

Human Modification of the Tropical Rain Forest of Nicobar Islands: Indicators From Land Use Land Cover Mapping

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ABSTRACT Tropical forests are pre-disposed to human induced modification throughout the world. It has serious implications at local, regional and the global levels. Repercussions are more severe in the island ecosystems since they are ecologically vulnerable and fragile. The present paper attempts to investigate the linkages between socio-economic drivers and the consequent modification of the landscape in terms of forest loss, in the Nicobar group of islands based on indicators derived from land use land cover mapping of the satellite remote sensing data. Although these islands have more than 80% of the area under forests but the situation varies in each of the twelve inhabited island of the group and they are under the varying degree of human pressure. Most active driver is the coconut plantation in addition to time-to-time clearing made in the past. There is a need to investigate the on-going modification of the land cover in these islands and satellite remote sensing forms a useful tool for such studies

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