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Investigating the effects of climate change on national parks in Iran

NAGHMEH MOBARGHAE¹, HOUMAN LIAGHATI², SABA SHOKROLLAHI³

¹*Shahid Beheshti University, Environmental Planning, Iran*

²*Shahid Beheshti University, Environmental Sciences Research Institute, Iran*

³*Tehran University, Environment, Iran*

Abstract

A national park is a large area of nature that governments protect its ecosystem and create a safe and suitable environment for the growth and reproduction of plant and animal species with a rich biodiversity. These natural areas include forest, pasture, grove, plain, river, lake and mountain.

Also, national parks are suitable areas for educational, research and tourism activities, which have special ecological values. For the proper protection of biodiversity, genetic resources, ecological integrity and landscapes, any human activities other than conservation measures are prohibited in these areas. For this reason, national parks have a stronger legal support than other protected areas. However, local residents benefit from the ecosystem services produced by these national parks.

In Iran, since 1970, 31 national parks have been registered in 17 provinces of the country with an area more than 2 million hectares, which include different climatic conditions, animal species and vegetation of country. Climate changes in recent years have left many effects in Iran. Therefore, these effects on national parks as hotspots with biological diversity can be seen with greater intensity. Surveys show that in Iran, climate changes show themselves mostly with an increase in temperature and a decrease in precipitation. In this research, the effects of climate change on the country's national parks have been estimated using climate change measurement and prediction models. The results show that a large part of national parks in the country are exposed to moderate to severe climate changes, which shows the necessity of adaptation policy in these ecosystems.

Keywords: Climate change, impact assessment, Iran, national parks