STATE, PEOPLE AND FORESTS IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA: A STUDY OF JOINT FOREST MANAGEMENT IN INLAND DISTRICTS OF ORISSA

Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirement for
the award of the Degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

UMESH CHANDRA TRIPATHY

CENTRE FOR POLITICAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI-110067
INDIA
1997

July 21, 1997

Certificate

Certified that the dissertation entitled **"STATE, PEOPLE AND FORESTS IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA: A STUDY OF JOINT FOREST MANAGEMENT IN INLAND DISTRICTS OF ORISSA"**, submitted by Mr. UMESH CHANDRA TRIPATHY in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other university. This is his own work.

We recommend that this dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

Dr. BISHNU MOHAPATRA

(Supervisor)

Prof. BALVEER ARORA

(Chairperson)

"To my parents"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CONTENTS

1 - NAYAGARH
2 - DHENKANAL
3 - BHUBANESWAR

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The paradigm which believes in maximum ecological preservation where state, people and forest are to live in harmony, has generated much steam in political and academic circle. The sharp depletion of forest resources due to rigid and centralized forest laws and the colonial attitude of the forest officials have inflicted enormous hardship on the local communities who are dependent upon it. Limited substitution possibilities for alternative sources of livelihood have added to their impoverishment. Therefore, for better management of forest resources the participation of local communities in both design and implementation level, is the need of the hour.

The word 'forest' is derived from the Latin word 'foris' meaning outside, the reference being to a village boundary or fence, it must have included all uncultivated and uninhabited land. In general a forest can be defined as an area set aside for production of timber and other forest produce or maintained under woody vegetation for certain indirect benefits which it provides e.g. climatic or protective. India, at present, has a forest of 74.88 million hectares (22.71 of the land area of the country). But the satellite imagery picture shows India has only about 37.8 million hectares of closed forest cover with crown density of over 40% which is 11.5% of

1

the total geographical area of the country. This shows the poor status of our forests despite the National Forest Policy of 1952 which envisaged to raise the forest area and its cover to 33% of geographical area of the nation. The country has about 36 hectares of degraded forest lands. National Remote Sensing Agency reported loss of about 2.89% area of the country of forest cover just in a span of 7 years between 1972-75 and 1980-82.[1] On the otherhand, people have been living in very large part of forest since time immemorial. Although over the years many of the forest villages have been given the status of revenue villages, there are still around 5000 forest villages. There are about 48 million forest dwellers living within or in the vicinity of forest. For them forest is their parent - basis of livelihood and survival. The benefits (direct or indirect) from forest, trees and common property are basic to these people. They are dependent on the forest directly for meeting their day to day requirements of food, fruit, fuel, wood, fodder and fibers. The minor forest produce has also an immense value to them. The leaves, seeds, gums, waxes, dyes, resins, bamboos, canes, bhabbar grass etc. are mainly collected by poor and marginalised which provide them support under difficult economic conditions. Apart from that forests also provide indirect benefits by preventing soil erosion conserving moisture,

Dolly Arora, "From State regulation to people's participation: A case of Joint Forest Management in India", Economic and Political Weekly, March 19, 1994, p.691.

water, regulating nutrients, preventing drought or reducing its impact, providing leaf manure and fixing nitrogen, regulating climate and rainfall, providing greenery and beauty and reducing pollution. Therefore, it is clear that forest is sine-qua-non of human survival (as every human being is directly or indirectly dependent upon it).

At present nearly 175 million hectares of India's land area is seriously degraded. The existing forest resources are also fast depleting. According to World Food and Agricultural Organization report in Asian region particular forests are disappearing in an alarming rate before our own eyes. The deforestation rate in the world in 1988 is around 17 million hectares per year. In Asia where 1/3rd of the landmass is covered with forests the rate of deforestation is estimated to be 2 million hectares per year. In fact Asia is fast becoming wood deficit region. India, Srilanka and Bangladesh have already lost their rain forests outside their parks and reserves.[2] As to an estimate of the World Research Institute (WRI) the deforestation rate of world forests is 0.8%. In 1981-90 it is around 3% in India. If the present rate of deforestation continues with the annual population growth of 2%, by the turn of the century the forests in India will be a rare species, reducing the per capita forest area

---

[2]   K.P. Sagereiya, Forests and Forestry, NBT Publication, pp. 2 and 3.

from 0.20 hectares to 0.11 hectares.[3] The repercussions of this mind boggling

deforestation have already been felt and in the future they are going to be severe.

The destruction of vegetation cover has produced dramatic alteration in rainfall, soil

erosion and whole string of downstream effects, including flooding and siltation. It

has also affected bio-diversity structure composition, forest community structure

composition, physiognomy, stratification etc. The loss of bio-diversity is highest in

Asia-pacific region. As deforestation progresses and trees and other forest produce

become scarce, the rural poor who are by and large responsible for the state of

affairs are the worst affected. For them the sustainable economic opportunities are

lost for good. In some places it has been seen that such degradation has often caused

periodic phases of hunger and malnutrition in the absence of supportive means of

livelihood for acquiring basic essentials of life.

Here question arises: why this deforestation and what are its immediate

causes? Deforestation simply means falling of the trees which subsequently leads to

the clearing of the forest. Human greed has brought about irreparable damage to

forest particularly in developing countries. In India alone more than 48 million

---

J.L. Bhat, "Joint Forest Management", An Article Published in Employment News, 9-15 Dec, 1995.

people live in and around its forests. Most of them are rural masses shackled in the vicious circle of poverty and illiteracy. The uncontrolled exploitation of wood and timber by this large populace has degraded many forests with rich flora and fauna. May of them are engaged in shifting cultivation. This type of farming practice is very dangerous as it requires to remove even grass and shrubs for living. The advent of industrialization is another cause that brought havoc to forests. As a result of unplanned and haphazard location and growth of polluting industries, our settlements and urbanization, the forests are receding. The mangroves have been cut down for firewood, building materials and reclaimed for hotels and housing and tourist resorts. With the destruction of mangroves forests a second line of defence against cyclonic fury, storm surge and tidal waves have been permanently removed. High intensity 'chena' cultivation has not only deforested a substantial portion of the land area in the dry zone but has also pushed such lands to the brink of desertification. The cleaning of steep slopes and stream reservations in the hill country for high value cash crops has resulted in heavy erosion, earth slips and land slides. On the otherhand, the big multi nationals who are engaged in non-selective exploitation of timber using powerful machinery especially, in the most fragile tropical eco-systems. The illegal timber dealers have exploited many of our forests leaving only the empty shell inside.

Above, we discussed the state of forests and people in contemporary India which depicts a bleak future of forests in India. Against this backdrop now we shall examine the institutional aspect, the role of state institutions and their policies. Indian state since colonial period has devised 3 major forest policies to conserve the forest resources. India's first national forest policy was originated in 1894 which gave priority on state custodianship and commercial exploitation. It consolidated the position of state by enabling it to forcibly take over all forests including private and community forests. The policy denied recognisation to the indigenous and conventional conservation practices of local communities and favoured regulation of rights and privileges of people living in and around forests. More frustrating was the Forest Act of 1927 which specifically denied people any rights over the forest produce "simply because they have domiciled there". After independence a new forest policy was set out in 1952. It retained the concept of reserved forests' and placed them under exclusive control of state. Although, the policy accepted the category of village forests to serve needs of people in villages, it didn't grant them right to manage these, the need for realization of maximum annual revenue from forests was considered a vital national need.[4] Relevance of forests to meet the needs of defence, industry, railway, communication and reconstruction schemes such as river dams was asserted.

Walter Fernandes and Shard Kulkarni : Towards a New Forest Policy, People Right and Environmental Needs, Indian Social Institute, 1992, p.35.

FOREST POLICY 1894 - Prior to British rule every ruling establishment of India adopted favourable attitude towards forests and due to low population pressures and high forest density forest produces were plentily available to fulfil the demand of administration and general mass. Overall coverage of land by forests was also satisfactory. No attention had been paid to promote even distribution of forests in various agroclimatic regions of the country. As a matter of fact program for forest management and afforestation had not been attached due importance during the period.

The 1894 Forest Policy of British government introduced a new era by adopting first organized forest management system to promote the general well being of the country under the state ownership of forests.

OBJECTIVES - (i) maintenance of adequate forests for preservation of climatic and physical condition of the country (ii) To meet the demands of the local people.

But these two objectives were subject to various limitations: (i) permanent cultivation should come before forestry. (ii) Satisfaction of needs of local people should override all considerations of revenue. (iii) After fulfillment of above conditions the realisation of maximum revenue would be the guiding factor in the management of forests.

NATIONAL FOREST POLICY (1952) - After independence, the government of India felt the need to reorient the forest policy in the light of recent changes which have taken place since it was enunciated.

OBJECTIVES - The Forest Policy of 1952 was based on the following objectives:

i) The need for evolving a complementary land use under which it would produce most and deteriorate least.

ii) There is a need to check

(a) denudation in mountainous areas on which depends the perennial water supply of river system whose basins constitute the fertile core of the country;

(b) the erosion progressing space along the treeless banks of the great rivers leading to revive formation and on vast stretches of undulating wastelands depriving the adjoining fields of their fertility;

(c) the invasion of sea sands on coastal tracts, and shifting of sand dunes, more particularly in Rajputana desert.

iii) The need for establishing freelands, wherever possible, for the amelioration of physical and climatic conditions promoting the general well being of the people.

iv)   The need for ensuring progressively increasing supply of grazing, small wood for agricultural implements and in particular of firewood to release cattle dung for manure to step us for food production.

v)   The need for sustained supply of the timber and other forest produce required for defence, communication and industry.

vi)   The need for realisation of maximum annual revenue consistent with fulfillment of needs enumerated above.

Functional classification of forests - For the first time Indian forests were functionally classified: (A) Protection Forests - It includes those forests which must be preserved for physical and climatic considerations. (B) National forests - It is maintained to meet the demands of the industry. (C) Village forests - It is meant to meet the local demands of food, fodder, manure, fuel and timber of rural community. (D) Tree lands - It is essentially out of the scope of ordinary forest management but essential for the amelioration of the physical conditions of the country.

Claims of neighbouring communities - The claims between state and people is the main bone of contention of every policy. National Forests Policy of 1952, though contrary to earlier policies recognized the rights of the local communities, did

least effort to end the impasse. The centralized exploitative tendencies of the policy maker became reluctant to give full rights to people. The forest policy only maintained that the needs of the local communities should be reasonably met without sacrificing the national interest. The future generation can't be sacrificed for the comfort of present one. This declaration put the claims of forest dwellers in a closed chapter.

In spite of the clear-cut policy of forest conservation the protection of forest remained a mirage and the policies failed very miserably. A major factor in the failure of forest policies in the region is underpricing of timber. For instance the stumpage fees charged by govt. on logger don't reflect the true cost to the society of replacing felled trees. Another area of policy failure is the rigorous promotion of forest based industrialization. It was believed that the policy would generate more employment increase governmental revenue and establish wood based industries. But economic cost of these policies to our society far exceeded the financial benefits. The failure of the policy makers to recognize the non-timber values has underestimated the economic value of the forest resource. For too long forests are viewed as source of timber.[5] But value of non-timber products (bamboo, waxes,

---

Michael Redcliff, Sustainable Development : Exploring the Contradictions, Routledge, London, 1989, Mc Neely and Pitt.

rattan etc.) can equal or exceed the timber values of forests. Our national policies have also failed to recognize communal property rights of indigenous communities, or deny land ownership because forest land is supposed to belong to state. Being denied security of tenure, many of forest dwellers have no incentive to invest in land improvement or follow agro-forestry practices. In Madhya Pradesh, for instance, much of the social erosion and forest degradation has been attributed to lack of security of tenure. The policies also failed to make serious effort to supply of fuel and fodder to forest dwellers which created social tension. So, people exerted increased pressure on state to reorient its policies. When the exploitative policies resulted in fast depletion of forest resources, the policies were shaped and reshaped but the interest of the industry and corrupt elites zealously guarded. In afforestation programme priority was given to plantation of commercial trees (teak, pine, eucalyptus) and plantation of socially useful variety of trees (Kusum, Sal, Mahua) was deliberately neglected. This type of policy orientation only added fuel to fire without taking any concrete step to stop deforestation and satisfy forest dwellers.

The state as an institution which took over the ownership of forests has also failed to conserve the forests and solve the related problems. The forest departments on which state has given the responsibility of protection of forests have not yet been able to enforce their ownership rights and defend the legal status of the resource for

several reasons. The institutions don't have adequate funds and staff. They are poorly organised for managing natural forests. They lack political support and don't enjoy the confidence of the local people. As to a Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) analysis the forest department of India needs to double the present number of staff. Even if the staff were doubled which is just an assumption forests with open access extending over large area would still not be protected without the co-operation of the local people. Another failure of the state institution is their inability to keep pace with society's changing needs. While the mandates imposed on Forest Dept. have changed over past four decades, the public sector forestry institutions have not changed much. They continue the colonial tradition of collecting fees and preventing people from trespassing. Another serious handicap is that state does not employ adequate technologies in Forestry management. Due to lack of forest technology the economic productivity of Indian forests has taken a nosedive. In comparison to agricultural area (155 million hectares) the area under forest is around 75 million hectares, almost half. But agriculture contributes 32% of India's gross domestic product (GDP) whereas forests contribute 1.6% only. Agriculture accounts for 73% of the rural working force while forestry accounts for only 0.2%.[6] Another important point of failure of state institution is that ironical enough, the state started

---

[6]   Forestry Survey of India : State of India's Forests, Dehradun, 1988.

subsidizing the industrial consumers of forest products in the name of national interest. Subsidies encouraged the industrial elites not only to maximize the profits but also to exploit the forests. This discriminatory policy of state further alienated people as they could not use their resources and bought it in high market prices.[7]

In past, prior to nationalisation, forests are under communal domain and the members of a community had customary rights of access and use. They had the knowledge obtained through centuries of trial and error of using the resource within the limits of carrying capacity. With the nationalisation of forests during colonial times, or after independence, the communities lost their rights to control the forest resources within their traditional territories, and the traditional management system went into cold storage. The recipes of the technical forestry specialists became the buzzword. The centrally designed scientific schemes for management of forest resources were implemented. But these centrally designed schemes not only propped up exploitative tendencies but also collided with locally based knowledge and practices about conservation. For example, in Chipko movement in the Himalayan region, local men and women protected trees with their bodies against chain saw of

---

[7]   S.B. Roy, "Forest Protection Committees in West Bengal", Economic and Political Weekly, July 18, 1992, pp. 1528-30.

13

loggers. This movement brought a consciousness against the exploitative policies far beyond the Indian subcontinent. The act of sanctifying trees enemas by the Buddhist monks of Thailand to protect the Thai rain forests is another example of collision of local wisdom with centralized exploitative policy.[8] These type of mass movements broke the 'jinx' by evolving a consciousness among people against exploitative policies. The political establishment increasingly felt that unless the forest dwellers are involved in the management of forests and are given a share of economic benefits, the degradation of natural forests will continue. A lot of these people are dependent on the forest for their livelihood, and thus have a stake in the sustainable management of forests. In this context, the search for more effective mode of forest management started. Joint Forest Management (JFM) emerged as the most promising alternative to state administration of the resources. Joint Forest Management can be defined as a process in which planning, development, conservation and protection of forest resources are made by both the forest officials and local communities".[9] Neela Mukharjee states three main objectives of the JFM: (a) to reduce the pressure on natural forests; (b) to involve local people depending

---

Fernandes Walter : Forest Environment and Tribal Economy, Indian Social Institute, 1988.

J.J. Roy Burman, "Encroachment of Forest Dept into the Development Field", Mainstream, Oct 12, 1996, pp. 30.

on forests for their subsistence needs in planning, development, exploitation and protection of forests and (c) thereby to preserve/conserve bio-diversity by means of people's participation.

In India for the first time J.F.M. reached policy discourse in 1988. This led to a shift of forest management: from state regulation to people's participation. The National Forest Policy of 1988 stressed people's involvement as one of the essentials of forest management in the development and protection of forests. The village communities should be motivated to identify the conservation of forests from which they derive benefits. The requirements of fuelwood, fodder, small timber such as house building material and other minor forest produce of the tribals and villagers living in or near the forests are to be treated as first charge on the forest produce.[10] Under National Forest Policy 1988, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India, issued guidelines to all state forestry departments in 1990, to ensure participation of communities and NGOs in the management, regeneration and protection of degraded forest lands. Orissa took the lead and issued the order promoting the J.F.M. in August 1988.

Shashi Kant, "Community Based Forest Management Systems: Case Studies From Orissa", IIFM, SIDA, New Delhi.

NATIONAL FOREST POLICY (1988)

The forest policy of 1988 which has evoked positive response both from policy makers and people, especially, in the context of rapid destruction of the forest cover, an appraisal of its main features seems relevant.

Forest Policy (1988)

Basic objectives — The objectives that governs the National Forest Policy are following:

i)   Maintenance of environmental stability through preservation and, where necessary restoration of the ecological balance that has been adversely disturbed by serious depletion of the forests of the country;

ii)   Conserving natural heritage of the country by preserving the remaining natural forests with vast variety of flora and fauna, which represent the remarkable biological diversity and genetic resources of the country;

iii) Checking soil erosion and degradation in the catchment areas of rivers, lakes, reservoirs in the interest of soil and water conservation, for mitigating floods and droughts and for retardation of siltation of reservoirs;

16

iv) Checking the extension of sand-dunes in the desert areas of Rajasthan and along coastal tracts;

v) Increasing substantially the forest cover in the country through massive afforestation and social forestry programmes;

vi) Meeting the requirements of fuel wood, fodder, minor forest produce and small timber of the rural and tribal population;

vii) Increasing the productivity of forests to meet essential national needs;

viii) Encouraging efficient utilization of forest produce and maximizing the substitution of wood;

ix) Creating a massive people's movement with involvement of women, for achieving these objectives and minimise pressure on existing forests;

x) Establishing national parks, sanctuaries and biosphere reserves and protected areas for conservation of total biological diversity;

xi) The forestry activities should be designed in such a way that they could work as levers for improvement of socio-economic conditions of rural poor and tribal communities;

xii) Good agricultural land should not be diverted for raising plantations;

xiii) The need for more attention for forestry research, personnel management, adequate data base and infrastructure in the field of forestry is realized and recommended.

17

STRATEGY

1. Developing partnerships between village communities (beneficiaries), the voluntary agencies/NGO's and forest departments. NGO's may serve as motivating force between communities and forest departments.

2. Ten years working scheme: Plans of short duration of about ten years may be useful, Plans about forest management and technical operations should be developed by foresters in consultation with village communities.

3. Plants to be grown: Trees for fuel, fodder and timber should be grown. In addition fruit trees, legumes grass medicinal plants should be grown which would meet requirements of local village communities, help enrich the degraded lands and conserve soil and water.

4. Access and benefits must be given to village communities undertaking regeneration activities with equal opportunity to all, based on willing participation. The benefits of people's participation should solely be derived by village communities only and these should not go to commercial or other interests.

5. Rights to Usufruct: All non-wood forest products-grasses, lops, tree branches and minor forest produce; percentage share of final tree harvest should go to communities subject to successful and satisfactory protection.

6. Use rules: Strict adherence to rules about no grazing or harvesting trees before maturity.

7. Funding: Forest department may meet the cost of Joint forest Management programmes from funds under social forestry programmes for preparation of land, raising nursery, and for protection of trees. The village communities may also seek additional funds from other agencies.

8. No ownership or lease rights of the forest lands should be given to communities or to the voluntary agencies/NGO's.

9. Forest land should not be assigned in contravention of the provisions of the Forest Conservation Act 1980.

Enrichment Planting

Enrichment planting is used to enhance forest productivity by planting valuable plant species in gaps within the natural forest. Most state forest departments developing Joint Forest Management programmes target at 10-25 per cent of the regenerating forest for enrichment planting. Choice of plants is made by village communities and foresters jointly. The species planted in comparatively open areas may be fodder, grass, fiber plants, bamboo, timber trees or fuelwood trees. Under the forest canopy shade tolerant mushrooms, medicinal plants, etc. may be grown.

Natural Forest Regeneration

Forest degradation is a gradual process caused by over exploitation such as over grazing, over commercial timber extraction or fuelwood cutting. The forest degradation can be halted and reversed (regenerated). The first step in effective regeneration requires strict control on grazing and cutting of green trees and shrubs. Village communities can develop methods to control grazing through social fencing and stall feeding. Microplans should be developed to assess fodder requirements and identify ways to meet fodder requirements through regeneration and enrichment grass planting. Once the strict access controls have been achieved, a number of silvicultural practice can be initiated to regenerate plants and increase productivity such as clearing of dead materials, cleaning of stool, multiple shoots cutting, enrichment planting of trees, grasses and herbs in gaps.

THE PRESENT STUDY

Our present study embark upon the systematic exploration of the Joint Forest Management in Orissa. The people who were instrumental to felling down of trees and clearing of forests, are now protecting forests, day and night, with utmost sincerity. It is a moot point that how such people are protecting forests voluntarily

20

so successfully where strong state apparatus failed. Joint forest management mainly is a manifestation of the local wisdom and skills in Orissa.[11] To what extent these skills have helped people to evolve a stable JFM system is another focus of our study. This dissertation also aims to discuss various institutional patterns that have emerged and related major questions such as role of state forest department, resolution of social conflicts that arise. The people's right for forest management has reached the policy level but the dishonest forest officials in cahoots with commercial interests, create obstacles in the path of its implementation. Our study examines to what extent it affects the JFM. Most of the plans and policies of India start with funfare but end in dismal failure due to distorted implementation. Our study examines the grass root level working of JFM from which we can gauge the seriousness of government's real efforts. Powerful national and international NGOs have entered the field to create awareness and consciousness among people. I have undertaken a which identifies the institutional support given by these NGOs to JFM projects.

---

[11]   S. Pati. and A. Panda : Community Organizations in Forest Management, IIFM, Bhopal.

21

OBJECTIVES AND AREA OF STUDY

For our purpose, two blocks (Kesharpur and Kaniha) from Nayagarh and Dhenkanal districts have been selected respectively. The study is taken up-

i)   To understand the emerging scenario of JFM in Orissa and to identify existing social groups and their role in ecosystem protection, traditional rights and use, management responsibility, benefit sharing, gender equity, effective monitoring and advocacy.

ii)   To examine the type of problems conflicts and crises that arise in JFM and their resolution.

iii)   To examine the role of NGOs in forest management by evolving community responsibility, participatory democratic structures and mechanism of open communication.

Hypothesis- The over all goal of Joint Forest Management is to protect and administer in a sustainable way the ecosystem, its wildlife and the traditional rights of local people. It requires a clear change in the roles, structures of protected area management and defines local people with traditional life style as integral to it.

My interview in the aforesaid two blocks - Kesharpur and Kaniha - with Village Forest Committee members, local politicians, NGO activists etc. reveals unique type of situations arising in forest management. There are areas where people are least conscious about joint forest management and they still perceive forests as the fiefdom of government. But a small group of people are always there who are conscious of JFM but are not interested to initiate it. Therefore initiation process is tardy. This is the initial stage. Secondly, in some areas consciousness is there and people collectively take part in JFM but it is ridden with conflicts and crises people are not highly conscious and organised enough to solve these crises, coming out of smut self-centrism. This stage can be termed as prismatic or transitional stage. Today some areas in Orissa exist where JFM is a success story. The project is stable and relatively free from conflicts. There is a clear change in the traditional roles, structures and processes of protected area management. This is called successful stage.

Methodology

The present study is based on both secondary and primary sources of data collection. Government documents and fields study reports constitute the primary source and Books, Journals, articles, governmental documents and paper cuttings

form the secondary source. In the primary sources we have used a dialogical approach where individual dialogues are held with officials and villagers. This is the dialogical method in which looking for specific answer, the researcher pays heed to what ordinary men, traversing ordinary walks of life, have to say.

Chapterisation

In the first chapter an attempt has been made to give a brief description of the current status of forests in India. Along with that attention on policy, institutional, social, technological and environmental aspects of forest management, have been focussed. Various forest policies have been discussed in order to give us the idea about how the shift occurred from centralized to present decentralized community participatory management system.

The second chapter analyses about what is community participation and who are the people need to be identified and what are the methods of involving them. What type of approaches have been made in order to enlist people's movement in planning and implementation of JFM, is also discussed.

The third chapter provides an insight into the inter/intra community conflicts and crises that arise in the course of functioning of JFM. People being conditioned to anticipate and receive personal benefit, community participation involving contributions for common good and sharing of benefits will rather be difficult. Though in J.F.M. grass root organizations have been developed over the years not all of them claim stability. Even those organizations in which one finds stability, their past is marred by conflicts. As almost all JFM projects go through a transitional phase, eruption of conflicts is quite normal. Therefore, in third chapter an attempt has been made to create an effective space for conflict resolution.

In the fourth chapter an attempt has been made to give a profile of the activities of NGOs engaged in JFM programmes in India in general and Orissa in particular.

JOINT FOREST MANAGEMENT IN ORISSA

JOINT FOREST MANAGEMENT IN ORISSA

Today, experienced environmentalists opine that unless people have direct stake and interest in conservation, even the best designed projects in the world stand little chance for the long-term success. They demonstrate how indigenous participatory methods developed through years of experience, observation and experiment, provide options for sustainable management of forest resources. Therefore, everywhere in the world there is a shift towards participatory model. India has taken a lead in it by experimenting the model through joint forest management (JFM). The resurgence of JFM in India though in its early stage, has already set an example to many developing nations engaged in similar struggles to stablize and sustain their forests while alleviating rural poverty. In India the early effort of implementing JFM was made by two states: Orissa (1988) and west Bengal (1989). The focus of this chapter is to study the community based forest management in Orissa and to identify various institutional patterns that have emerged and the related major questions.

Orissa is one of the most important forest and tribal states of India. Thirty eight percent of the land area in Orissa is designated as state forest[1]. The latest assessment of ministry of environment and forests shows that Orissa is fourth highest

---

[1] Mark Poffenberger and Betsy McGean: <u>Village Voices and Forest choice, Joint Forest Management in India</u>, Delhi Oxford Univ. Press, 1996, p.33.

state in forest cover having 47,102 square kilometers of forest[2]. Due to predominance of tribal people and their heavy dependence on forest eco-system, deforestation has had a devastating impact on community subsistence livelihood. In June 1993, it was estimated that ten million people were affected by famine. Six districts of western Orissa have experienced declined water labels and recurring droughts since 1965, and both the phenomena are related to the deterioration, of region's forest[3]. Commercial logging, collection of fuelwood and overgrazing have resulted in widespread deforestation, drastically reducing the flow of forest products which are critical for survival of many tribal communities. The scenario in other districts is also grim. With a population of 3.2 crores and less than 17% of the total land area covered by good and productive forests, the situation is exploding[4]. This overwhelming live stock pressure on a shrinking resource base has prompted many researchers to predict a rapid extinction of forests in Orissa.

But remarkably, in many parts of Orissa the rural communities have shown interest to check this inevitable consequence. Through collective action, small

---

[2] Ministry of Environment and Forests : Forestry Summary, 1996.

[3] Amit Mitra and Kanti Kumar : 'Death by starvation', An article published in Journal Down to Earths, 15 June, 1993, p.32.

[4] SIDA. 'Helping Forest Dwellers of Orissa to adopt variable alternatives to shifting cultivation' (BBSR: Center for Development of Research and Training, 25 Dec. 1990).

village groups have come together to protect and reclaim degraded forest land, to prevent grazing and finally to fight against commercial logging. In some regions, with little or no assistance from the state or other outside actors, the protection groups have established access control to protect scare forest resources. This phenomenon, as Poffenberger says, is a transition from open access management 'vacuum' to controlled access and monitored utilization[5].

Though many communities in Orissa began protecting forests since 1970s, but the role of state as a partner in it started in 1980s. At a result by late 1980s, an estimated three to four thousand communities has established control over about 10% of states reserve demarcated and undemarcated forests covering nearly 5,72,000 hectares[6]. On 1st August 1988 Orissa govt. issued circulars on endorsing community managements on forest which took the lead in establishing the 'JFM scheme' defining new groups and their institutional structures, rather than simply recognizing and supporting existing local forest protection systems. By the end of 1993, about 27% of Orissa's state forests were under some type of community control[7].

---

[5] Mark Poffenberger and Samar Singh : Forest management partnerships : Regenerating Indian forests, Unasylva 170(43): 46, 1992.

[6] SPWD (1993): Joint Forest Management update, New Delhi.

[7] Orissa Forest Department, Unpublished area statement, 1993.

The history of forest management in Orissa is closely related to political history of the state. Prior to independence by and large all the forests of Orissa where managed under the Indian Forest Act (IFA) 1927, except the districts of Ganjam, Koraput and a small segment of Phulbani, where Madras Forest Act was in force. Reserved forests existed in territory of 'Mughalbandi' under IFA 1927, whereas in the princely states these were of two different categories like reserved forest 'A' and 'B'. During this period there also existed protected forests in the area under IFA 1927 and Khesra forests in princely states. The year 1948 witnessed the birth of a new state of Orissa when the then 25 princely states known as 'Garjat' region merged with costal belt known as 'Mughalbandi' region. After the merger the state govt. created 22 territorial forest zones and two research and working plan divisions, all under direct control of Chief Controller of Forests[8]. The status quo remained till 1952 when second National Forest Policy came into existence. Though the blueprint of 1952 Forest policy was prepared by the independent government, some of the tenets of the British Policy survived. This further alienated the tribal communities and local people who live in the fringe of forests. Driven to alienation poverty and frustration, local communities, which once practised restraint while using forest resources, began overexploiting them. As the resource base degraded

---

[8] Geetal Raju : Development of people's institutions for management of forests, Viksat, Ford Foundation, N. Delhi, 1993, p.10.

under these pressures, the cycle of poverty and migration intensified. Yet, as forest resource shortages became acute, in some areas village leaders drew attention to the problem suggesting strict forest controls. Voluntary patrol to regulate forest use became successful in many villages, allowing rapid regeneration to take place, while encouraging other communities to adopt similar management systems. This laid the foundation stone of JFM in Orissa. In some districts such as Dhenkanal, Nayagarh, Sundargarh and Sambalpur, the protection mechanism mostly evolved as a result of the initiatives taken by the people. These grassroot initiatives, in time, became popular during 1980s. Case reports indicate that communities' action was a response to the scarcity of resources upon which depends their survival. Villagers became increasingly aware of the fact that they could not rely only upon the government to resolve their resource crisis, and they only could solve it through their independent local actions[9]. During 1980s the state forest department was busy with large plantation oriented social forestry projects, and as a result community forestry progrommes received little attention from the state. It is in late 1980s that the state government recognized its significance and made efforts to legitimise it. It is only in 1988 that the state government issued a circular recognizing the J.F.M.

---

[9] Mark Poffenberger Ad McGean, Village Voices and Forest Choices, JFM in India : Delhi Oxford University Press, 1996, pg 26.

Most of JFM projects in Orissa today are in an experimental stage. Efforts of NGOs, govt. agencies and research organisations are devoted to make the experiment more fruitful and error and less damaging. Our focus in this chapter is to examine this transitional phase of JFM from three criteria and understand the complexity of interactions between the communities and their resources. Our observations are based on data collected from secondary sources as well as interviews conducted with the forest officials and NGOs who are directly involved in JFM programmes in Nayagarh and Dhenkanal districts of Orissa. The three-fold criteria of evaluation participatory contours that involved in our study are:

i)   The type of problems experienced in managing people's involvement and analysing it in terms of their perception, motivation and attitudes;

ii)   Identification of existing social groups in the village and to examine the type of groups harnessed for implementation of JFM programmes and the relationship between groups;

iii)   Understanding the approaches and procedures followed to involve the rural communities while initiating the project and its implementation.

ANALYSIS OF PROBLEMS AND PERCEPTIONS OF PEOPLE AND OFFICIALS

The success of JFM programme depends largely on effective people's participation at various stages of their implementation. Peoples direct involvement in the programme is necessary right form project formulation stage where decisions are taken regarding selection of site and maintenance, distribution of benefits and marketing of forest produce[10]. Most of the attempts to involve rural communities in resource management and preservation taken place during the last 10 years. There are several favourable factors that facilitated the community participation. I some areas like Lapanga (Sambalpur) and Kesharpur (Nayagarh) the presence of strong village organistion and unity of village facilitated successful community participation in forest protection. Second, the scarcity of forest produce is a major factor that induced local communities to take lead in forest protection. This phenomenon is widely observed in various districts of Orissa namely, Bolangir, Dhenkanal, Puri and Nayagarh. This finding is supported by a study undertaken by Binay ku Pattnaik and

---

[10] R.R. Prasad : "Social factors influencing promotion of social forester projects", Journal of Rural Development, vol. 9(2), p.328.

Anirudh Brahmachari[11]. According them Phulbani district which has second larger area under forest cover in state of Orissa (5.856 06 sq km.) is marked by relative absence of people's participation in forest protection and management. In comparison to other districts of Orissa, the people of Phulbani district face relatively less hardship while collecting forest resources most of the people live in the fringe of forests and they are easily accessible to forests. As they collect their requirements from the forests without any difficulty and responsibility, they are least interested to protect forest which lays responsibility. This indicates of the supply factor of forest produce which affect adopting community practice. Third, the presence of management vacuum due to ambiguous status of forest and poor state control over them encourage people in some to step in and start protection. In Dhenkanal district, for instance, many JFM projects started from this stage. Fourth, the positive effects of other villages protecting forest encourage the nearby villages also to start protecting forests. The villages like Baunshagadia, Shardhapur, Shakeri and Darapada in Nayagarh district are beneficiaries of this effect. The forest protection effort, for example, first started in Shakeri with the formation of a protection committee. As to the committee decision an able bodied person of every family kept

---

[11] Binay Ku Pattnaik and Anirudh Brahmachari: "Community based forest management practices, Field observations from Orissa", Economic and Political Weekly, April 13, 1996, pp 968.

33

for patrolling the nearby village forest to prevent felling. All the villagers pledged before the village deity to co-operate the protection effort by not cutting trees. As a result, the village forest regenerated which attracted the attention of other villagers. In few cases, like in Gamei, Kesharpur and other villages around Binjgiri hills, farmers took lead in forest protection after experiencing loss of soil fertility in their land holdings due to denudation at the foothills.

The foregoing discussion founded on the factors that motivated people to start community participatory management in Orissa. Now an overview of attitudes and perceptions of forest officials to the programme implementation is necessary. As for the officials, their attitude to programme implementation has not registered much of change in spite of they are being trained in a specially created institution (BASUNDHARA NGO) in order to impart give them an understanding of the aims and objectives of JFM[12]. These officials, in spite of the training, are not very keen to interact, discuss and evolve plans in consultation with local people. Some of them brazenly express that given the opportunity they will rather go back the regular forest department. The officials, accustomed to work in a regular forest department with inbuilt hierarchical system of administration, it is difficult to work in a different

---

[12] B.C. Muthaya and M. Loganathan "Community participation in social forestry, A dialogical Assessment", Journal of Rural Development; vol. 11(6), 1992, p.736.

work environment which is fundamentally participatory in nature. It is also discovered that there is not much of interaction between forest officials and elected representatives of people in order to work out a strategy for involving people in programmer implementation. Even in the district of Dhenkanal, where the involvement of people is believed to be very high, people complain that the forest officials are not still prepared to ease control over significant source of resource the minor forest produce (MFP) like leaves, Sal seeds and cashewnuts. The marketing of these items is under the control of tribal development co-operative corporation[13].

In some districts apart from grass root level institutions, some apex organisations have emerged to provide stability to JFM. Brukshya O' Jeevara Bandhu Parishad (BOJP) in Nayagarh, the Budhi Khamari Joint Protection Party (BJPP) in Baripada and in Bolangir Badatika Anchalika committee are prominent among them[14]. Even in these areas, at the grassroot level - the panchayat level - the local participatory institutions appear to play second fiddle to the forest officials. Above all, there is a fear of threat of the forest department officials among the people as then often whimsically decides to enforce rules, which would negate the space for forest management. For example, in Kaniha of Dhenkanal district, J.F.M. started with the

---

[13] J.J. Ray Burman "Encroachment of Forest Department into the Development Field", Mainstream, Oct. 12, 1996, pp. 30.

[14] Evolution of Orissa social forestry prospect, Phase-I, Govt. of Orissa, BBSP (Mimeo) 1987.

formation of a village forest committee (VFC). After some years, when villagers

started cutting trees according to their committee management rules, the new District

Forest Officer immediately confiscated timbers and fined villagers. Disgusted, the

village decided to have nothing more to do with JFM scheme.

ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL GROUPS IN THE VILLAGE HARNESSED FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF JFM

Traditional village governance systems among both tribal and non-tribal

communities of Orissa have maintained greater operational strength than in many

other Indian states[15]. The hamlets (Sahi) not purely comprising of homogenous

social groups have been traditionally involved in a range of community governance

activities, including the management of village water ponds, temples, gardens and

protection of forest agricultural land. But due to increasing depletion of resources

and politicisation, cracks appeared communities and caste and class conflict became

somewhat inevitable. Intra-group benefit sharing is an issue which is haunting many

JFM programmes in Orissa creating tensions between various social groups.

Generally villages practise equitable distribution by households; although in some

---

[15] A.K. Mahapatra "Ethnological Notes on Pauri Bhuinya Tribes of Orissa", Indian Forester, vol. 117, Feb, 1996.

districts there are attempts to skew distribution to disadvantaged groups (such as SCs and STs). Such attempts have met with limited success and have became a breeding ground for conflicts. In Nuasahi near Nayagarh the protection system lost its lustre as the dominant castes resisted the attempt of the local minister to do certain devours to poor low caste people by allotting them greater share of fodder collection. Finally, the JFM programme was brought back from the brink of collapse due to the intervention of district administration. The village Mahapada in Dhenkanal witnessed a conflict, threatening the collapse of JFM because of perception of unequal and favourable distribution of benefits to certain castes. The non-brahmins alleged that the brahmins cut tress defying the VFPC rules and shrug off the protection responsibilities. However, the conflict was resolved by dividing the forest patch and immediate transfer of protection to different castes.[16] As protection effort is conditioned by a coalition of different interest groups and factions within a village, any single instance of wrong perception may trigger large conflict and may lead to break-down of VFPC. Sometimes, too much scarcity of forest produce causing excessive external and internal pressure on the forest may lead to helplessness and ultimate collapse of JFM. In villages where forests are being protected by groups not representing all the sections, or social groups dissensions or resentments are

---

[16] Operation research groups (1992) OSFP Phase-I, A.Socio - economic cost benefit, BBSR, ORG.

bound to increase. The village forest committee of Lapang (Sambalpur) which looks after the day to day management of forests has only 10 to 12 members, most of them belonging to Brahmin and Kulita castes. The Dalits and women are totally unrepresented. Though all the people have right to attend the General Body Meeting of village to decide various issues, in practice only the dominant caste members take part. Since 1963 the Presidents of the committee have been Brahmins with two brief intervals. Now this village forest committee is facing resistance from lower caste Sundhis and conflicts are frequently occurring. In the long run this under representation may lead to disastrous consequences. In some village committees the protection rules are quite strict but not transparent. Dominant social groups and rural oligarchs taking advantage of this misuse the rules and reap benefits. In 1987 the villagers of Komanda (Nayagarh district) felt the constraint of fund to build a high school in their village. The VFPC decision that some teak trees should be cut and sold to get money. Some influential members in connivance with DFO and local MLA hired a contractor for the purpose. Around 200 trees were felled and village got Rs. 40,000/- instead of estimated Rs.50,000/-. But later some people of the village learnt that actual value of trees felled was more than Rs. 2 lakhs. This lack of transparency may create havoc in JFM. Therefore, for successful community management, the method of organisation should be democratic and equitable, while identifying different social groups and involving them for this purpose the organizers

should properly understand the socio-economic backgrounds of various social groups, so that they can be effectively dealt. As Walter Fernandes says, "For conservations a clear programme of action should be chalked out to satisfy the socio-economic needs of local people by creating a personal stake for different social groups in sustainable use of resources.[17]

UNDERSTANDING THE APPROACHES AND PROCEDURES FOLLOWED IN JFM PROGRAMMES OF ORISSA:

Strictly speaking JFM is not a sudden invention as it is culmination of various form of protection efforts which have been set up in India over sixty years ago. But what is new and exciting with JFM is that the manner in which the state apparatus is gearing up to develop partnership between local and Forest Department, based on documented field experience on large scale. The government has prepared new policies and is examining new technologies and forest management options, rethinking institutional needs and resources, engaging in social science research and changing its attitude towards local communities and their roles in forest management

---

[17] Walter Fernandes "Wild life and forest dwellers", in article published in 'The Hindu', 5th Feb, 1997.

in a changing environment[18]. Therefore, the JFM programmes of 1990s are operating within a definite framework and under certain principles. Though the application of these principles are different under various local conditions, certain principles have been identified as common to all. Let's discuss these principles:

Ecosystem Protection - The demand for conservation of forests for ecological stability grew due to the acknowledgement of fact of interdependence of various units in an ecological system. The state has accepted this demand and has continued a pretense of being committed to conservation for ecological purpose. However, this pretence was exposed when Orissa government issued instructions that village forests cann't be constituted out of reserve forests. This instruction rules out JFM as a viable alternative, as majority of forests in our country are reserved. Not only that but also the state govt has the power to make rules for the protection, development, management and regulation of access of individuals or communities to a village forest and distribution of usufructs. This shows that there is a growing tendency towards central control of JFM. If this trend continues local organisations and localized movement will no longer be able to take part in eco-system protection.

---

[18] Marchis Meench : Training and Planning of JFM, working paper no. 8, sustainable forest management, Ford Foundation, New Delhi, 1990.

Community Responsibility - The communities participating in JFM programmes are required to be conscious and responsible enough as forest protection is an arduous task. It has been seen that some communities so much depend on outside agencies that when these agencies or NGOs withdraw from the scene, the communities simply fail to discharge the responsibility as they are ill-prepared for the task. Some times, dominant villages within a particular area start felling tress defying widespread resentment from other villages. This is very much prevalent in Ordagoan block of Nayagarh. In some villages acute problem of seasonal unemployment compels villagers to destroy forests and sell timbers in markets[19]. The remedy of all these problems lies in community responsibility. The village leaders and active members of JFM must educate themselves about these problems so that they can responsibly act at the need of the hour.

Traditional rights and use - The local communities hold traditional rights over forests and that should not be encroached upon. The local communities depend on forests for survival and in turn have been maintaining them since ages. In spite of that govt. is too reluctant to recognise the customary right of people over forests. Most of the VFPCs in Orissa are operating on administrative orders. This slender

---

[19] Neela Mukharjee : Who felled Arjuni experiment, Hindustan Times, Dec 14, 1995.

legal standing seldom encourage them to take part in JFM. Therefore, government

need recognise the traditional rights of people, so that local communities will co-exist

with forests.

Benefit sharing - It is an issue which, currently, has led to the practice of widely

different policies in different regions of Orissa. People generally derive two kinds

of benefits from forests : (i) benefit in kind (fuelwood, fodder, medicinal plants leaf

etc.) and (ii) cash benefit (by selling bhabbar grass, sal and teak trees). People

derive these benefits as on individual members or group as a whole. Some

researchers point out that the benefit in kind is relatively free from problems but

recognition of cash benefit vastly increase the potential of intra-group conflict. To

resolve this problem, a common village fund should be established and the direct

cash benefits should be channelised to that account, which may be spent for

community purposes. Another issue which haunts the JFM projects is revenue

sharing with govt or outside parties[20]. Some NGOs argue that govt should

completely withdraw from revenue field and communities should be given complete

ownership. But, this argument seems far from sound as once the govt's revenue

share is removed motivation of forestry staff to handover, advise, assist and monitor

---

[20] Messerchamidt et al Forest User Groups in Nepal Perspectives an What Works and Why, 1992.

community forests diminishes. Furthermore, without revenue sharing govt will never handover the high quality productive forests to local communities.

Use of traditional skills and knowledge - The success of any policy on people's participation depends on the scope it provides to people to innovate, experiment or effectively utilize their traditional knowledge base. But, the extreme faith placed by colonial and post colonial India state on experts and international organisations and attempts to impose policies from above have eroded the traditional skills. In this context the obvious question is : Does the policy of Joint forest management provide sufficient scope for revival of relevant traditional skills and development of local knowledge base ? A befitting answer is given to this question by the people living around Binjgiri hills (Nayagarh dist.) who adopted successfully, the time tested local methods in protection of forests and solving intra-community conflicts[21]. Therefore, JFM system must adopt different local skills and knowledge in different local context to secure genuine participation, instead of the principles developed in labs without having any human touch.

---

[21]   Sashi Kaul : Gandhian approach to management of forests as common properly resource : A case study of Binjgiri hill (Orissa), India, (Paper presented at first annual meeting of International association for study of common property at Duke University, Durham N.C. 27-30, Sept 1990) pp. 5.

Gender Equity - In many of the JFM programmes in Orissa, women are no where in the scene. As Orissa is predominantly male dominated society and women are relatively less assertive, gender equity is not an issue. However, scholars argue that there is a need of identifying women as full members along with other members of family because forest products are becoming more commercialized and cash revenue is involved[22]. Furthermore, government forests are public property to which women have legal access equal to that of men. Therefore, a productive approach identifying women is needed which will provide them their constitutional rights as well as introduce a mechanism for promoting their voice in a culturally constrained setting.

Effective conflict resolution - All most every JFM projects of Orissa experience conflict and crises. conflicts may occur over the issue of demarcation of boundaries, closure of forest patches resulting in stealing of timber, quality of vegetation cover etc. Without creating an effective mechanism for conflict resolution, the possibility of implementing JFM effectively seems remote. For an effective conflict resolution, a comprehensive programme, policy support and strong participatory spirit are needed. A change in policy programme is the need of hour which will provide fillip

---

[22] H. Egneous and R. Ray: Women's attitude to social forestry, A study of 31 villages in Orissa, BBSr , SIDA and ISO, 1992.

to current travail of people to conserve the natural resources and will infuse new institutional pattern which will deal such conflict effectively[23].

From above discussion it is clear that the community based forest management practices in Orissa are more of an evolution from below than imposition from above. In other states forest departments are administratively involved with JFM, while in Orissa it is trying to involve itself with community based management forests. Another point is that a close examination of JFM projects in Orissa shows that they are deficient in many aspects and the institutional pattern followed in JFM is unstable. Some projects run in such a way that in the strict sense of the term they may not come under JFM. However, one cannot deny that despite deficiencies JFM programmes in Orissa have achieved success. As to Poffenberger, "the seeds of Orissa's future forest lies in indigenous system of management of forest based communities".

---

[23] Marh Poffenberger and Samar Singh : Forest Management Partnerships : Regenerating Indian Forests. Unasyliva 170 (43): 46, 1996.

Types of Local Forest Management Institutions

Inputs	Local Political Representatives	NGO Resource Persons	Traditional Leaders	National/State Policy Support	Forest Department	Donor Agencies	Statutory Body	Govt. Dept./NGO	Grassroots Organization Movement
Type	LOCAL INITIATIVE			FOREST DEPARTMENT PROMOTED			GOVERNMENT/NGO/ LOCAL INITIATIVE BROADER MANDATE		
Examples	Jungle samiti, youth club	Council of elders, village council, shamilat forest, sacred groves		Yan Panchayats, forest co-operative, forest labour co-op	FPC, VFPC, HRMS		Gram Panchayats, Tree Growers Co-op, Gram Yikas Mandal, Mahila Mandal		Chhatisgarh Mukti Morcha, Ghad forest users sign, CHIPKO
Locations	Orissa, Bihar, Rajasthan, Gujarat	Orissa, Punjab, Karnataka, Rajasthan (most states)		U.P., H.P., Gujarat	West Bengal, Orissa, J & K, Haryana		All states, Gujarat, H.P.		M.P., U.P., Karnataka
Characteristics	Informal hamlet group, tribal areas, strong forest dependency, up to 20-30 years old, some more recent	Informal clan, caste or hamlet, pastoral areas, rainfed agriculture, strong forest plus grassland dependency, some over 100 years old		State government/ F.D. recognized, older	Created/promoted by F.D., a few with legal autonomy, most F.D. dependent, more recent		Multiple functions including forest protection, diverse mandates		Lobbying for local rights, strong grass roots base

Major Forest Protection Zones in Orissa

Zones	District	Zones	District
Baripada	Mayurbhanj	Deogaon-Saitala	Balangir
Nilgiri	Baleshwar	Jeypore	Koraput
Nindol	Dhenkanal	Phulbani-Boudh	Phulbani
Joranda-Gondia	Dhenkanal	Nayagarh	Nayagarh
Deograh-Barkot	Sambalpur and	Tangi-Banpur	Khurda
	Dhenkanal	Bonai	Sundargarh
Keonjhar Sadar		Kodala	Ganjam
Champua	Keonjhar	Khaparkhol	Balangir
Sundergarh	Sundergarh		
Kolabira	Sambalpur		
Rangali	Sambalpur		
Loisingha-Agalpur	Balangir		

Districtwise Distribution of Joint Forest Management Projects

District	RF		PF		Total	
	No. of Organisations	Area in ha	No. of Organisations	Area in ha	No. of Ogranisations	Area in ha
Koraput	30	1600	184	9400	214	11000
Khenkanal	44	12000	220	44500	264	56500
Mayurbhanj	141	40000	47	14800	188	54800
Sundargarh	3	700	231	35000	234	35700
Sub Total	218	543000	682	103700	900	158000
Keonjhar	62	3500	6	900	68	4400
Ganjam	3	1300	4	100	7	1400
Phulbani	12	500	18	600	30	1100
Puri	7	6000	4	300	11	6300
Ralangir	5	900	81	6000	86	6900
Sambalpur	1	500	26	2500	27	3000
Kalahandi					19	2000
Cuttack	10	1000	19	2000	18	1400
Balasore	15	2400	8	400	15	2400
Sub Total	115	15100	166	12800	281	28900
Grant Total	333	70400	848	116500	1181	186900

JOINT FOREST MANAGEMENT : CREATING A SPACE FOR EFFECTIVE CONFLICT RESOLUTION

JOINT FOREST MANAGEMENT : CREATING A SPACE FOR EFFECTIVE CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The Joint Forest Management system developed in Orissa proves that the local communities can effectively manage forest resources. JFM which has encouraged the trend of voluntary forest protection by villagers with the help of local forest officials is extremely desirable both from the environmental and development perspectives. It has the potential of becoming a effective solution to the problems of depletion and degradation of forests and of village development. Though, through JFM a number of grass root level organisations have evolved over the years, not all of them can claim stability. As every JFM programme is passing through a transitional phase, eruption of periodic conflicts is inevitable. Prof. Madhu Sarin opines, "a certain amount of conflict is inevitable as village forest committees under JFM persuade, its members to forsake some individual benefits or freedom for a larger common goal".

The potential sources of conflict in JFM can be divided into five categories: (i) Equity (ii) Legal identity (iii) Markets and external pressure, (iv) Inter-community conflicts and (v) Intra-community conflicts. Each of these conflicts disturb the stability of JFM project. Therefore, the stability of a JFM project depends on the capacity of the parties involved to resolve the conflicts. To achieve stability and

46

sustainability, it is quite essential that JFM projects evolve effective conflict resolution mechanism. The focus of this chapter is to discuss the major sources of conflict in JFM and the effective methods evolved by local communities that can reduce conflict.

Equity - The major threat posited to joint forest management practices is the equity considerations. Village which start earlier acquire large chunk of the forest areas for protection, leaving small areas for the late-comers in the vicinity. Also there are villages that do not have any forest area under their protection but do need forest produce. If the needs of these remote villages are not met, conflict erupts which is likely to make the JFM project unstable. For example, Sundarkhol Ranger in the Dhenkanal district, recorded an undercurrent of tension between Kadalipal, the protecting village in the vicinity, and the remote village Kantabati due to lack of the latter's access to the forest resources. As JFM projects organize community groups, the parties involved in it must consider formal and informal resource rights. Most Indian communities carry with them a long legacy of resource rights and traditions, some of which date back to centuries. Many of these rights were recorded by the government under the Forest Settlement Acts made by the colonial government in late nineteenth or early twentieth century. In some regions also informal agreements were made acknowledging the resource rights, between neighbouring villages in

47

order to prevent equity conflicts. But in Orissa, due to poor documentation and differential perceptions, the process of working out mutual acceptable agreements relating to equity rights often encounters complexity[1].

When the Orissa Forest Department began accelerating its JFM programme in hill districts, certain residence of adjoining and distant villages protested that JFM agreements were being exclusively negotiated only one of the numerous final user groups living at the fringe of forests. In some cases, those more distant villages claimed greater equity rights to the forest area than villages situated closer. Some villagers claimed their rights based on the earlier residence in the area, while others based their claims on prior agreements with the forest department or other government agency. Several distant communities asserted product specific right based on past usufruct (right to fodder). In the Ordagaon block of Nayagarh district, several agreements drafted earlier with single villages near the forests had to be modified later to eliminate conflict produced by the unintended exclusion of other user groups. In Sakeri village the village Forest Protection Committee (VFPC), entered into a lease agreement with Orissa Forest Department for joint management of nearby forest areas. The income from the annual leases went into the VFPC

---

[1] Neera M. Singh and Kundan K. Singh : Community Based Forest Management Systems; The Balangir Experience, 1992.

account to support general villager development. Eight years later, the leaders of the adjoining villages - Gunthasahi, Garjani, Kusadeepa etc. - protested against their exclusion, claiming that their villages enjoyed exclusive rights on a major chunk of the forest area protected by Sakeri VFPC. The situation became out of control when the villager of Garjani went in a rampage felling down the valuable 'Sal' trees. Being alarmed by the violent activities of the villagers the Forest Department called a joint meeting of the concerned villages for the resolution of the conflict. While, forest settlement agreement of 1938, mentions no such demarcation of territory between individual villages, the Forest Department was almost compelled to accept the claims of the belligerent villages as the boundary pillars mentioned by villagers were found in the forest. Later, accepting the claims the JFM support team facilitated renegotiation of boundaries and use agreement by organising frequent joint meetings of the concerned villages. Subsequent problems related to lease pricing similarly resolved through consultative discussions among the concerned villages.

In some other region of Orissa, villages located far from forest areas have legal settlements and "nistar" rights relating to equity. While it is difficult for the distant villages to participate in day-to-day protection and management under JFM scheme, they can not simply be excluded from JFM agreement unless either the rights conceived is changed or distant right - holders agree to delegate the forest

management responsibility to more proximate groups on mutual terms of access. The inability to negotiate mutually agreed equity terms can result in the collapse of local organisations as well as the destruction of regenerated forests. In some cases, with self initiated forest protection groups and formally recognised VFPCs, communities dissatisfied over equity considerations have conducted mass loots[2].

In Dandakaranya forest area, Koraput district, the traditional right holders are very unaccommodating. While prosperous Brahmin and Khandayats of this area claim traditional rights over the adjoining forest compartment, their dependence on it for fuel only is indeed marginal. In contrast, the tribals of the area depend heavily on the forest for their income, demand equal rights over the forest. Despite a series of meetings and the interventions by several voluntary organizations the higher castes refused to allow the tribals, the equity rights over the forests. As no consensus could be reached, a Joint management agreement failed miserably. Apart from traditional right holders, a large number of people in Orissa who are displaced due to large dam and other big developmental projects, Steel Industries, famines and other natural disasters also depend on the forest resources. Some times the Indian government is rehabilitating the refugees (like the Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka in

[2]   Neela Mukharjee "Who felled Arjuni experiment", Hindustan Times, Thursday, Dec 14, 1995.

Dandakaranya forest), who commonly become heavily dependent on forest resources. When these migrant communities plead for equity rights over the existing forests, the traditional right - holding community becomes reluctant to extend support to migrants. This unaccommodating attitude of the traditional user groups leads to tension between the migrants and local user groups. In such regions the Forest Departments entering into JFM agreement, faces a dilemma in determining whether higher priority should be given to the older, traditional right - holding communities or to migrants with stronger forest dependencies[3]. Therefore, to avoid future conflicts the JFM effort needs to take care of this 'ecological or development refugees', at the same time taking into account the rights of traditional user groups.

Another point is that the question of equity needs to be assessed by taking the cost and benefit into account[4]. The costs incurred by the poor in protecting forests is relatively higher compared to that of rich. Firstly, in 'Thengapalli' system, the loss due to the patrolling duty for the poor is more than that for the rich. Secondly, loss of income through head loadings and patrolling duty might mean loss of daily

---

[3] Madhu Sarin "From Conflict to Collaboration", Institutional Issues in Community Management : In Poffenberger and Betsy McGan (Eds.) : Village Voices, Forest Choices : JFM in India, Delhi 1996.

[4] Kanchan Chopra, K.K. Gopal and M.N. Murthy : Participatory Development People and Common Property Resources, Sagar Publication, New, Delhi, 1990, pp.18.

wage for the poor. Since the poor is more dependent on non timber forest produce (NTFP), the greater resources produced from the protected forests by re-generation should benefit them the most. Wherever this factor is overlooked while making commitments to equity, conflict and crises are bound to occur.

Experience indicates that the most effective local forest management groups have evolved various conflict resolution mechanism to minimise the conflicts relating to equity. As far as the equity is concerned, it is predominantly a function of the way the forest is protected and managed by the community. It is often a reflection of the power dynamics of the village and inequalities persisting in the village social structure. In some cases, judicious external intervention in this respect has proved successful to make management practices more equitable. But in areas where villages are already protecting forests and particularly where large areas are under protection, changing inequalities through the process of redistribution has been difficult. Owing to the complexity of the issue of equity, it would be difficult to do anything substantial except perhaps making available by some means the forest produces to the population in the vicinity not protecting any patch.

To deal with this issue effectively the experience and technique of Haryana Forest Department is worthy enough to emulate. The Haryana Forest Department

has applied a simple mapping technique which serve as an effective planning tool[5]. The existing use patterns are mapped with members of different groups to illuminate formal and informal rights and resource dependencies. This information provides a sound basis for discussion regarding the terms of the management agreement. In Haryana, the user groups living at distances of three to five kilometres from the forest, and therefore unable to participate in daily protection and management, have been allotted secondary usufruct rights. The primary users who tend to reside closer to the forest area, enter into the JFM agreement with forest department and accept primary management responsibility while permitting continued access to the secondary users on clearly defined terms. This compromise strategy helps to prevent the inequitable excluding of periodic benefits to the more distant secondary users, while also formalising the access rules and clarifying the range of user rights in the villagers' minds.

With India's growing migrant population spurred by developmental projects, environmental deterioration or new economic opportunities, the challenge is to strike a balance between the migrants and traditional users in the redistribution of forest

---

[5] Participatory Forest Management in Shivalik Hills : Experiences of Haryana Forest Department, Sustainable Forest Management, Working Paper no. 5, Ford Foundation, New Delhi, 1990.

access on the basis of better equity. This requires a better understanding of sustainable forest-use levels, historical and socio-political dynamics and the forest dependencies of the traditional and migrant user groups. If consensus can be achieved, local user groups and the migrants can be united under JFM agreement which has a far better chance of sustaining it.

As to the Financial and Legal equity is concerned both in India and Orissa under JFM, community forest lands continue to belong to the government, even though management authority and rights to products have been transferred to communities. The government, as landlord and national custodian, retains rights and continues to bear experiences in relation to these resources which need to be sustained. But such activities of the government are not always transparent. In order to make JFM projects more sustainable, these activities of the government should be comprehensive and transparent to the whole community.

In the process of arbitration of conflict relating to equity, the role of governmental institutions is also important. The Haryana experience shows that the constant political and institutional flux, including repeated transfers of forest department personnel has resulted in placement of individuals with widely differing

attitudes, understanding and priorities concerning JFM[6]. This has disrupted the process of dialogue and confidence building, necessary to solve equity related conflicts. This problem also haunts the forest department of Orissa. Therefore, this aspect needs to be given more attention while dealing with equity issues.

Legal Conflict - The local communities are the most effective institutions for forest protection and conflict resolution at the local level. But for this purpose they need the legal backup and stronger enforcement capabilities of the government in dealing with inter/intra community conflicts and difficult offenders. In Orissa, the formal VFPCs formed and statutory bodies and are operating on administrative orders. Lack of legal standing deprived them of taking action against the offenders. In some cases, the lack of legal standing of VFPCs have led to legal disputes questioning the right of the VFPCs over areas being protected by them. Sometimes, powerful offenders raise question about the legitimacy of these VFPCs formed under JFM. The VFPCs adopt various ways to deal with offenders including verbal warnings, fines, threats of social ostracism or turning them over to the forest departments. Warning seems to be used most commonly, especially with first-time offenders. Fines are often divided on offenders with previous records of warnings. Imposing

---

[6] S. Sarkar, N. Singh and A. Kothari : Joint management of protected areas in India : Report of a workshop, IIPA, New Delhi, 1995.

fines or other forms of penalties, sometimes, becomes problematic as it raises the issue of the VFPC's legal authority. Court cases have been filed against forest closure enforced by various community groups. For Example, the president of the Protection Committee of Hardattal in Balangir district of Orissa was arrested because the group has detained cows that had entered to their patch of forests[7]. Similar problems are encountered by groups when they attempt to close forest tracts in which other villagers also have rights. The Gamtalao FPC in Gujarat witnessed a violent conflict when a forest watcher impounded the buffalo belonging to a powerful person of a nearby village. The person accompanied by ruffians threatened the Gamtalao FPC members questioning their right over the forests. However the representatives of both the villages met and agreed to extract a fine of Rs. 120 from the man, for illegally grazing his animals in Gamtalao forests[8].

Community which work in active collaboration with the forest department are given very slender legal authority to punish the offender. Due to slender legal

---

[7] Mark Poffenberger : The Resurgence of Community Forest management; Case studies from Eastern India (a report prepared for Liz Claiborne and Art Ortenberg Foundation Community based Conservation Workshop) 18 to 12 Oct. 1993.

[8] Madhu Sarin "From conflict to collaboration : Institutional issues in community management", In Poffenberger and MaeGean (Ed.) : Village voices and forest choices, A study of JFM in India, 1995, pp. 194.

56

standing these communities are prone to turning over offenders to the local forest officials. For example, in Salboni village of West Bengal the local VFPC repeatedly warned an individual for cutting the forest for commercial firewood. One day discovering him loading a cart with fuelwood, a group of fifteen FPC members dragged the offender alongwith the cart to the range office guard. Though the guard eventually let him off with small fine, the offender who promised to reform himself could not do so rather again started wood felling.

Sometimes, trouble arises when forest department field staff fail to provide promised legal back-up to VFPCs which are promoted under JFM programmes. since VFPCs are not legally empowered to punish outsiders, it may result in serious loss of credibility for them. Sometimes, VFPCs repeatedly bring offenders to the attention of forest department field staff, but the field staff avoid taking action, which creates frustration. In this case, if the VFPC is unable to regulate the access of outsiders, even its own members begin ignoring the rules framed by community. Finally, it leads to the rapid collapse of JFM. In certain cases 'mass loots occur where dozen even hundreds of villagers from outside communities join enmasse to fell a regenerating forest during night. Often protection group members gather with lathis and spears, bows and arrows etc. to resist them. This confrontation brings the situation to the brink of disaster. In this situation the support of local forest official to protected community is quite critical as it can effectively break up looting.

57

Other issues which lead to legal conflict is tenurial rights and revenue-sharing with govt. Before going to lunch JFM project an agreement is made between the protecting community and FD, specifying the tenurial rights. As to this right the protecting community is entitled to reap timbers after a fixed period. But, sometimes, due to inflexible attitude of FD and lack of legal guarantee of these rights in some cases, the local community is deprived of timber when felling time comes. Either the FD does not arrange for felling of trees or confiscate timber when the local VFPC starts felling trees as to earlier agreement. This adds to frustration of local communities and illicit felling becomes rampant. According to the villagers of Arjuni village of West Bengal, the FD after completion of earlier committed 5 years term, failed to arrange the felling of trees, as a result of which large number of people felled the trees and sold it in near by market[9]. It led to virtual collapse of JFM project. But the official version is different, As to FD, it failed to organise felling because JFM agreement for five years was still to be completed.

Under JFM the total revenue is shared between people and government. The more the high-quality productive forests the greater the revenue share of government. The revenue share of the government give more incentive to forest staff to participate

[9] Neela Mukharjee, "Forest management and survival needs : community experience in west Bengal", Economic and Political Weekly, Dec 9, 1995.

in the JFM project. As JFM projects work on administrative orders without proper legal recognisation, sometimes forest officials and committees members absorb the revenue adopting corrupt practices. In some areas these corrupt practices are so rampant that the common man being deprived of its right questions the legality of protection committees.

Now the question of solving these legal conflict comes. Already various JFM projects have used a range of approaches to deal with legal conflict arising out of 'access control'. Their strategy mainly focus on to achieve consensus among all or majority of community regarding the establishment of boundary demarcations, patrols and watchers fines, extraction fees and seasonal limits. However, this process of evolving consensus on rules that regulate access may be highly sensitive, requiring months even years. A primary objective of forest management is to control access to the resource. If this does not place any major restrictions on community member activities, consensus on the necessary rules for restraining outsiders will be relatively easy to achieve. But, if controlling access requires complete closure, reaching consensus will be difficult if viable alternatives are not provided. A dominant subgroup may succeed in enforcing closure to suit its own interests, but the system is unlikely to be sustained as the subgroup lacks sufficient legal authority. Therefore, devolution of some sort of legal power to the VFPCs is required as they

can impose sanctions on the offenders and conveniently deal with the legal battles. But while conferring power to VFPC it should be made mandatory that in case of an imposition of sanction, a resolution to that effect should be passed in a General Body Meeting (GBM) of majority of all villagers of the concerned village. As far as the revenue sharing with government or any outside body is concerned, all the rules to that effect need to be made before the broad based representative body of the concerned villages. To boost the morale of the poor people to work for protection of forests, the rampant corruption, nepotism and favouritism of the forest officials and committee members also needs to be checked. In order to change the attitude of the forest officials, adequate trainings and frequent orientation programmes may serve the purpose. At the sametime adequate steps should be taken to free the VFPCs from the clutches of the vested interests.

Conflict Relating to Market Pressure - As timber and fuel wood become scarce, the market prices tend to increase. This has two types of effects on JFM. First, the increasing temptation to sell the timber and fuel wood within the villagers creates conflicts among the protecting community, thereby creating instability in the grass-root organisation. The situation becomes worse when JFM projects are situated near the towns as it is easy to cut trees and sell them in vicinity. The 'Arjuni' village experience shows when the timber prices sky-rocketed in the nearby town, the

'Arjuni' forest area started recording a large number of illegal felling. Even such felling continued till all timber trees near inhabited areas surrounding the forest were illegally felled. The problem became almost unmanageable after some time when the number of thieves became much bigger than what the committee could physically handle. The Forest Protection Committee lost control in the midst of so many timber thieves, some of whom attacked the committee members and created socio-political cleavages in the close-knit 'Arjuni' village. Secondly, due to increasing the value of the forest resources, the external threats from timber smugglers and others increase. The dense forests in Mahanadi river bank near Gania block of Nayagarh district, which are under JFM has witnessed many bloody conflicts between the timber contractors and forest officials backed by villagers. As the value of 'Sal' trees in these forests is worth lakhs of rupees, more conflicts in the near future are bound to occur.

To case the market pressure on JFM areas, new market strategy, change in bureaucratic structure, and new livelihood strategy need to be drafted based on traditional knowledge[10]. Government support also is needed to assist communities to redraw these strategies.

---

[10] Ian Napier; Community Management/user groups (Group-A); Working paper on sustainable Forest Management, Ford Foundation, New Delhi, 1990.

Inter Community Conflicts - Inter Community conflicts often arise over denial of forest access or the usurpation of the rights of the weaker community by more powerful one. Conflicts can also emerge with the forest department over direct clear-felling of forests on which local villagers are highly dependent. Sometimes the forest departments sell of timber rights to commercial or industrial interests, neglecting the rules of JFM causes enough heart-burning among the villagers involved in forest protection. Where JFM programmes have been initiated by forest departments, conflicts with different villages may be generated over the imposition of inappropriate rules or demands, allotment of greater patches to relatively powerful village and forest departments failure to understand the community problems, priorities or knowledge. In many cases the powerful village takes off large areas of protection, leaving small areas for other neighbouring villages and thereby sowing the seed of inter-community conflict. The social conflict in 1992 between 'Badatika' and 'Sahajachapan' in Bolangir district is one instance of such conflict erupting because of the size of the area acquired for protection. Often social conflict between villages also occur on account of the quality of the vegetation cover. For example, a serious conflict erupted between 'Nagiapas' and 'Beltigiri' in Dhenkanal district (1992), because villagers of 'Beltigiri' perceived that forest patch assigned to 'Nagiapas' as a better vegetative cover[11].

---

[11] Binoy Kumar Pattanayak and Anirudha Brahmachari, "Community Based Forest Management Practices, Field observations from Orissa," Economic and Political Weekly, April 13, 1996.

62

Another factor which leads to inter-village conflict is the development of feeling among various villages about the inequitablity of the benefit division and distribution mechanism. If the JFM system is perceived to be equitable and operating smoothly, the management committee will gain legitimacy and support of the members belonging to different communities. Alternative, if the system is seen as biased, corrupt and inefficient, the organisation may loose credibility and ultimately the project collapse for lack of support from different concerned communities.

Now, let us examine different mechanism developed for resolution of inter-village conflicts. The most effective mechanism for resolution of inter-village conflict is frequent or regular general body or gram-sabha meetings. In Orissa, many JFM groups organise such meetings, binding all members to attend them. In these meetings attendance is taken seriously as the penalty for non-participation may amount to loss of membership. Representative leaders from each hamlet or each village also attend. If a conflict can not be resolved through open discussion, the leadership is also expected to step-in. If the collective leadership is unable to arrive at a satisfactory decision, the responsibility passes over the one or more respected individuals whose decision then become binding. Inter-village conflicts may also be resolved through discussion and negotiation among the leaders of the concerned

63

villages, particularly where the presence of forest department is visibly weak. In other areas where villagers participating in forest management with active encouragement from forest department, the field staff often play a neutral role as facilitator. The JFM support team in Haryana has frequently been called upon by the protecting villages to assist them in resolving the inter-community conflicts.

Intra-community conflicts - The inter-village conflicts are quite common in Orissa, as the village communities are heterogenous with prominent class, caste and communal differences. Wide variations in the nature and types of forest dependencies in different sub-groups, is also there. The frequent clash of interests between a grazier sub-group desiring forest access and other groups desiring closure to facilitate regeneration is a daily phenomena. Forest protection is basically a coalition of different factions and interest-groups within the village, coming together for a common cause that offers benefits to all. As local communities perceive JFM as a gain-gain situation, it is relatively easier to form a coalition. All the sections within a community think to gain from forest protection efforts although the relative gains are not same for all. When big-gap in relative gains of different appears sections, intra-community conflict arises. The coalition is also prone to break-down in situations of intra-community conflicts which is a product of the inherent contradictions within a village community. In other cases, the perception of

inequitable distribution of forest produce may lead to conflict among groups. In some JFM projects it has also been experienced that villages where forests are protected by groups not representing all the sections, frequent intra-community conflicts are the order of the day.

However, to minimise and resolve intra-community conflicts, the attempt of villagers has not lagged behind. The third party intervention policy applied in certain JFM projects has proved highly successful in resolving conflicts. For example, the Apex people's organisation like 'Brukshya O Jeevar Bandhu Parishad (BOJBP) at Kesharpur in Nayagarh district has been effective in mediating and setting intra-community conflicts. The absence of serious conflicts in and among villages protecting 'Binjgiri Hill' (Kasharpur) is an ideal illustration[12]. Apart from it for conflict resolution, we suggest that, where JFM projects are undergoing in a transitional phase, a permanent high-level committee consisting of the intellectuals, the local politicians, local NGO representatives and officers from district administration, should be formed to work-out a broad-based solution. This committee may serve as an effective third-party.

---

[12] Sashikant : Community Based Forest Management Systems; Case Studies from Orissa, IIFM, SIDA, SWED/Forest, New Delhi, 1991.

The Udaipur JFM experience (Rajasthan) gives an important lesson. Here, due to increasing commercialization of the timber, the cash benefit increased. As in most of the states in India, a share of the income derived from the timber is given to the local community, the Rajasthan forest department gave a share of the direct cash benefit to people in the same line. But this direct cash benefit instilled selfishness among the participating people. They tried to get more cash-benefits by organising tree-felling before the agreed maturity period. However, to solve the problem, the local NGO's suggested the government not to give direct cash benefits to the individual coffers instead channelize it to a common fund. Later, the government implemented the suggestion and a common fund was created and the direct cash benefit was deposited in it. This common resource was used for community festivals, village Puja, village Drama, etc. and providing funds for marriage of grown-up girls of poor families of the villages[13]. On the other hand, to compensate the loss of individual cash benefit, the benefit in kind was increased. This experiment proved highly beneficial as it infused a feeling of cohesiveness among village-folk, reducing the potential of intra-community conflict. This is an ideal experience which can be emulated by the forest department and local communities of Orissa.

---

[13] Deep Narayan Pandey "Participatory Forest Management in Udaipur", An Article Published in Yojana, July, 1996.

From the above discussion, it is clear that the Forest Protection Groups (FPGs) in India, and in Orissa, in particular, have clearly defined roles and institutions to deal with various types of conflicts. particularly in tribal areas, these resolving Institutions are deeply rooted in their strong traditions of collective action. Therefore, it would be of immense help for the forest department and other JFM supporting institutions to further study these indigenous communities and develop more sophisticated guide-lines and institutional framework to deal with conflict.

ROLE OF NGOS IN JOINT FOREST MANAGEMENT

ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION (NGO)

IN JOINT FOREST MANAGEMENT

Recent years have witnessed a resurgence of interest in India in grassroot organisations as a vital instrument for creating greater avenues of community participation in people centred developmental projects. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) form a crucial component of such grassroot agencies generally known for supportive collective action through community participation. The people centred programmes, particularly those implemented by people's organisations demand a different approach. This approach involves qualitative aspects such as community participation, improvement of people, spreading awareness, imparting skill sand expertise, instilling motivations, bringing attitudinal change etc. NGOs are quite adept in it and the magnitude of such efforts by voluntary organisations is gradually increasing due to supportive policies from governments in promoting voluntary action and inadequacies of bureaucratic governmental interventions.

Joint Forest Management (JFM) is basically a people oriented approach to the management of forest resources. JFM, as per discussion in preceding chapters indicates, it can not operate in a vaccum. Associated with governmental institutions,

a number of non-governmental institutions operate in JFM, concerned with research, training, donation and other allied activities. Further, it must be remembered that most of the attempts to involve the rural communities in JFM, have taken place in last 10 years and there has been insufficient understanding of the complexity of interactions between communities and their resources and the many factors which can encourage as well as discourage people to take part in JFM. This is an area that NGOs have increasingly stepped into, provide the additional services, communities need to manage effectively their forest resources.

The focus of this chapter is to evaluate the role of NGOs in joint forest management and identify the important services NGOs provide. The evaluation includes both tangible (beneficiaries covered, money spent, staff recruited, production figures, profits etc.) and intangible (people's participation in decision making, level of awareness, leadership and programme assistance) indicator. The project areas involved in this evaluation are basically an all India level with a special reference to Orissa. With powerful national and international NGOs entering into the scene and extending support to local organisations of people, there is a spurt of interest among local communities to assert their rights on forest resources. In order to evoke interest among local communities, the NGOs provide a number of support services to the local people. They are identified as :

Technical and managerial support - Direct partnership of larger international, national and state level NGOs with government in supporting community forestry has been pioneered in West Bengal, Gujrat and Orissa. Apart from direct project activities, these NGOs have demonstrated important abilities to work as intermediary organisations to build local NGOs and impart training to forest officials. Given the meagre resources and lack of skills of forest officials and local people, this sector requires concerted long-term training and financial inputs from national and international NGOs as well as govt. NGO support appears to have the greatest potential for widespread impact when it is targeted to provide technical and financial training and resources support. Experiences from Orissa shows that the use of untrained local forest officials and village committees in developing plantations and forest management schemes, have generally met with much less success[1]. Based on experience to date, NGOs while imparting training performs following functions :

(a) training forest department staff and community forest leaders, (b) conducting community level publicity and extension services, (c) developing operational /micro planning tools and serving as facilitator between the community and forest department, (d) assisting communities in developing participatory monitoring methodologies, (e) selected multi-disciplinary studies, particularly in social science

---

[1] Nalini Ranjan Jena : Project tiger and people : A report on similipal, Mimeo, Jyoti Vihar, Sambalpur.

departments, (f) establishing marketing information networks, (g) forming women's groups and firm forestry associations, (h) providing technical support for small scale, non-timber forest product processing and energy alternatives and (i) providing training to local level NGOs in accounting, forestry and management.

A number of NGOs are increasingly active in imparting training and promoting community forestry. They are best suited for the purpose as they take a more holistic view of the problems facing local people and impart training in a wider developmental agenda that is beyond the scope of forest department. There are numerous examples of NGOs engaged in these activities. For instance, CARE, a NGO engaged in agriculture, soil conservation and community forestry in Nepal targeted small subgroups of women, students and occupational class. The project staff interacted with villagers and prepared an operational plan. Initially, the project attracted relatively low participation. But, when CARE started training and excursion of both staff and farmers, to both failed and successful projects inside and outside of the project area, it created a sense of competition among farmers to improve their forest management[2]. SAMBHAB, an Orissa based NGO is currently engaged in developing skills of people for better management of forests by focusing

---

[2]   Marcus Monach : Training and planning of JFM, working paper no. 8, sustainable forest management; Ford foundation, New Delhi (1990).

71

on teaching people to use alternative technology to reduce fuelwood consumption, such as, water heaters, solar water heaters and micro hydro plants.

Use of indigenous knowledge in conservation - The NGO activities at the grassroot level are based on people's knowledge that has for centuries ensured a sustainable use of resource. This local knowledge based on sustainable culture has been weakened because of the impoverishment of local communities. This knowledge systems are alive but are disappearing slowly. Today, if revived, then can be creatively used to protect forests and wildlife. For its revival, NGOs can provide the best possible external support. For native people, forest is not just an inventory of natural resources but represents the spiritual and cosmic forces that make life what it is. There are some tribal communities in Africa those who are experts in using as well as caring the forest. They have discovered a plant (Pittu plant) to protect their medicinal gardens[3]. This is so dangerous that if people touch it or even go near it, they will instantly die. Therefore, they plant it in secret in specialized medicinal gardens. Fear of coming into contact with 'Pittu' is sufficient to keep out unwanted guests in these gardens and to guarantee the secrecy of garden and its contents. This type of expert knowledge only can be revived and used by

---

[3] Kilaparti Ramakrishna and George M. Woodwell : World Forests for future; their use and conservation, Yale University Press, 1993, pp.63.

72

NGOs as they are considered more proximate to people than the forest department. Here too, one should wary of romanticising their knowledge. A modern state does not only stand for protection; it prefers protection and development in a sustainable way. The local knowledge alone is not sufficient to maintain this sustainability in a changed environment. To achieve it one also needs the scientific knowledge developed by modern experts. So, a fusion of scientific and traditional knowledge can serve our purpose best. But, FD (Forest department) which is generally routine based can not do this as it lacks the initiative and people see it as alien. NGOs which are working with people can find the way of getting scientific and traditional knowledge to interact with each other and play a complementary role.

Seeking Justice through Judicial intervention - Despite efforts over past twenty years, the loss of forest wealth has continued unabated. There has been a serious loss of already fragile forest areas which has affected the livelihood of local population in a serious manner. But the entry of NGOs in the field of community forestry has changed the scenario to some extent. Some of the NGOs have gone to the extent of pleading before court on behalf of people to break the nexus of vested interests with forest officials and to protect forests. The recently passed Supreme court's interim order on a public interest litigation (PIL) is extremely important

having wide ramifications[4]. According to this judgement, the court has banned all non-forest activities including saw-mills, Veener or plywood mills and minings in forest areas. It has also prohibited transport of timber or wood by any means hence forth. It further directs all state government to set up expert committees within one month which will work out a regulatory system to harvest wood from prevailing plantations. The court order is in right direction and it has given a tremendous morale-boosting to NGOs active in community forestry. Further, the local communities are becoming increasingly conscious of their rights to forests and have developed enough strength by getting institutional support from NGOs to court against the arbitrary orderer of forest officials. In Dalki forest area (Sambalpur district of Orissa), Birla company wanted to take over some of the protected forest for reforestation, which they identified with the help of one of committee members of lapang VFPC. A meeting was held in the village at which company asked to be given 32 acres of protect forests on lease. But later the villagers discovered that the area company wanted for lease had already a good forest cover. Villagers objected to the handover but local forest officials went ahead in their plan. The lapang VFPC with the help of local NGO (Nipidita) placed before the tahashildar. The tahashildar gave them a date for appearing. As the number of people was not specified, two truck loads of people went and won their case against Birla.

---

[4] C.K. Varshney, "Forests and sustainable development", An article published in Kurukshetra, Jan-Feb 1997, p.20.

Providing material Inputs - The material inputs - Saplings, fence materials etc. - play a very crucial role in any JFM programme. Though JFM unlike that of social forestry gives importance to natural regeneration of forestry: in some degraded forest patches, where natural regeneration is not possible plantation is needed. For plantation, forest nurseries play a important part in India. For achieving a target of 5 million hectare on forest, around 10 billion seedings are required but the country is presently planting annually at the rate of 1.5 million hectare using three billion nursery plants[5]. Obviously, such a large programme can not be achieved only by government departments. Therefore, the nursery operations need to be decentralized and in this context the involvement of NGOs is essential. For a successful plantation under JFM, a nursery should be available within 10 km radius with at least 25,000 saplings[6]. The local NGOs operating in nearby villages can do this job efficiently providing efficient service. One of the most important causes of failure of social forestry programme is the big farmers running nurseries grew eucalyptus instead of other productive saplings. This made the social plantation less attractive. So what is needed today, JFM programmes should plant productive saplings which will satisfy

---

[5] Navin Chand Joshi, " Creating ecological balance through forestry", Kurukshetra, Jan-Feb, 1997, pp.23.

[6] Asish Kothari, "Conservation in India : A new direction", Economic and Political Weekly, 1995, Oct. 28, pp. 32.

75

the food, fodder and timber needs of local communities. This task can be best done by involving local NGOs more and more who have a good knowledge of productive saplings. The involvement of NGOs in providing material inputs has already been experimented in several areas. 'Action Aid', an international NGO implementing a JFM project in Sindhapalchok district of Nepal, works through community development committees[7]. For this purpose, it has established two private nurseries since 1988 to provide seedlings to the project. We have also similar experiences in Orissa. In the Kommanda village of Nayagarh, district a local NGO 'Sambhab' is running a large nursery to provide saplings to the people of nearby villages, thereby evoking an interest among the villagers to plant trees in degraded forest areas. Lastly, we can say that for greater involvement of NGOs, it is crucial that a change in attitudes of foresters, villagers, politicians and decision makers is necessary. Right policies also will give boost to these voluntary organisations to become more active and protect ecological balance.

Linkage to outside world - International assistance, both financial and technical, is vital for JFM programmes and is available to developing countries that have decided to go for joint forest management. UNEP's Environmental assessment programme

---

[7] Babu Ram Pathak : Forest user groups in Nepal : Perspectives on what works and why, 1992.

for Asia and Pacific for example, offers assistance in data management relating to forests of member countries[8]. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) provides assistance for improvement of member countries policy and regulatory frameworks for forestry development. Apart from this several international NGOs like Action Aid, CAPART, CARE, SIDA etc. provide financial and managerial assistance to JFM projects. These international agencies trust local NGOs more than the governmental agencies which are bureaucratic and inefficient. The donors view the projects financed by them as a partnership between them and local masses through the NGOs[9]. The local NGOs provide necessary linkage between the people and the outside world by giving them expert knowledge developed by different international groups. The NGOs also provide necessary facilities to international agencies to operate the various local conditions. Case study shows that NGOs undertake the baseline survey at the beginning of the project. NGOs prepare half-yearly progress reports on the projects and send them to funding agencies whose representatives occasionally visit the projects. Action is taken on the comments of NGOs. Apart from this local people, field functionaries and NGOs management board meets regularly to evaluate the activities and methods of functions of VFPCs.

---

[8] Mohan Sundar Rajan, "Sustainable use of forests : role of satellites and computers", Kurukshetra, 1997, pp. 27.

[9] U.V.N. Charyulu and Mukkavilli Sectharam, "Participatory evaluation of People's development projects - A case study", Journal of Rural Development, vol. 9, p.395.

Providing Grassroot Experiences - There are various NGOs active in rural India, which have strong grassroot foundation. The developmental approach of several of these NGOs has resulted in sustainable model of activities and application of this model has resulted in improving living conditions of the people as well as created new opportunities for income generation for them. With the changing pattern of consumer needs and growing environmental crises, it is necessary that technology should keep pace with it. The NGOs based on experience have developed and tried out various rural technologies relating to eco-restoration in hill areas, waste recycling, bio-compositing, rural sanitation, ecological farming etc. Let's discuss them in brief.

a)   **Biomass Utilization** - In hill areas, where effect of deforestation has been felt most acutely, a group of scientists belonging to HESCO (a local NGO) have been able to introduce a technology through field based research and experiment. This has resulted in appropriate utilization of invasive and under utilised forest biomass in Himalayan region of U.P. for fuel, compost and fodder. Agave cantula (Rambans), a thorny bush is gaining popularity in this area because of its multi-purpose uses for soil-binder; for biofencing to protect agricultural field and orchards against the wild animals; and to make fancy articles, from fibers extracted from leaves of these plants for economic

78

gains[10]. Another plant species (Bhimal), retained by villagers for fodder, has also been found to have multi-purpose use in making shampoo from bhimal pulp, fibers from outer peeling of the stem for making articles, and matchsticks from the wood that is left after taking away the fibre.

b)   **Integrated approach based on bio-energy sources** - This model is developed by Bhopal based central Institute of Agricultural Engineering. The operational components of this model consist of survey for assessment of resource availability and total energy needs for crop production; post harvest operation, live stock raising and utilization pattern of agricultural biomass; efficient soil and water use pattern and management planning for sustainable agricultural development and to make a village self-reliant based on renewable energy source.

c)   **Alternative Agriculture** - In India, where crops are grown largely for direct human consumption by a predominantly vegetarian population, the importance of indigenous practices is now being fully realized. use of organic manure -

---

[10] Sunil K. Agarwal, "Appropriate technology transfer and eco-sustainable development", Kurukshetra, Jan-Feb, 1997, p.31.

through mulching, green manuring and composing of rural and urban waste of biological origin, etc. for providing all major and micro-nutrients in soil for better plant growths and enhancement soil life. The plant based pesticides and timely sowing operations, and practice of minimum tillage developed by NGOs indicate the importance of traditional wisdom of Indian farming systems.

d)   **Clay-emitter Irrigation system** - To tackle the problem of water scarcity for irrigation, the center of Science for villages (CSV) at Wardha, Maharashtra is working on a technology called 'emitter method' especially for small and marginal farmers who require a cheap and efficient system for irrigating their crops[11]. The method envisages the use of earthenware burnt clay tubes made from locally available clay, connected to each other with a PVC tubing in series at a distance equivalent to distance between two plants.

e)   **Sanitation and Water Management** - To improve sanitation and water management practices in rural area, Dr. N. Kamalamma from Gandhinagar Rural Institute Gandhigram, Tamil Nadu, has been able to design several

---

[11] Sunil K. Agarwal, "Appropriate technology transfer and eco-sustainable development", Kurukshetra, Jan-Feb, 1997, p.31.

simple low cost technologies such as rain water harvesting models, soak pills, spill water recycling units and toilet models, which have been field-tested and proved to be effective in changing the rural environment[12].

Improvement of Women - Despite the growing ecological consciousness among local communities, women still face gender inequalities as they have not been given a defined role in the JFM and other environmental protection programmes. The negative effects of such gender inequalities are being seriously challenged since last two decades. Various NGOs, and active feminist groups are spearheading a protest. An important example is 'Chipko movement' in which women took the front seat by hugging trees as protest against the commercial exploitation of Himalayan forests. Several other cases of this type are on record. Kripa, a woman activist of CANE, (citizen's for alternatives to nuclear energy) was instrumental in organizing the farmers against the effort of scientists to build a power plant in heart of rain forests in Karnataka[13]. In Kesharpur, Orissa. the conservative rural women under the leadership of a local NGO (Brikrhya O' Jeevara Bandu Parishad) went from village

---

[12] Department of Science and Technology, Govt. of India (1995) : Technology models for rural applications, DST publication, p.115.

[13] Bina Agarwal : Feminist environmentalism or ecofeminism ? The Hindu Survey of Environment, 1995, pp. 1-14.

to village pleading people not to cut trees from Binjgiri hills. This indicate that NGOs have been active in agitations against gender inequality in development activities and spreading the empowerment of women.

NGO and Capacity Building - The word conservation strategy has recommended for greater public participation in planning and decision making concerning the use of forest resources. The NGOs serve as an institution of public participation in planning and decision making in rural India. The NGOs as participatory institutions are engaged in capacity building of rural communities to protect community forests and environment. The success or failure of JFM largely depends on the administrative capability, leadership and motivation of field personnels. It is an important means of converting programmes inputs into outputs with economy and efficiency. It involves the ability to mobilise, allocate and combine the actions that are needed to achieve the objectives of environmental protection. NGOs build this administrative capability by providing training to both forest officials and local youths. Further, the large amount of funds flowing from central and state governments need to be handled carefully by the local communities engaged in JFM. NGOs are instrumental in teaching people how to handle the financial resources and spend it judiciously.

Spreading Education - Planned efforts by NGOs in launching awareness programmes among local people through extension or dissemination of ecological and environmental knowledge, information and innovations etc, have shown excellent results. While implementing JFM, it is essential to convince and motivate people about the need for their organized, committed and active participation in protecting forests. The NGOs through their complains and environmental education create the willingness and develop confidence among people to protect the forests and solve their problems in an integrated and co-ordinated manner. The experience of Seva mandir, a NGO operating in Rajasthan provides us with a good example. Seva Mandir began with a literacy project and through it created a consciousness among local people against continuous deforestation of nearby forests. Soon thereafter, it organised the villagers and started group farm forestry; then it switched over to community forestry and finally to JFM[14].

While assessing the role of NGOs we come across a number of successful experience in participatory management initiated and supported by non-governmental organisations. However, there are problems. While voluntary agencies can be of help in making room for people's autonomy where these are actually grounded in

---

[14] B.M. Chittangi, "Gram Panchayat and Environment management in Rajasthan", Khadi Gramodyoga, The Journal of Rural Economy, Bombay, vol.xxvi, no.10, PPA.

local reality and are sensitive to people's needs as well as their capabilities, this is not always the case. A large number of voluntary agencies can be seen to be operating programmes supported by outside agencies. Even when these programmes are drawn with the help of or by involving local people, the capacity of their funding agencies to influence them is significant enough to raise doubts about their autonomy. Unless the autonomy of peoples participation from such interventions from above is ensured, JFM regulations are not likely to make difference to the state of people. Secondly, there are strong grounds to be cautions about the role of non-governmental organisations limiting the autonomy of people through their training and monitoring programmes. Such training programmes are very characteristic of several NGOs which assist the personnels engaged in field, regularly organising training programmes for them. Where this leads to remain to be seen, but these programmes have least ventured to undermine the influence of state and external donor agencies, while strengthening the hands of people. Thirdly, some of the successful JFM programmes have actually been evolved as 'experiments' from their specific local conditions, thereby limiting the possibility of their being replicated in other local conditions[15]. It is a fact which often makes NGOs very selective in their

---

[15] S.K. Dhar : Participatory forest management in Shivalik Hills : Experiences of Haryana Forest Department, Sustainable forest management, Working paper no.5, Ford Foundation, New Delhi.
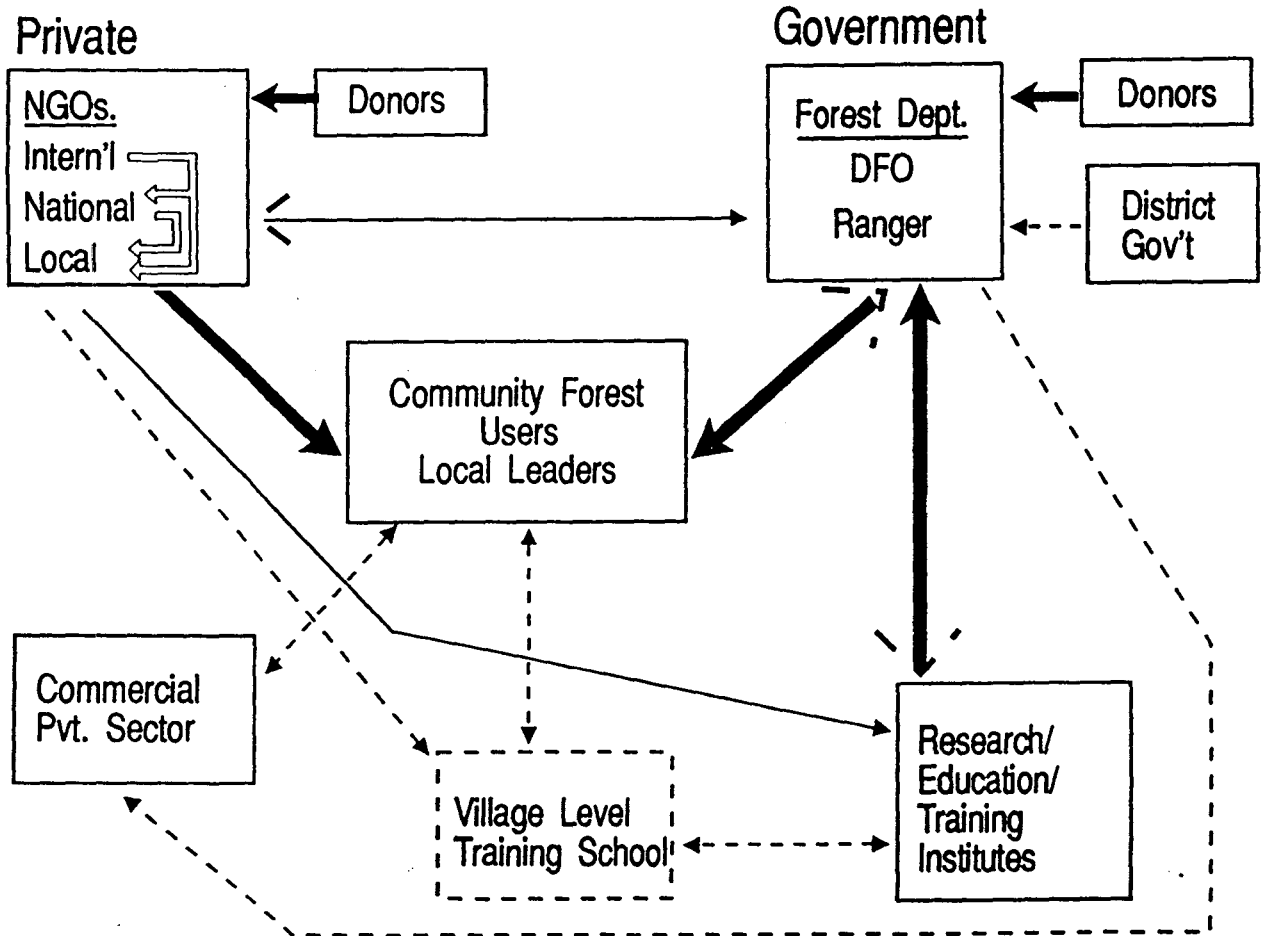
support and thus introduces new basis of inequality across regions. Fourthly, NGOs usually prefer to work in areas where the chances of success are more than where it is relatively poor. It makes the struggle of autonomous people relatively more difficult than those supported by NGOs. Fifthly, the community participation supported by local NGOs, despite tall claims, is not likely to promote local knowledge and skills. As international donors above and various information and dissemination strategies are systematically used to influence the people and reduce them to tools of these agencies. These agencies promote participation only to the point where it does not challenge the centrally planned programmes and projects. Sometimes NGOs being outsiders are so conditioned in their thinking that and so limited in their perception that they may not truly understand people's needs problems and suggestions and instead continue to offer them skills and knowledge which may be misleading. Sixthly, heavy reliance on the support of NGOs can be dangerous as in case the NGOs withdraw the project may collapse. Unless policy framework enables people to participate, organise and empower themselves, NGO continuance will give the illusion of people's participation[16].

While concluding, we can say that though doubts persist about the capability and intention of NGOs, their invaluable contribution to evolving JFM can be hardly

---

[16] Dolly Arora, "From state regulation to people's participation : A case study of forest management in India", Economic Political Weekly, March 19, 1994, p.692.

overlooked. From above study, it is quite clear that NGOs show the greatest promise in developing operational and micro-planning tools and serving as a interface between the community and forest department. But at far as the loopholes are concerned a sturdy safeguard is needed by enhancing the organizational culture and giving optimum professional incentives to staffs. In order to maintain transparency and congenial atmosphere between NGOs and people, the NGOs must provide a work environment that encourages consultations and maintains pluralistic membership.

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Private

Government

NGOs.		Donors
Intern'l		
National		
Local		

Forest Dept.		Donors
DFO		
Ranger		District Gov't

Community Forest
Users
Local Leaders

Commercial
Pvt. Sector

Village Level
Training School

Research/
Education/
Training
Institutes

Key

→ = Main flow at present: what has worked

→ = Minor (pilot) flow: what has worked

---→ = What should be tried

CONCLUSION ·

CONCLUSION

One of the objectives of this study is to analyse the real meanings, institutional support system and operational constraints of Joint Forest Management system, in the context of its operation in Orissa. The study reveals that JFM has already made an entry into policy discourse at the national and regional levels. But the present framework of JFM has many limitations. The experiences in Orissa suggest that the policy changes introduced through JFM alone will not bring about significant changes unless participatory spaces are created through state policy as well as people's own actions. Therefore, it is essential to strengthen people's participation through policy support not confined to some issues alone but from all sides.

Further, it is observed that the core problem which haunts JFM projects in Orissa is the traditional mistrust and hostility between the forest officials and the people. While officials feel justified in enforcing the law, the locals are agitated at being denied resources which they claim are justly theirs. Though, under JFM the agitated people have come together with common resolve of jointly protecting life supporting forests in partnership which forest department, the govt. has not taken any step to explore the possibility of legislation on JFM.

The JFM hopes to redress the grievances of people through their participation in forest protection. According to the JFM scheme, locals and tribal people will help the forest department in making plans and programmes for conservation. Local responsibilities will be fixed for protection of reserves in return for sustainable use of forest resources. But the top-down policies on which government relies heavily gives least importance to this fact. According to Dunu Roy, "Forests can only be protected voluntarily. Top down policies for conservation can not succeed in a populous country like India".

The JFM programmes in Orissa have made reasonable progress in achieving protection of forest through people's participation. But the process of decentralization which is crucial to JFM has not as yet permeated to the grassroot level as Panchayts are not actively involved in forest management. It is a peculiar phenomenon in Orissa that Panchayats have least role in JFM. Most of the forest protection efforts are initiated either by people themselves or by the support of NGOs. The Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad are expected to collectively decide about the type of programmes and area where it has to be implemented. But this process is yet to take root in Orissa.

One way of looking at the operationalisation of JFM in Orissa in Orissa is to analyse the ways that was conceived many parts of the state. The objective of achieving the target is so important for the forest department that it tends to overlook the importance of the ways and means of implementing the programme. Due to overjelousness of forest officials, some well-developed forest protection groups have gone unrecognised whereas in some cases groups have been recognized, whose activities are only limited to files.

Another point is that people seem to be guided by immediate gratification and whatever tasks provide for long term results, do not seem to attract them. This finding suggests that the place where JFM projects provide immediate benefits to people, the participation on them is always more. Therefore, in many JFM project areas, the people are allowed to cut grass, collect fuelwood and lops and tops. But where JFM includes productive forests having potential for valuable timber, the above small benefits seem to have attracted less people. The attraction of timber rights and cash benefits, in these areas have created much fissures between people and FD.

In some regions, the lack of frequent contact between FD officials and village leadership and prospective beneficiaries has been observed. The lack of contact,

89

particularly in the maturity periods creates havoc with JFM experiment, as people become increasingly skeptical of the FD official's mentality, relating to arrangement of tree-felling. Increasing frequent contact between officials and prospective beneficiaries may solve the problem.

The village forest protection committees are the pivot of JFM programmes. In many cases these committees are not effectively organized and membership is not all comprehensive. These committees need to be organized effectively and membership should include both from youth and women.

Where JFM programmes have been launched without proper evolution of the economic conditions of the people involved in it, it is likely to get less success in motivating people to protect forests. The Arjuni experience bears an ample testimony to it. Most of the inhabitants of Arjuni village remain unemployed during rainy season due to lack of any agricultural work. In this season they heavily depend on nearly forest in order to get work. They cut tress from the forest and sell it in the nearby market to sustain themselves. But when JFM project started in this area, the villages were debarred from felling trees indiscriminently, which affected their livelihood. As a result, violating all JFM rules, they started illegal felling and finally the JFM experiment collapsed. Therefore, joint forest management practices should

be modulated to generate employment all the year round. Timber and bamboo harvesting, silvicultural operations and afforestation should designed accordingly. Plantation of minor forest products yielding tree like Mahua, Kendu, gum etc. be accord priority over commercial tress.

JFM can be instrumental in reviving traditional skills by giving related training to people. But heavy dependence on modern technical knowledge in many JFM projects given by outside agencies mars this prospect. The revival of traditional skills such as basket manufacturing, tasser rearing, bee-keeping, resin tapping, bidi making, seed oil extraction, leaf plate making etc. shows a greater potential to give employment to people and encourage them to involve themselves in protection efforts.

It has been observed that JFM projects in Orissa are dominated by rich and influential sections. The poor low caste people, in many projects, have been either under represented or totally denied of representation. As earlier we have discussed, without a comprehensive representation the future of JFM is grim, a broad-based strategy need to be involved to represent all the sections. To ensure better representation to all sections of society, reservation should be provided to the weaker sections and occupational groups in the VFPCs, in proportion to their population.

One of the blunders committed by forest officials is that they have undermined the traditional management, distribution and leadership structures in villages while planning and launching projects. The projects while launching need to be adjusted with the aforesaid structures. This may vary from region to region, and from village to village. Existing system must be researched before making adjustments. Defunct systems must be re-established. This is the only way to ensure bottom to top approach.

In most of cases, people involved with the projects perceive the existing components and support system as interior arrangements. To them, once the goal of forest protection is achieved government may withdraw all support system and community rights over forests may be scrapped. This perception of local people need to be removed. They must be clearly aware of JFM as a movement and that they are the leaders who should spearhead the movement.

It is the task of FD and village forest committees to disseminate informations and spread consciousness among villagers. But it has been observed that VFCs and FD officials are not satisfactorily responsive to people's quest for more information. These institutions are need to be more responsive and refreshed knowledge and materials need to be supplemented by government, possibility of JFM becoming

success is more if there is a good communication linkage between the committee and the community of users, about rules and regulation and meeting times.

As most of JFM programmes in Orissa are in a transitional phase, they are affected by conflicts. But there is no concurrent development of legal institutions and procedures to deal with these conflicts. In order to make JFM more effective development of legal institution is necessary.

NGO's role in encouraging JFM and making it success is very instrumental. But in some areas, people have developed negative attitude as their plan and policies sometimes fail to cater to the local needs. Transparency and involvement of local leaders in the process of chalking out plans and strategy can solve this problem.

However, lastly, it is important to note that the future of improving the current degraded state of India's forests and their long-term management lies on JFM which develops partnerships between the local community institutions and forest department. Given the vast diversity in local resource management traditions and capabilities, the expansion of JFM across Orissa and the country as well, will need to be carefully conceived and closely monitored by FD. The forest department will need to help and support local communities in developing their own capabilities and

solutions to suit the diversity of their situations and concerns, instead of relying on external agencies for help. Because, the greater the external support, the greater the dependency on that source and less sufficient a community becomes. Apart from that, the resource management institutions under JFM, need to be founded on generic institutional principles having commitments to equity, autonomy and participatory decision-making. Thousands of local communities in Orissa and other states have already demonstrated their ability to practice sustainable forest management based on principles of equity and grass roots democracy. Therefore, instead of attempting to impose standardized institutional forms from above, the challenge before forest department lies in listening to and learning from their potential allies (the local communities) in protection and management. The wealth of experience, local wisdom, and diversity that nation's rural communities represent will exhibit how a smooth partnership can be evolved between FD and local communities while also helping to promote the community empowerment and regeneration of forest eco-system.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aggarwal, Bina, "Feminist Environmentalism or Eco-Femism ? The Hindu Survey of Environment, 1995, pp.1-14.

Arora Dolly, "From State Regulation to People's Participation: A case of Joint Forest Management in India", Economic and Political Weekly, March 19, 1994, p. 691.

Bhat J. L., "Joint Forest Management", Employment News, 9-15 Dec., 1995.

Bhatt, K.V. and S. Satish, "NGO Links with the Karnataka State Watershed Development Cell; MYRADA and PIDOW project" in J. Farrington and D.D. Lewis (eds.), Non-governmental Organisations and the State in Asia, (London, Routledge, 1993).

Charyulu, U.V.N., and M. Seetharam, "Participatory Evalution of People's Development Projects - A Case Study", Journal of Rural Development, vol. 9(2), pp.393-396 (1990), NIRD, Huderabad, India.

Chhatre, Ashevini, "Draft Forest Legislation: Missing the Wood as well as Trees", Economic and Political Weekly, Sept. 17, 1997, p.2473.

Chitlangi, B.N., "Gram Panchayat and Environ Management in Rajasthan", The Journal of Rural Economy, Bombay, vol. 36, no.10, July, 1990.

Chopra, Kanchan, "Forest and Other Sectors, Critical Role of Government Policy", Economic and Political Weekly, June 24, 1995, p.1480.

Chopra, Kanchan, Gopal, K.K. and Mauti M.N., Participatory Development People and Common Proerty Resources, (New Delhi, Sagar Publications, 1990).

Deeney, John and Walter Fernandes, "Tribals; Their Traditions and Management Systems", In Walter Fernandes (ed.) National Development and Tribal Deprivation (New Delhi, Indian Social Institute, 1992).

Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, Technology Models for Rural Application, DST Publication, 1995.

Dev, Debal and Malhotra, K.C., "People's Participation; The Evolution of Joint Forest Management in South-West Bengal" in S.B. Roy and Ashok K. Ghosh (ed.), People of India: Bio-cultural Dimensions, (New Delhi, Inter-India Publications, 1993).

Dutta, S., "Chakrasila Wild life Sanctuary; A Case Study", Paper on Bio-divesity, Pune, ECONET, April 12-14, 1996.

Egneous, H. and R. Ray, "Women's Attitude to Social Forestry", A Study of 31 Villages in Orissa, Bhubaneswar, SIDA and ISO, 1992.

FAO, Tropical Forest Action Plan, Operational Guidelines, FAO, 1992.

Fernandes Welter, "Wild life and Forest Dwellers", An article published in Hindu, 5th Feb. 1997.

Fernandes, Walter, "Sustainable Wildlife Protection with the Forest Dwellers", Kurukshetra, January-February, 1997, p.8.

Fernandes Walter, Forest Environment and Tribal Economy, Indian Social Institute, 1988.

FSI, The State of Forest Report 1987, Forest Survey of India, Government of India, Dehradun, 1987.

Gadgil Madhav and Guha Ram Chandra, The Fissured Land; An Ecological History of India, (New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1992).

Gadgil, M. and P.R. Seshagiri Rao, "A System of Positive Incentives to Conserve Biodiversity", Economic and Political Weekly, August 6, 1994, p.2103.

Guha Ramachandra, The Unquiet Woods; Ecological Change and Peasants Resistance in the Himalayas, (Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1989).'

Hallsworth, E.G. (ed.) Socio-economic Effects and Constraints in Tropical Forest Management, (London, John Willey and Sons Publication, 1982).

Iyyan, Pillai, "Social Forstry in Tamilnadu, Prospects and Problems", Indian Journal of Agricultural Economics, vol.XLII, no.3, July-Sept, 1988.

Jachariah, and Sooryamurti, R., Sciene for Social Evolution, (New Delhi, Sage Publication, 1994).

Jana, M.M. and Saha, P., "Forestry and People's participation in West Bengal", Everyman's Science, Indian Science Congrass Association, vol.XXVII, no.4-5, 1992.

Jena, Nalini K. "National Parks and Sanctuaries verses people's rights: Some Issues" in Gopal Iyer (ed.), Sustainable Development: Ecological and Socio-cultural Dimensions, (New Delhi, Vikas Publishing House, 1995).

JPAM Update; News on Action Towards Joint Projected Area Managemnet, Various Issues of 1995 and 1996, IIPA, New Delhi.

Kant, S. Neera M. Singh and Singh K. Kundan, Community - based Forest Management Systems: Case Studies from Orissa (New Delhi:, IIFM, SIDA, and ISO/Swed Forest, 1991).

Kaul, Sashi, "Gandhian Approach to Mangagement of Forests as Common Property Resource: A case-study of Binjgiri Hill (Orissa), India", Paper Presented at First Annual Meeting of International Association for Study of Common Property at Duke University, Durham N.C., 27-30, Sept. 1990, p.5.

Ketan, B., "Helping the Poor, What the Social and Forestry Can Do", Kurukshetra, vol. XIX, March 1988.

Khosho, T.N. and Sharma M, (Ed.)., Sustainable Mangaement of Natural
Resources, (New Delh, Malhotra Publication House, 1991).

Khosla, A., "Role of Science and Technology in Sustainable National Development",
Development Alternatives, New Delhi, India, 1991, pp.4-7.

Killaparti Ramakrishna and George M. Woodwell, World Forests for futures: Their
use and conservation, (London, Yale University Press, 1993).

Kitteredge, J., Forest Influences, (New Delhi, McGrawhill, 1948).

Kothari, A., Singh, N. and Suri, S. People and Protected Areas; Towards
Participatory Conservation in India, (New Delhi, Sage Publication, 1996).

Kothari, A., "Environment and New Economic Policies", Economic and Political
Weekly, vol. XXX, no.17, April 29.

Kulkarni, Sharad, "Proposed Forest Act: An Assessment", Economic and Political
Weekly, July 23, 1994, p.1009.

Lal, T.B., "Economic Value of India's Forest Stock", In Anil Agarwal (Ed.), <u>The Price of Forests</u>, (New Delhi, Centre for Sciecne and Environment, 1992).

Lal, J.P., "Economic Value of India's Forest Stock", <u>The Price of Forest</u>, CSE, New Delhi, 1992.

Mahapatra, L.K., <u>Tribal Development in India: Myth and Reality</u>, (Delhi, Vikas Publishing House, 1994).

Mahapatra, A.K., "Ethnological Notes on Pausi Bhuinya Tribes of Orissa", <u>Indian Forester</u>, vol.117, Feb. 1996.

Mathew, George (ed.), <u>Status of Panchayat Raj in the States of India</u>, (New Delhi, Concept Publishing Company, 1995).

Mathur, V.P., <u>Forest Management</u>, (Dehradun, Jugalkishore and Co. 1968).

Meench, Marchis, "Training and Planning of JFM", <u>Working paper no. 8, sustainable forest management foundation</u>, New Delhi.

Messerchamidt et al. Forest user groups in Nepal perspectives an What Works and Why, 1992.

Mitra, Amit and Kanti Kumar, "Death by Stravation", An Article Published in Journal Down to Earths, 15 June, 1993, p.32.

MOEF, Conservation of Biological Diversity in India; An Approach, Ministry of Environment and Forest, Government of India, New Delhi, 1994.

Mukharjee, Neela, "Who Felled Arjuna Experiment", Hindustan Times, Dec. 14, 1995.

Mukherjee, Neela, "Forests Indigenous Communities and Sustainable Development", Kurukshetra, January-February, 1997, p.30.

Muthaya, B.C. and M. Loganathan, "Community Participation in Social Forestry: A Dialogical Assessment", Journal of Rural Development, Vol. 11(6), 1992, p.736.

Nayah, Kibakar, Bhuyan, B. and Singh, D.N., "Performance of Forestry in Orissa with Special Reference to Social Forestry Projects", Indian Journal of Agricultural Economics, vol. XLIII, no.3, July-September, 1988.

ORG (Operation Research Group), 1992, OSFP Phase I, A Socio-economic Cost Benefit, Bhubaneswar, ORG.

Ostrom, E., Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990).

Palit, Subhabrata, The Future of Indian Forest Century, (New Delhi, Ford Foundation, 1993).

Parthasarathi, A., "Science and Technology in India's Search for A Sustainable and Equitable Future", World Development, 1990, pp.1693.

Pati S. and A. Panda, "Community Organizations in Forest Management", Indian Institute of forest Management, Bhopal.

Pattanaik, Binay K. and Anirudh Brahmachari, "Community Based Forest Management Practices, Field Observations from Orissa", Economic and Political Weekly, April 13, 1996, p.968.

Poffenberger, Mark and McGean, Betsy., Village Voices and Forest Choices, Joint Forest Management in India, (Delhi, Oxford University, 1996).

Poffenberger, M., "The Resurgence of Community Forest Management in the Jungle Mahals of West Bengal", in D. Arnold and R.C. Guha (ed.), Nature, Culture and Imperialism, Bombay, OUP, 1995).

Prasad, R.R., "Social Factors Influencing Promotion of Social Forestor Projects", Journals of Rural Development, vol. 9(2), p.328.

Raha, M.K. and P.C. Coomar, (ed.), Tribal India: Problem, Development and Prospect, (New Delhi, Gyan Publishing House, 1989).

Ramakrishnan, E.S., Shifting Cultivation and Syustainable Development: An Inter-disciplinary Study from North-Eastern India, Man and Bio-sphere sereis, Volume 10 (Paris, The Parthenon Publishing Group, 1992).

Ritchie, Dann, A Strategy for Asian Forestry Development, (Washington D.C., World Bank, 1992).

Roy Burman J.J., "Encroachment of Forest Department into the Development Field", Mainstream, Oct 12, 1996, p.30.

Roy S.B., "Forest Protection Committees in West Bengal", <u>Economic and Political Weekly</u>, July 18, 1992, pp. 1528-30.

Roy, Bunker, "Open Letter to Home Minister: Foreign funds and Threat to voluntary Sector", <u>Economic and Policital Weekly</u>, Dec.7, 1996.

Roy Burman, B.K., <u>Tribal Situation and Approach to Tribal Problems</u>; A Preliminary Appraisal, (New Delhi, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, 1995).

Sagreiya, K.P., <u>Forests and Forestry</u>, New Delhi, (National Book Trust, 1994).

Sarkar, S., Singh, N., Suri, S. and Kothari, A., "Joint Management of Protected Areas in India, Report of a Workshop", <u>IIPA</u>, New Delhi, 1995.

Shyam Sundar, S., "Problems an Opportunitis for Westlands Development in Drought Prone Areas Based on Peoples Participation; A Forestor's Perspective", <u>The Indian Forestor, vol.12, no.7</u>, Dehradun, July 1986.

SIDA, Forestry for Poor; An Evaluation of SIDA Supported Social Forestry Project in Tamil Nadu, India, SIDA, Stockholm, Sweden, 1988.

Singh, K., Managing Common Property Resources: Principles and Case Studies (New Delhi, OUP, 1994.

Singh Chhatrapati, Common Property and Common Poverty; India's Forests, Forsts Dwellers and Law, (Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1986).

Srinivas, K. Ravi, "Power without Accountability; Draft on Plant Breeders Rights", Economic and Political Weekly, March 26, 1994, pp.729-730.

Srivastava, K.B., "Management of Rural Development in India: The Case of Decentralised Planning", Journal of Rural Development, vol.9(2), pp.397-408 (1990, NIRD, Hyderabad), India.

The Government of Madhya Pradesh, Forestry Project of Rehabilitation of Degraded Forests and Afforastation in M.P., Madhya Pradesh Forest Department, July, 1987.

The National Forest Policy, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India, New Delhi, 1988.

The National Forest Policy, Government of India, New Delhi, 1952.

106

The Government of Orissa, 'Evaluation of Orissa Social Forestry Prospect, Phase I, Government of Orissa, Bhubaneswar, 1987.

Troup, R.S., The Cilvi nature of Indian Tress, volume III, (London, OUP, 1921).

Tucker, R.P., "The Depletion of India's Forests under British Imperialism" in D. Worster (ed.), The Ends of the Earth, Perspectives on Modern Environmental History, (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1988).

Venkateshwaran, Sandhya, Environment, Development and Gender Gap, (New Delhi, Sage Publications, India, 1995).

Venkatratnam, L., "Traditional Approach - "Farmer's Wisdom for Sustainable Agriculture", Kisan World, 1990.

Serials, Journals, and Newspapers

1. Yojana

2. Kurukshetra

3. ECONET

4. Down to Earth

5. Mainstream

6. The Economist

7. The Indian Forest

8. Economic and Political Weekly

9. Journal of Rural Development

10. Journal of World Development

11. Journal of Bombay Natural History Society

12. The Alternative

13. Population and Development Review

14. The Journal of Rural Economy

15. Social Science Review

16. Indian communicator

17. The Hindu

18. The Times of India

19. The Hindustan Times