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(*Verbascum thapsus*)

(*Rhamnus pallasii*)

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Temporal and Spatial Grazing Patterns in Eastern Alborz

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Abstract

An efficient management system is necessary to facing various environmental challenges. Systematic and ecosystematic approaches in natural resource management demand understanding all parts of ecosystem and their relationships, a necessity for various planing and decision making. Grazing is one of the most important processes in rangelands ecosystem. In range exploitation style, which exists in Iran, human impacts on this process and on (to graze) has special importance to research. This study focused on the role of human on grazing process that was carried out among herders of eastern Alborz through participatory research. During the research period, a total of 179 persons were interviewed among which 70 cases were interviewed during participation and passing the one night to several nights at the residence of herds. Interview notes were analysed via content analysis approach.

From the results of this study, a model was presented which relays on human role in spatio-temporal regulation and focouses on grazier instead of grazer. This model has four spatio-temporal levels: first level called (CHARAGAH) is an area which is allocated to grazing during a period of a year. Second level is (RUGAH), a supposed division of CHARAGAH determined for grazing during one or several days. Third level is (TOWGAH), a part of ground allocated for grazing during several minutes to hours. Last level is (KALAFGAH) that means small area of stopping and biting. Finally, from this study, rethinking on theory and practices as well as considering human role as grazier in grazing plan is recommended.

Keywords : Grazing, Shepherd, Herder, Grazing distribution, Spatio-temporal Grazing Patterns.

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