

Contribution of Forest Products to the Nutritional Value and Livelihoods of the Baiga and Pahadi Korwa Primitive Tribal Groups in Dindori Forests of Madhya Pradesh and Sarguja Forests of Chhattisgarh

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The study focused on identification of NWFP species used as the food, nutritional values, cultural and socio-economic linkages, seasonal procurement pattern, and constraints in use by the primitive tribal groups in interior forest areas of the Eastern Madhya Pradesh.

The main objectives of the project were:

- To identify NWFP species used as food in this region and their nutritional values.
- Socioeconomic and cultural linkages with the region and used as food and their impact on the tribal household economy.
- Seasonal procurement pattern of forest food and constraint of their use.
- Record local perception of sustainable harvesting practices, for the NWFP food species, and its comparison with the account of harvesting practices employed for these species.

The study reported that Forest produce like fruits and berries are collected and consumed by children throughout the year. Other forest produces like vegetable leaves and other food items are collected by adults and children for domestic consumption as well as for selling in the market. The purchase of food items is limited and villagers have at times no option but to dwell in forests for survival, especially in the lean seasons. Malnutrition among children is a common phenomenon in the project area. Weight height for age criterion was used to calculate the nutrition status of children. The percentage of malnourished (underweight) children is high. Results for adults were not different signifying a inadequate diet lacking both in quality as well as in quantity.