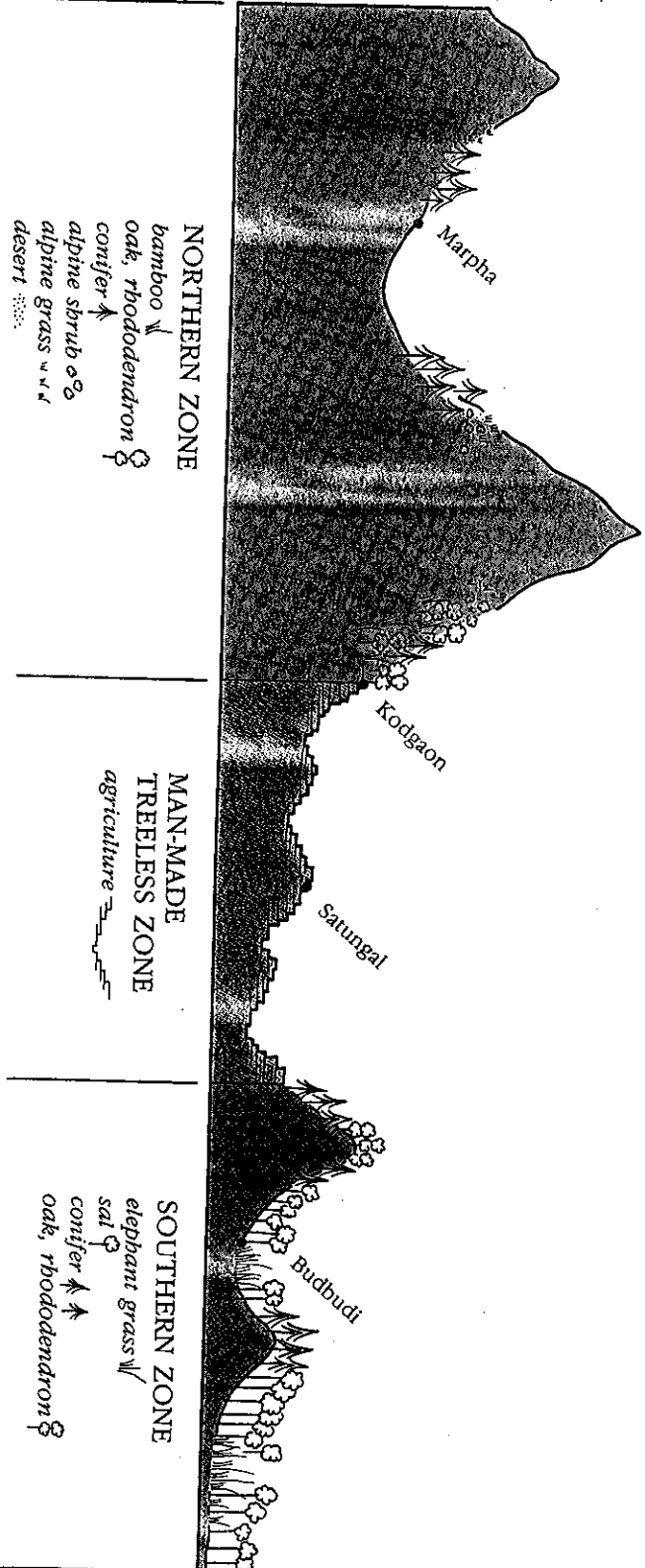


26,240'
8,000 m
22,960'
7,000 m
19,680'
6,000 m
16,400'
5,000 m
13,120'
4,000 m
9,480'
3,000 m
6,560'
2,000 m
3,280'
1,000 m



## VEGETATION

majority of the natural vegetation cover. The forests run in two belts—a southern one, which includes the Terai, the Siwaliks, and the Mahabharat, and a northern one which includes the Himalayas and the Inner Himalayan Valleys.

The southern zone consists of deciduous and semi-deciduous trees, and the forests are less dense than in the northern zone. There is little undergrowth except in the Mahabharat region above 6500'.

The treeless area between the two zones—almost the entire Midlands region—is entirely man-made, the result of centuries of habitation. Here most of the trees which grow around the villages and fields have been planted for some particular purpose—either they have edible fruit or can provide animal fodder, or in the case of bamboo, can be used for making houses, bridges, baskets, and many other necessities of village life. Often the only remnants of forests are shrubs and thickets among which cattle graze.

**MAN-MADE TREELESS ZONE**  
agriculture

**SOUTHERN ZONE**  
elephant grass  
sal  
conifer  
oak, rhododendron

The northern zone of forest cover appears on the southern slopes of the Himalayas above 8000'. This man-made line, which actually varies between 6000' and 10,500' marks the point at which local conditions (slope too great, soil too thin, temperature too cold, or cloud cover too dense) make cultivation impossible. Above this limit of cultivation the forest extends to about 13,000'. Although many of the species of the northern and southern forests are similar, the northern and higher forest differs markedly from the lower southern one because at the higher elevation the temperatures are much cooler and there is less rainfall. As the elevation progresses, the trees become smaller, shorter, and then disappear altogether at the "treeline," the upper limit of forest growth. Beyond this point and extending for another 4500' is the alpine zone composed of shrubs, bushes and grasses. The vegetation is "capped off" at the snowline—about 17,500'. Above this point the snow never melts. The progression of vegetation cover on the north slopes of the Himalayas (the Inner Himalayan Valleys) is similar to that on the