

7.26 TRIPURA

7.26.1 Introduction

Tripura, one of the smallest States in India, is situated in the northeastern part of the country. The geographical area of the State is 10,491 km² and shares international border with Bangladesh on three sides. The State lies approximately between latitude 22°57' and 24°33' N and longitude 91°10' and 92°20' E. The main rivers flowing through the State are Khowai, Dhalai, Manu and Deo.

The climate of the State is generally moist and humid. The minimum and maximum temperatures in summer are 21°C and 38°C and in winter it ranges between 4°C and 33 °C. The average annual rainfall varies between 2,250 mm to 2,500 mm.

As per Census 2001, the total population of the State is 3.20 million of which the rural population is 82.94%. The population density is 305 persons per km². The Scheduled Tribes constitute 31.5% of the population. The projected population of the State is 3.53 million (as projected by the Office of RGI for 2009) which constitutes 0.31% of the country's population. The livestock population of the State is 1.46 million (Livestock Census 2003), which has decreased by nearly 8% since the census of 1992.

Land use pattern of the State is given in Table 7.26.1.

7.26.2 Recorded Forest Area

The recorded forest area of the State is 6,294 km². Reserved Forests constitute 66.33%, Protected

Forests .03%, and Unclassed Forests 33.64% of the total forest area. About 60% of the State's geographic area is under recorded forests.

7.26.3 Protected Areas

Tripura has 2 National Parks and 4 Wildlife Sanctuaries covering an area of 603.64 km², constituting 5.75 % of the total geographical area of the State.

7.26.4 Joint Forest Management

JFM started in the State in 1991. There are 374 JFM Committees managing about 0.10 million ha of forest area which is about 17% of the forest area of the State. More than 33,000 families are involved in this programme, of which around 17,000 families belong to the Scheduled Tribes.

Source: MoEF, 2005.

7.26.5 Forest Cover

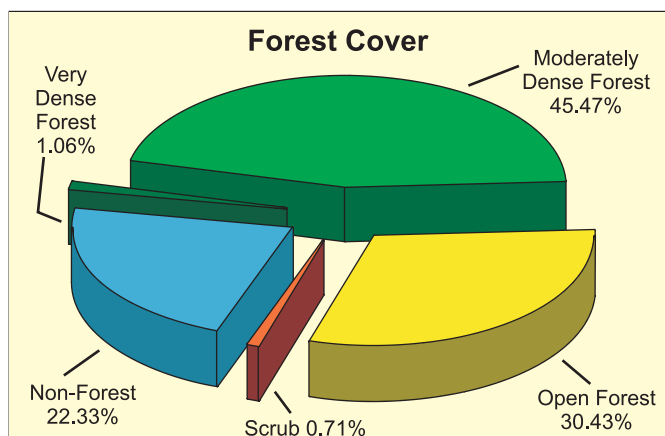
The forest cover in the State, based on interpretation of satellite data of Nov 2006 - Jan 2007, is 8,073 km², which is 76.95% of the State's geographical area. In terms of forest canopy density classes, the State has 111 km² very dense forest, 4,770 km² moderately dense forest and 3,192 km² open forest. The distribution of forest cover of the State is shown in Fig. 7.26.

Comparison of the current forest cover (satellite data of Nov 2006 - Jan 2007) with the previous assessment (satellite data of Nov - Dec 2004) shows a loss of 100 km² of forest cover.

Table 7.26.1: Land use pattern

Land Use	Area in '000 ha	Percentage
Total geographical area	1,049	
Reporting area for land utilization	1,049	100.00
Forests	606	57.77
Not available for cultivation	134	12.77
Permanent pastures and other grazing lands	0	0.00
Land under misc. tree crops & groves	27	2.57
Culturable wasteland	1	0.10
Fallow lands other than current fallows	1	0.10
Current fallows	1	0.10
Net area sown	280	26.69

Source: Land Use Statistics, Ministry of Agriculture, GOI, 2006.



The change matrix, given in Table 7.26.2, reveals that there has been a decrease of 2 km² in the very dense forest, 46 km² in moderately dense forest and 52 km² in open forest.

On the basis of ground truthing by the officials of FSI, main reasons for decrease of forest cover is shifting cultivation in all districts.

District wise forest cover in different canopy density classes and scrub along with the changes compared to 2005 assessment is given in the Table 7.26.3.

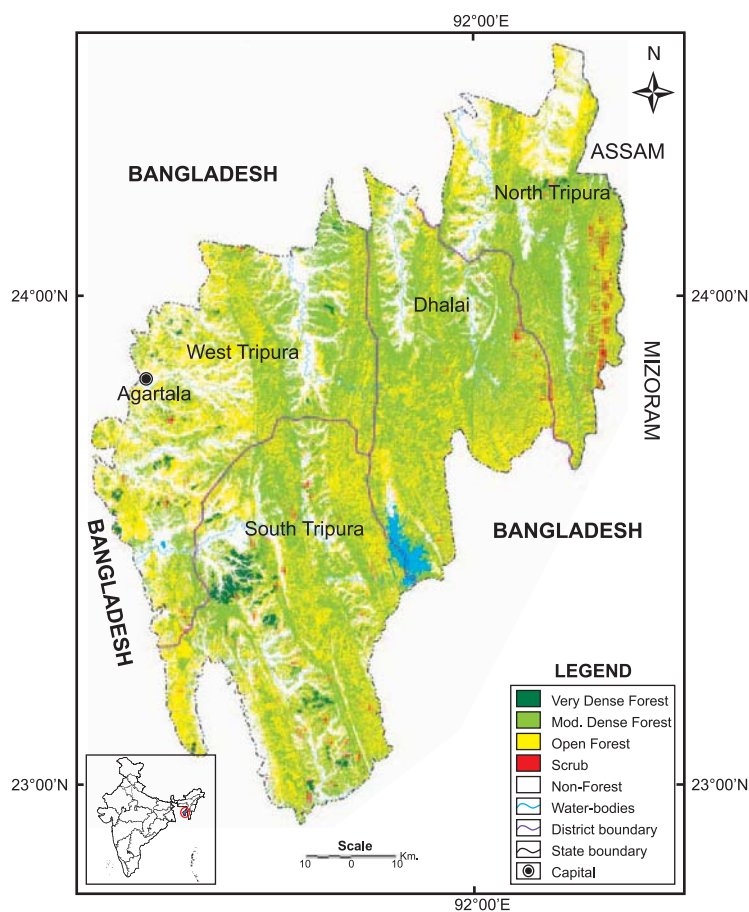


Fig 7.26 : Forest cover map of Tripura

Table 7.26.2: Forest cover change matrix

(area in km²)

2005 Assessment (Data of Nov - Dec 2004)	2007 (Data of Nov 2006 - Jan 2007)					Total of 2005
	VDF	MDF	OF	Scrub	NF	
Very Dense Forest	110	1	1	0	1	113
Moderately Dense Forest	1	4,754	9	9	43	4,816
Open Forest	0	13	3,152	25	54	3,244
Scrub	0	0	13	40	1	54
Non-Forest	0	2	17	1	2,244	2,264
Total of 2007	111	4,770	3,192	75	2,343	10,491
Net Change	-2	-46	-52	21	79	

Table 7.26.3: District-wise forest cover in 2007

Number of districts: 4

(area in km²)

District	Geographical area	Very dense forest	Mod. dense forest	Open forest	Total	% of G.A.	Change*	Scrub
Dhalai TH	2,402	3	1,329	671	2,003	83.39	-24	11
North Tripura TH	2,039	10	925	541	1,476	72.39	-32	34
South Tripura TH	3,057	73	1,390	1,013	2,476	80.99	-22	23
West Tripura TH	2,993	25	1,126	967	2,118	70.77	-22	7
Total	10,491	111	4,770	3,192	8,073	76.95	-100	75

* Change compared to 2005 assessment (revised).

7.26.6 Altitude Zone wise Forest Cover

Forest cover of the State in different altitude zones is given in Table 7.26.4.

Table 7.26.4: Altitude zone wise forest cover

(area in km²)

Altitude Zone	VDF	MDF	OF	Total
0-500m	111	4,736	3,170	8,017
500-1000m	0	34	22	56
Total	111	4,770	3,192	8,073

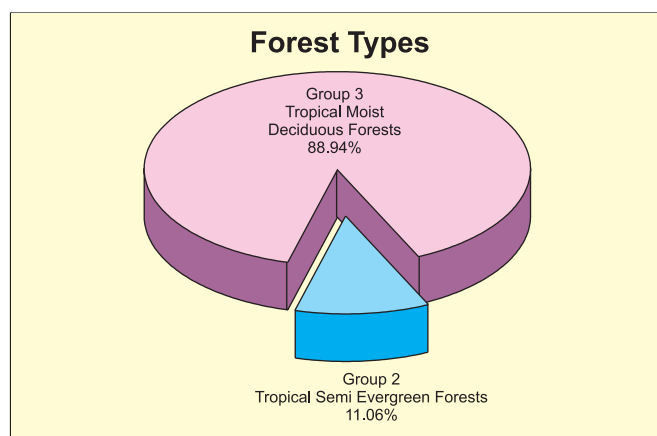
(based on SRTM Digital Elevation Model)

7.26.7 Forest Cover in different Forest Types

As per Champion & Seth Classification System (1968), the State has 5 forest types which belong to 2 forest type groups viz Tropical Semi Evergreen and Tropical Moist Deciduous Forests. Distribution of forest cover in different forest type groups found in the State is given in the pie diagram.

7.26.8 Tree Cover

Tree cover of the State has been estimated using sample data of TOF inventory collected over a period of six years i.e. 2002-08. The estimated tree cover in the State is 171 km² which is 1.63% of the



geographical area of the State. South Tripura district of the State has been inventoried. The forest and tree cover of the State is presented in the Table 7.26.5.

Table 7.26.5: Forest & tree cover

(area in km²)

Category	Area	% of Geographical area
Tree Cover	171	1.63
Forest Cover	8,073	76.95
Forest & Tree Cover	8,244	78.58