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**Use of Forest Resources by People in Protected Areas and its  
Implications for Biodiversity Conservation**

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**Abstract**

The importance of wildlife conservation cannot be argued against. However dependence of local people, mostly marginalized and tribals, on forests cannot be overlooked either. Protected Areas (PAs), specially in the tropics, coincide with areas of human habitation with a heavy reliance on the PAs resources for subsistence and economic use. Lack of viable alternatives compels people to continue relying heavily on the Park resources which has brought many problems in its wake for the people, the forest department and most of all for the wildlife.

This paper looks at resource use by the resident human population in one of the PAs in India, the Bandhavgarh National Park, and assesses its implications for the PA. The paper is divided into three parts. The first part assesses the reliance of the resident human population on the Park resources for subsistence as well as economic use. The second part assesses the impact of this resource use on the Park; the third part focuses on possible solutions for lessening the dependence of people on Park resources and strategies for involving people in Park management.

Use of the Park resources has implications for the PA in the long run as well as for the resident people themselves. People's use of the Park resources is in direct conflict with the use of Park resources by the wildlife and in blatant flaunting of Park rules and regulations.

Continued resource use by people may prove to be detrimental for the wildlife in the long run. The point to be kept in mind though, is that this resource extraction by the resident human population within the Park is not as big a threat as resource extraction and utilization by the peripheral villages. Education, awareness generation, benefit sharing, provision of better irrigation facilities for improved productivity, increased land efficiency provide some answers for protection and conservation of the wildlife in the long run.

**Keywords:** India, resident human population, resource utilization, wildlife conservation