

**Willingness to Spend Labour Hour for Biodiversity Conservation:
A Case Study with Special Reference to Village Forest Dwellers
and Encroachers in Assam**

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ABSTRACT Loss of biodiversity has been considered as a major threat for mankind and declining biodiversity is burning issue in the north-eastern region of India, especially in Assam. Some of the threats to biodiversity in the region are deforestation and forest degradation, expansion of agriculture and illegal extraction of forest. The *Forest Rights Act* 2006 has been passed by the parliament of India with dual aims of protecting the right of forest dwellers and at the same time this *Act* tries to procure the involvement of forest dwellers to protect forest. The main objective of the paper is to determine the factors which affect willingness to pay in terms of labour hour for biodiversity conservation in Assam. 190 households were interviewed from two village forests and two encroached villages of *Sonitpur* and *Golaghat* districts of Assam during April and May of 2010. Respondents in village forest are more willing to pay than that of encroacher's village. Sex, age, literacy of the respondents and size of land holdings were found to be significantly related to spending labour hours for biodiversity conservation programme.