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Resource Dependence and Local People's Attitudes Towards Conservation – A Case Study of Katarniaghat Terai Ecosystem

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ABSTRACT

The Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary (KWS) in Terai ecosystem is under heavy biotic pressure due to resource use by local communities. This paper examines extent of resource dependence and attitudes of local communities towards KWS. There are 10 villages within KWS and another 64 villages on the periphery within a radius of 5 km of the sanctuary boundary. 369 households were sampled in 15 villages (2 inside and 13 outside the sanctuary). The pattern of dependence differed for the households sampled outside KWS. Agriculture was the main occupation both within and outside the KWS. Majority of households agreed that KWS should be given protection. Households outside KWS however, showed less support for protection to animals. Alternatives should be provided to local people for reducing dependence on KWS. These families should also be involved in conservation oriented employment generating schemes in order to address the issue of unemployment. Extraction of resources should be regulated by creating zones within KWS so as to curtail the impact of biotic dependence on the PA.

KEYWORDS Resource Dependence; Conservation Attitudes; Protected Area

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