

Abstract

The high rate of deforestation is a global problem with negative impacts on species biodiversity and it also contributes to global and local climate changes. This problem is much more urgent in hotspots of biodiversity and endemism like west African mountains. Moreover, these locations are now recognized as the most fragmented and the most deforested mountains on the African continent. Impacts on local organisms is mostly negative. The organisms are facing habitat loss and the inability to migrate between the isolated regions. The bond between associated animals and plants, that are life depend on each other, is being broken and the whole ecosystem is being changed. In general, the ecosystem is less stable and all these changes make deforestation a chain reaction. Although there are some positive impacts on the biodiversity too, it does not influence the endemic species. It has more positive consequences for the generalist species occupying wide range of habitats and utilizing various food resources. Local communities are also facing the impacts of the ecosystem changes, their lives are negatively influenced by longer and more intensive periods of drought, landslides and they are not able to rely on the supply of the forest products. To be able to change current situation, financial support and technical development of the agricultural industry must be provided as well as education of local residents and cooperation between government and rural communities, as it is the only way to understand the problem in a complex way.

Key words: deforestation, loss of species biodiversity, endemism, hotspots, agriculture, west Africa, Cameroon Highlands, Guinean Forest.