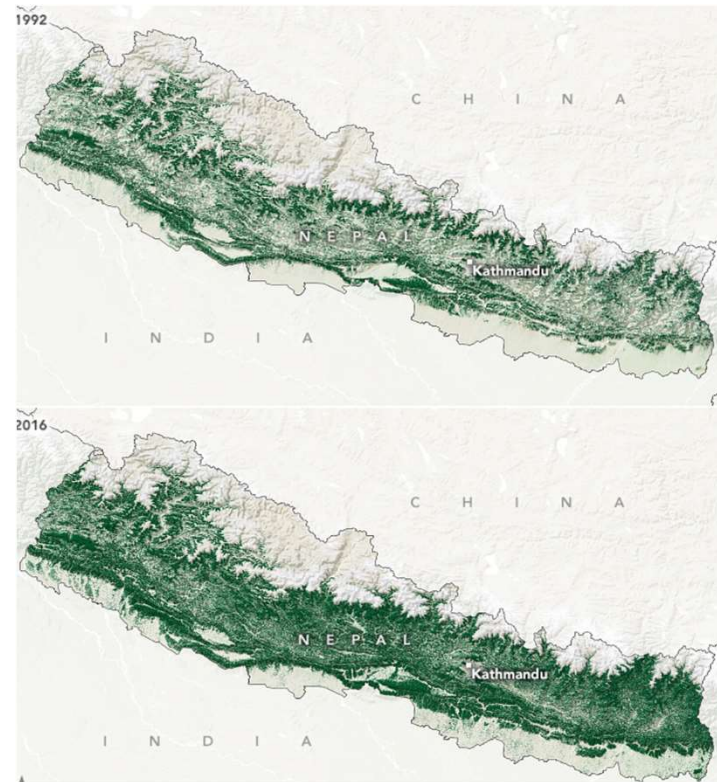


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Forest cover and poverty have improved

- Impressive increases in forest cover; 45% in 2019 (Acharya et al 2022; MoFE, 2022)
- Forest cover increased and poverty reduction
 - Community forestry for public forests (Oldekop et al 2019; Acharya et al 2023; Libois et al 2022)
 - Out-migration (Li et al 2022; Chhetri et al. 2023): remittances reduce dependency on public forests.



Other changes have been observed

- Increase in tree-planting on private agricultural lands (land use changes)
- Remittances come in; labor in short supply
- Are forests still important for livelihoods, poverty and inclusive development?
 - Public forests (govt. managed/protected; community forest; leasehold, religious; collaborative)
 - Private 'forests': groves of trees on private agricultural land (private afforestation/tree planting)



Large-sample socioeconomic surveys that also deal with environmental amenities

- Not done often due to several factors:
 - Technical complexities
 - Different jurisdictions (in ministries and WB)
 - Takes time
 - Takes money
 - Takes coordination
- When done, can be very informative for guiding investments, policy, dialog
 - If forest products are not traded, GDP will not capture them



4th Nepal Living Standards Survey (3rd Wave)

- Nationally representative sample of 3,204 households
- Main module: demographic, income, expenditure, assets, etc.
- Forest module:
 - Dependency (and change in) on forest products from public and private forests
- Examine
 - Importance of public forests and private treelands in welfare of households
 - Inclusiveness (economic and social)

Many households depend on forest products

(N =3,204 households)	Nationally representative
Access public forests for NTFPs	37%
Access private trees for NTFPs	48%
Access either public forests or private trees	66%

Note: estimates adjusted for clustering at the *psu* level; weighted using household weights. Estimates nationally representative.



Females collect forest products

(N = 3,204)	Firewood collection (% hhs)	Other forest products (% hhs)
Use male hh labor	27%	22%
Use female hh labor	45%	40%

Note: estimates adjusted for clustering at the *psu* level; weighted using household weights. Estimates nationally representative.



Dependency on products is high

- Public forests
 - Firewood (45%); grass (22%); litter (17%)
 - Other products are food items, medicinal plants
 - Value of products ~17% of food consumption value per household
- Private forests
 - Firewood (45%); grass (30%), litter (27%)
 - Other products are food items, bamboo
 - Value of products ~18% of food consumption value per household

Note: estimates adjusted for clustering at the *psu* level; weighted using household weights. Estimates nationally representative.



Forest use by p.c consumption expd. quintiles suggest equity in access

N = 3,204 households

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Total
Don't access any	0.05	≈ 0.07	≈ 0.11	≪ 0.25	≪ 0.52	1.00
Access public forests only	0.20	≈ 0.24	≈ 0.30	≫ 0.18	≫ 0.09	1.00
Access private trees only	0.22	≈ 0.21	≈ 0.23	≈ 0.22	≫ 0.12	1.00
Access both	0.23	≈ 0.25	≈ 0.24	> 0.19	≫ 0.10	1.00

- Larger share of hhs. in higher quintile of p.c. con. expd. dont access any forest >> sign of GRID
- Larger shares of hhs. in q1-q3 access public forests than in q4-q5 >> progressive use of shared resources
- Larger shares of hhs. In q1-q4 access forest products from their private resources >> 'rich' and 'poor' households are creating environmental amenities
- Larger shares of hhs. in q1-q3 access forest products from both than in q4-q5 >> progressive use and creation of resources

Forests are important safety nets for the poorest

In the last 5 years, how has your household's consumption of forest products changed?
 Plotted against **per-capita consumption quintiles** generated by NLSS

	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Q5
INCREASED	0.18	>	0.15	>	0.10	>	0.07	>	0.04
DECREASED	0.35	≈	0.36	≈	0.35	>	0.24	>>	0.14
NO CHANGE	0.28		0.31		0.31		0.26		0.14
NOT APPLICABLE	0.19	≈	0.18	<	0.23	<<	0.43	<<	0.68
	(sum =1)		(sum = 1)		(sum = 1)		(sum =1)		(sum =1)

Note: estimates adjusted for clustering at the *psu* level; weighted using household weights. Estimates nationally representative.



Policy Implications

- Forests are important (esp) for energy needs; have high 'value' despite not traded
- Public forests show progressiveness; cater to economically/socially vulnerable; safety-nets
 - Progressive in access by economic status; equity by social status
 - *Would 'commercial development' of opportunity affect these impressive achievements?*
 - *Building on the institution of comm. For. User groups; hw they are managed etc. (develop)*
- Private forests are an emerging asset by ALL households (esp. remittance/women headed)
 - Help increase forest cover
 - Support sustenance of rural households; ease pressure from public resources
 - *Case for supporting private activity to raise value and incomes*
 - *Tree mix (cash vs. products to satisfy males and females)*
 - *Local saw mills*
 - *Regulations related to private land*
 - *Extension for afforestation (not available in Nepal)*





THANK YOU



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