Economic Contribution to Local Livelihoods and Households Dependency on Dry Land Forest Products in the Pastoral and Agropastoral areas of Hammer District, Southeastern Ethiopia

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The study was conducted in Hammer district, Southern Ethiopia, to provide empirical evidence on economic contribution to local livelihoods and households dependency on dry forest products. One agropastoral and two pastoral kebeles were purposively selected, and data was collected through household survey, group discussions, market assessments, and field observation. A total of 164 households, selected based on a random sampling procedure, were interviewed using structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics, parametric and non-parametric mean comparison tests, ANOVA and multiple linear regression were used to analyze the data. The study found that income from forest products contributes 21.4% of the total annual household income. The major dry forest products include honey, fuel wood, gum and resin, and crafts and construction materials, contributing 49%, 39%, 6%, and 6% of the forest income, respectively. Households of the pastoral site earned more forest income and were relatively more dependent on forest products income than those in the agropastoral study site. Significant variation was also found among income groups: households with higher total annual income obtain more forest income than those with lower income, but they are relatively less dependent on forest products than the lower counterpart. Besides, forest income and income dependence were found to be influenced by various socioeconomic and contextual. The total forest income was positively influenced by access to extension service, while negatively by nonfarm activity, distance to market and distance to the forest. On the other hand, the level of dependency on forest income (percent of forest income from the total household income) increased with being in a pastoral area, female household head, larger household size, lower land and livestock holdings, less availability of nonfarm income and higher access to extension service. The findings of the study provide valuable information up on which important implications for dry land forest development and management strategies can be drawn.