# 'UJJWALA SCHEME REDUCED RELIANCE ON FOREST WOOD'

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Biodiversity, Ecology, and Wildlife Related Issues

The Union Environment Ministry has credited the Ujjwala scheme, which provides free cooking gas to extremely poor families, with 'possibly' reducing the demand for fuelwood.

The India State of Forest Report, 2019, — that biannually also assesses the tree cover — also surveyed 1,110 villages, which are on the fringes of forests, to assess how much fuelwood, fodder, small timber and bamboo villagers use.

The use of these products — according to the Forest Survey of India — was a major source of "impairment to forest productivity" but wasn't adequately assessed.

In their assessment of villages in 31 States and Union Territories, nearly 8,52,90,000 tonnes of fuelwood, 105,30,39,000 tonnes off fodder, 584,8204 cubic metres of small timber and 18,34,000 tonnes of bamboo were collected annually by those living in the forest fringes.

The maximum fuelwood was removed in Maharashtra — 95,39000 tonnes — followed by Odisha and Rajasthan.

The highest removal, per person, was in Nagaland followed by Himachal Pradesh and Tripura.

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