

INTRODUCTION

Location

Rasuwa is one of the eight districts of the Bagmati Zone. It is bordered by China in the north, Dhading in the west, Nuwakot in the south, and Nuwakot and Sindhupalchowk in the east. This district extends from 27°02' north to 27°10' north latitude, and 85°88' east to 85°45' east longitude. The altitude of the district ranges from 600 to 7,246masl. The district headquarters are at Dhunche which is situated at an elevation of 1,963masl.

The population of Rasuwa was 30,241 according to the 1981 Census and 36,768 according to the 1991 Census, indicating an average annual growth rate of 1.97 per cent. Between 1971 and 1981, there was an absolute decline in Rasuwa's population. There are 18 Village Development Committees in the district.

Climate and Soil

The climate of Rasuwa varies from subtropical to temperate and alpine, but most of the area has a temperate and alpine type of climate. The average annual rainfall is 994.3mm and occurs mainly during June, July, and August. The average temperature in Dhunche is 22.6°C maximum and 11.5°C minimum. The minimum temperature in Dhunche goes down to 0°C and the maximum up to 25°C. The area is free from hailstorms.

The cultivated lands of Rasuwa District have sandy loam soil whereas the high mountains and the Himalayan belts are mostly from rocks with thin layers of sandy or sandy loam soils.

Land Use

Rasuwa District has a total land area of 1,51,179 hectares. About 2.8 per cent of the land area lies in the middle mountains. The high mountains and high Himal occupy 49.7 and 47.5 per cent of the land area respectively. Table 1 indicates that Rasuwa has very limited land for crops (6.87%). Ice and rocks cover 26.99 and 15.63 per cent of the land area respectively. However, there is a considerable area under forests (28.19%). About 6.4 and 15.92 per cent of the land area are under shrubs and grasslands respectively. Among fruits, apples are the major crop. Vegetables are grown in homesteads for household use only.

Table 1: Land Use Pattern in Rasuwa District

Belts	Area (ha)	Forest Land (ha)	Shrubs (ha)	Grassland (ha)	Rocks (ha)	Ice (ha)	Landslide	Total Cultivated Land (ha)
Middle Mountains	4148 (2.8%)	217	387	888	-	-	12	2644
High Mountains	75161 (49.7)	41343	7163	9739	7651	1527	-	7738
High Himal	71870 (47.5)	1056	2124	13437	33150	22103	-	-
Total	151179	42616	9674	24064	40801	23630	12	10382
Percentage	100	28.19	06.4	15.92	26.99	15.63	trace	06.87

Figure in parentheses are percentages.
Adapted from the ICIMOD's Forest Report.