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Land use and its change in forests of Kerala

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RGB image of Malayattur Division Reeds

The eastern side and the south western part of the division contain evergreen forest as they are in red colour in the RGB image. The central part contains deciduous forest. There are grasslands also in the central and in the western part. The eastern part of the division is steep with the highest value of 1200m in the Kuttampuzha Range. The Kalady Range and Kodanad Range are plains. Kodanad Range and Kalady Range are mostly plain. The region near western boundary is almost plain.

Kuttampuzha Range

This range is remarkable in the sense that almost all the area under its jurisdiction is forest. Idamalayar reservoir, Pooyamkytty reservoir and reed extraction are the main features of this range. There are many large west flowing rivers in the area.

There is a road leading to the Pooyamkutty dam site. The dam is almost on the western boundary of the range, further transpot from there is only through water. One time this range was more well connected with outside world through the Alwaye-Munnar road. The road was made motorable by the 20 th century, before which it was an important trade route.This road at present starts from Thattekkad and goes along the left bank of Pooyamkutty river and proceeds to Munnar. Damage to the key bridges in flood led to abandoning of the road. Part of the road was made motorable in dry weather for reed extraction and in connection with the Pooyamkutty project. There is a foot path from the Valpara region of Tamil Nadu top this region. Muduvas occupying the hill tops use it. There are no enclosures with in the range as per topo sheet. On the southern side there is an enclosure and a path leading to this. Idamalayar reservoir is a very prominent land mark situated on the north western corner of the range. Kuttampuzha river form the boundary also on one side. Bhuthathankettu reservoir come on the southern side. The region contain mostly evergreen forest. There are few scattered deciduous patches on the western side. FIP 250K map shows four types of vegetation 1) Deciduous/savannah areas on hill tops and northern side of Idamalayar dam. 2)Low elevation evergreen and semievergreen areas (degraded). 3)Medium elevation evergreen froest and its degradation areas. 4)High elevation evergreen forests of upper reaches. Muthuvas occupying the hill tops and settlers in the Manikantanchal area are worth mentioning.