

Deforestation In Protected Areas – A Gis/Rs Based Study of National Park of Albanian Alps

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Abstract

Deforestation means the massive cutting down or damage of forests. When this occurs in protected areas such as national parks the consequences are more profound due to the sensitivity of the ecosystems. Hence, deforestation in protected areas is a serious environmental problem, which contradicts the very purpose of these areas like preserving biodiversity, protecting natural habitats, and ensuring ecological sustainability. This study focus on identifying and analyzing the spatial temporal patterns of deforestation in the National Park of Albanian Alps by making use of Geographic Information System (GIS) and Remote Sensing (RS) technology. Their combination provides tools to generate crucial information of where the forest cover has changed over time and to measure the rate of this change over a period of time. A series of thematic maps are prepared for this purpose identifying areas of deforestation and providing a deeper understanding for the surrounding environment. The Albanian Alps, covering an area of 2,020km², constitute the most mountainous and interesting region of Albania, ranking it among the few countries in Europe with Alps.

Keywords: Alps; deforestation; GIS; spatial; visualization