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The Impact of Non-timber Forest Products (NTFPS) on Rural Livelihood: A Case Study of Communities in Forest Reserves in Central Aceh, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study was carried out to assess the contribution of NTFPs to the livelihood of inhabitants in forest reserves in Central Aceh, their availability and vulnerability to harvest was also considered. A total of 25 inhabitants from communities in the two districts (Central Aceh and Bener Meriah) were used for the analysis. While the availability trend and the vulnerability to harvest of about six important species of NTFPs were also considered, the consideration was based on part harvested, species biology and harvesting techniques. The selected species were, palm tree (*Arenga pinnata*), two rattans (*Calamus javensis* and *Daemonorops draco*), bamboo (*Bambusa* sp) and trees (*Aquilaria* sp and *Pinus merkusii*). Data were obtained by using semi-structured questionnaires for open interviews with farmers. Data analysis was done by employing descriptive and differential statistics. The result of the analysis shows that NTFPs contributes immensely to the livelihood of the inhabitants in this area. About 25 % of their monthly incomes were generated from NTFPs harvesting. They served as source of food, raw material for sugar production, crafts and other decorating materials. They also provide aroma, colourant, equipment, medicine and are used for cultural purposes. The results also shows that, the species availability trend decreases from *Calamus javensis* (86 %), *Daemonorops draco* (56 %), *Arenga pinnata* (50 %), *Aquilaria* spp (28.6 %), *Bambusa* spp (25 %), to *Pinus merkusii* resin (0 %). It was discovered that *Aquilaria* spp, *Arenga pinnata* and *Calamus javensis* are the most vulnerable to harvest. Whereas, *Bambusa* spp, *Daemonorops draco* and *Pinus merkusii* are the least vulnerable to harvest.

Keywords: vulnerability, forest reserve, harvest, income, keywords: NTFPS, livelihood, species