

People's Participation in Protection of plant genetic diversity in the Central Zagros Rangeland: a case of Iran

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This paper aims to reflect on a participatory action research project in linkages with the Green Message NGO, local settlers and the Department of Forestry and Natural Resources in Central Zagros Region of Iran. The action research involved two different phases in each phase the stakeholders were involved in planning, acting, observing and reflecting. Based on the results, the tribal life of inhabitants which naturally depended on herd and herder, as well as the poverty among rural settlers had seriously damaged the plant bio-diversity of Zagross. This project by creating an alternative livelihood, changed people's point of view towards valuable natural species and the methods of protecting them, by informing people of the dangers of over-exploitation of four endangered species, and empowering people in harvesting and cultivating the wild seeds in their rain-fed lands, for which they were paid by the project's fund. The project ended up with establishing of the participatory conservation pattern in the region.

Key Words: SGP, Iran, participatory, range land, empowerment, plan diversity, conservation