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Evolution of Joint Forest Management in South West Bengal: A Subaltern Detail

Debal Deb

Joint management of degraded forest lands has given new hope for the communities directly dependent on the forests on the one hand, and for the forest department to achieve a sustained yield of timber, on the other. The evolution of the forest protection committees (FPCs) and their success in regenerating *sal* forests in south west Bengal, drew attention of the State forest department (FD) in the late 1980s, and subsequently was endorsed by the Government of India's Ministry of Forests and Environment.

Following a Government of India order issued on June 1, 1990, endorsing the joint forest management (JFM) approach, a number of States began adopting the south west Bengal FPC model which is essentially an endeavour of social fencing of the forest lands by the local community in return for free access to non-timber forest produce, 25 per cent share of the intermediate biomass yield from forestry operations, and 25 per cent of the net sales proceeds from rotational harvest of pole/timber. As of 1992, the JFM programme has been undertaken by the forest departments of ten States, besides West Bengal.

Governmental support of the JFM approach notwithstanding, the operational success varies in these States. Even within a State, there are numerous FPCs which are not functioning very well within a short period after their formation and some forest fringe communities have remained intransigent to the attempts to form FPCs. A survey in Jamboni range, Midnapore district of West Bengal showed that while 74 per cent of the FPCs were functioning well, several stopped functioning soon after their formation (Malhotra et al. 1990). For eliciting a community's participation in the JFM programme, it seems, therefore necessary to understand the social motivational forces that have propelled the programme where it originated and made successful. This paper attempts to describe the origin of the model in south-west Bengal from a perspective not so far explicitly taken by the standard accounts of the history of JFM.

Dr. Debal Deb works with the World Wildlife Fund-India, Eastern Region Office, Calcutta.

Origin of the Model

The unabated crisis especially of fuelwood in the district caused rapid degradation of all forest lands, including the QGS plantations. Around the early 1960s the entire Midnapore district (and other adjacent districts) became totally denuded of forest stands. This led to a total loss of revenue for the FD, and the local communities faced an acute shortage of fuel and fodder customarily obtainable from the forests. A large section of the population started migrating seasonally to other areas in search of wage employment. All conventional measures of the FD became grossly inadequate even to protect the degraded *sal* coppice bushes. It was increasingly being realised by the FD that without the active participation of the local communities, the coppice forests had no future (Palit 1990).

A conference of the foresters of the State FD on the "Problems of Protection" of forests observed that "effective forest protection is possible only through the cooperation of the local people and by meeting the needs of the local population without losing sight of the ultimate aims of scientific forest management in the region." It was also at this conference that for the first time in the history of Indian forest management the idea of joint forest management (JFM) was mooted. The conference recommended the following steps to be taken by the Government of West Bengal:

... to encourage setting up of local forest protection committees with suitable recognition and conferring powers of honorary forester on members and such other concession as may be made available, ... to identify the needs of forest produce of local population, particularly where such committees are set up and meet their needs before any sale to market through open auction is done (Anon 1972).

In 1972, Dr. A.K. Banerjee, the then Divisional Forest Officer, Midnapore Division, launched a most innovative project (upon a pledge by the local tribals) on the lines of the above recommendations called "Socio-economic Project" in a cluster of 11 villages in the Arabari Block of the district. This project involved eliciting the cooperation of the local population to regenerate and protect the coppicing *sal* forest (as well as the plantations of QGS) through the formation of grassroots management groups in return for free availability of non-timber forest produce (NTFP), first preference of employment in the FD workforce, and a promise of 25 per cent share in the net cash output from the sale of short rotation *sal* poles. Altogether 618 families participated in the project, protecting 1,272 ha of forest land (Malhotra and 1989). Under the protection of the community, the forests began to regenerate rapidly through coppice growth.

Based on the success of the Arabari experiment, the JFM programme spread gradually to the neighbouring areas and received increasing support from the FD and voluntary organisations. A supplementary proof of the FD's enthusiasm may be found in the beginning of the social forestry programme in 1981 as a State policy, with the financial support of the World Bank. This too required people's involvement in its plantation efforts.

Institutionalising the Approach

The Government of West Bengal issued two orders dated July 1989 and August 1990 (for details see *Wastelands News* Nov. 1990-Jan. 1991) conferring legitimacy on the approach, which has been widely replicated in other districts. From an initial modest number of communities participating in the JFM programme in the early 1980s, the number of FPCs in the district of Midnapore are estimated in 1990 to have been 648, with about 94,176 ha of degraded forest land under their protection. The number of FPCs have shot up to 751 by 1992, protecting 122,527 ha of forest land. As of April 1992, 1,912 FPCs were formed in the three south western districts, protecting 254,646 ha of degraded forests (Bardhan Roy 1992), which constitutes 63.32 per cent of the total forest land in the region.

A Subaltern Detail

The above account of the evolution of the FPC model of JFM is the standard official one, which is likely to purport an elitist interpretation in terms of mobilisation, or at least initiation of the process in the local villages from the top by the forest bureaucrats. While the reports from the State FD staff (e.g. Ghosh 1988) as well as from NGOs (e.g. Roy 1992) do acknowledge the importance of grassroots level FD workers in popularising the model across the forest communities, there remains a tendency to explain the initial drive for forming FPCs by an urge that percolated down the departmental hierarchy, to generate forest revenue, which in the final analysis seems to be the prime mover. This "top down" view betrays an inclination to underestimate the extent of popular initiatives, both on the part of the lower rank FD personnel and by the villagers themselves. As Sumit Sarkar (1984) has pointed out in a different context, what needs to be questioned is

the central assumption. . . that subaltern groups lack any relatively autonomous culture or mind of their own, and only respond mechanically to economic pressures or are mobilised through initiatives from the top.

An analysis of the social mechanisms underlying the initiation and success of the FPC model is in order. The subaltern category in this analysis

subsumes the lower rank FD staff together with the village communities depending for survival on the forest. Clearly, the interests and motives of these groups for involvement in the protection of forests were few and far between, although the most obvious common motivating factor among the groups was the perception of the significance of forests. But the objectives of forest protection as perceived by the different groups were often extremely diverse.

A thread of the sense and intention of an autonomous community control of forests seems to have been spun from the popular spirit of indigenous people's movements in the region. The tribal conviction that forests *eo ipso* belong to the tribals (Elwin 1963) was sustained by the *Jharkhand* movement that had arisen from the tribals' alienation of land due to several industries both in the public and private sector in the Chotanagpur plateau. It was coupled with the demand for job opportunities and was against ethnic discrimination. Bureaucratic exploitation of the displaced tribals and their inability to repay debts after paying high rates of interest resulted in a general feeling against *dikus*, a term which originally meant non-tribal *zamindars* and their employees, and later, all non-tribals. In 1951, the *Jharkhand* Party was formed as a continuation of the *Adivasi Sabha* organised in 1938 for promoting tribal welfare, and in connection with the right to use the forest in the Chotanagpur area. The *Birsa Seva Dal* was formed in 1967, which advocated the cause of tribal students and workers of Bihar (Sen 1972). The party acquired membership also from the south western districts of Bengal and has won wide popularity over the issue of tribal self-governance among all the tribal and even some non-tribal communities, particularly the Kurmis. The initial bitterness against the Kurmi peasantry so manifest in the first half of the nineteenth century has subsided, as they have been accepted, through the shared ethos in respect of forest resource use, as a part of the tribal universe (Singh 1972).

However, the decisive thrust for a drive for forest regeneration and protection came from a realisation of the importance of forest produce driven home to the villagers by the severe drought of the early 1970s, coupled with the acute wood famine that prevailed in south west Bengal. During the lean period of agricultural production, a significant portion of the diet of the villagers consisted of wild berries, tubers and mushrooms from the forests that were now severely degraded. There was also an acute scarcity of browsable fodder for the grazing cattle. Finally, the forests were depleted of all traces of wood for sale as fuelwood, for which there has always been a demand in the townships: in Salua market, for example. The Army base too constituted a large clientele that motivated the nearby villagers to extract headloads of fuelwood regularly from the forests. Within the villages, upper

caste households similarly commissioned the tribals and lower caste people to gather fuelwood. Since the sale of wood turned out to be the only source of income for the poor villagers, even the root stock of *sal* were excavated from the scrub bushes. Clearly, everyone had a stake in the forest resource, but the hardest hit by the consequences of its exhaustion were the tribal and lower caste villagers themselves who found it impossible to survive on an already used up resource base.

The villagers of course learned from experience to relate not only their household economic dependence but also the drying up of wells and ponds, and the general drought over the entire district, to deforestation. There was a desperate search in the popular consciousness for a solution. The stories of the past, when the forest was replete with produce to fulfil all their requirements, retold by the older generation, served to strengthen their resolution to protect the forests in the face of a dreadful future bereft of all resources.

Another significant point worth mentioning here is that a general environmental awareness characteristic of the period, grew among numerous village communities, especially among the youth. In many cases the latter took the initiative to form organisations that informally operated like FPCs, with the support and patronage of the community at large. The rationale to form such organisations included conservationist beliefs many of them empirically not tested. They included beliefs such as that the resuscitation of forests would bring rains, purify the air, make the soil fertile and reduce aridity in the region.

The principal reason that initially, in the 1980s, a proportion of the FD staff—certainly not all—were interested in the formation of FPCs in forest beats, was the incumbent moral pressure they felt upon themselves because of their failure to protect the forests, let alone generate revenue from them. The deterioration of the forest implied professional inefficiency that would have had adverse implications for their career. With the new drive for the social forestry programme to protect the plantations and afforest demarcated forest areas, the responsibility of the foresters increased (Ghosh 1988).

Furthermore, the historical legacy of mistrust between FD and the forest fringe villagers rose to a peak during this period of escalating deforestation (Malhotra 1989), and mere official sanctions against forest use, by the impoverished villagers, had served to spawn further bitterness which most foresters loathed. The only way to achieve the minimal level of protection of the degraded forest lands was by winning the confidence of the villagers. And the only means to win their confidence was by acknowledging that forests should meet the daily necessities of the villagers. However, this also entailed sharing of forest management, which was conceptually difficult for

many FD officials to accept. At this point, the success of the Arabari experiment came as the right answer, and the higher officials in the West Bengal FD hierarchy recognised the immense potential of the model to reverse the process of forest degradation.

It is only at this point that the FD hierarchy played a crucial role in validating the FPC approach. The institutional inertia of maintaining a distance with the people, along with the attitudinal barriers to share the authority of forest management with the village communities, eventually began to break down because of the cascade of official circulars and the government orders which the FD rank and file had to follow. Finally, the increased availability of a large spectrum of NTFP from the regenerating forests under community protection (Malhotra and Deb 1992) has served to improve the relationship between the FD and villagers and thus strengthen the JFM approach.

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PEOPLE'S' PARTICIPATION IN
JOINT FOREST PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

One day Workshop, at SIRSI, on 29-06-1993

IMPORTANT RESOLUTIONS

- (1) We welcome the idea of Peoples' Participation in the Natural Resource Conservation, Development, Management & Distribution..
 - (2) Ideas contrary to this basic concept of peoples' participation are mentioned in the Annexure-I to Karnataka Government Order No. AHFF 232 FAP 86, Bangalore, dated 12-04-1993. Therefore, we strongly oppose this Government Order.
 - (3) It is resolved that the order should be implemented only after a public debate and taking into consideration of the public opinion.
 - (4) The assembly further resolved that people, department of Government and NGOs should have equal powers and opportunities in this project.
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PROCEEDINGS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
JOINT FOREST PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT (J.F.P.M.) SCHEME

ANNEXURE - 1

G.O. NO. AHFF 232 FAP 86, DATED 12.4.1993

-; COMMENTS AND CRITICISMS :-

Section- 3 :- AREAS COVERED UNDER JFPM :

- (a) Section prescribes 3 classes viz., (a) degraded forest with 0.25 and less canopy cover.
- (b) C and D lands other non-forest waste lands.
- (c) Road side & canal side and Tank bunds etc.

It is difficult to judge the canopy cover of 0.25 and less. In the absence of a definite norms the identification of such lands would be very difficult and as such this clause is ambiguous.

Section- 4 :- COMPOSITION OF VILLAGE FOREST COMMITTEE :

"Any person belonging to village (or selected group of villages)". This expression does not necessarily indicate the villagers dwelling in the vicinity of the village where JFPM is introduced. Any person of any village may form VFC for any other area. This section needs to be more specific.

Section- 5 :- FORMATION OF VILLAGE FOREST COMMITTEE (VFC):

- (a) (i) Comments applicable to Section-4 above is again true to this sub-section also.
- (b) (ii) Where as VFC to be registered under societies Registration Act is tenable, the idea of respective DCF to register under this acts is not acceptable. VFC or the managing committee constituted for the purpose of JFPM shall be empowered to register the VFC under societies Registration Act.

Section- 6 :- EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS OF THE VFC :

The Section intends to incorporate wide representation to different sections of society. But it prescribes the representative of NGO by nomination from DCF. The intention is not clear. NGOs cannot agree to this as it involves bureaucratic favouritism. It is appreciable that the section intends not to entitle the ex-officio members any pecuniary benefits from JFPM.

Section- 7 :- MANAGING COMMITTEES OF THE VFC :

This section gives details of the members- It is well represented by different sections of society in the elected category. 4 members belong to ex-officio category.

Out of this one representative from NGO to be nominated by DCF concerned. Again the intention of nomination is not clear. It deprives NGO to play its independent and impartial role in the JFPM scheme. It also invites favouritism by Forest Officials.

Section-10 :- FUNCTIONS OF THE MANAGING COMMITTEE OF THE VILLAGE FOREST COMMITTEE :

10.1. The tennure of office of MC is prescribed as 5 years. There is no indication of procedure to be adopted after the expiry of this period of five years. Whether the committee is dissolved or superseded or re-elected or reformed ?

10.2(a) 1/3 of membership forms quorum. This includes Chairman, who may himself belonging to ex-officio category. So Chairman and 4 other ex-officio members to the managing committee form quorum. Proceedings of the meeting even without a member from 'elected' category, which is 10 in number may become valid. This is objectionable in as much as the ex-officio members are not eligible to vote in the general body of VFC. It is only judicious if elected members are given more importance.

(b) This section 10 as a whole may allow a situation where the activities of JFPM under VFC may become a mere bureaucratic exercise.

Other sub-sections of this section 10 mention various financial and panel powers of the managing committee. It is conspicuous that the committee does not have sufficient powers as to sanctions, approvals, directions etc., over the bills of expenditure. This is absent even in subsequent articles. The different sections in respect of financial implications fail to confirm any real financial powers on either General Body or Managing Committee of VFC. There are all the possibilities that the VFC and its Managing Committee may act as only "an extension of the forest department" - as feared under Section 16(8) below.

Section-11 :- TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP AND DISSOLUTION OF
MANAGING COMMITTEE :

(a) The whole of section 11 is ill-constituted, arbitrary in nature and completely bureaucratic. It is quite contrary to the very concept of JFPM. The aims and objectives prescribed under 1 and 2 articles and spirits involved in the JFPM is totally defeated. The General Body or Managing Committee, or democratic principles are all ignored. Department officials have taken all arbitrary powers in their hands.

(b) Forest department being a party to M.O.U cannot be vested with such arbitrary powers. Conflicts, abuse of powers, misuse of powers, should be decided by an impartial panel or body to be independently constituted. There must also be provisions for appeals.

(c) Sub-section 1 and 2 pertains to removal of member from managing committee. The forest authorities are given arbitrary powers. The managing committee itself is not empowered to decide the case of removal of its own member, but the range forest officer is being entrusted with this power. The managing committee is merely departmentalised.

(d) Sub-section 3 pertains to removal of membership for a life time. This as a sweeping power which may be abused by the officials of Forest. The words "Competent Government or other authority" is ambiguous, and can well be mis-interpreted by the department, in its own favour.

(e) Sub-section 4 pertains to the "superseding power" of the DCF concerned over the Managing Committee. The power given under this section is highly autocratic. Even General Body is not being consulted. This is purely bureaucratic despotism, trusting none. VFC, under this clause may be threatened by the forest authorities, and misuse the power for favouring vested interests by DCF and his subordinates. The abuse of power is inherent, in as much as this clause prescribes no appeal against the decision of DCF in this matter. This defeats the very purpose and objectives of the JFPM. These clauses are very much ill-constituted.

Section-12 : MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS ETC.,

Whereas the responsibilities of maintaining proper records are clearly prescribed under this section, the various sub-clauses fail to recognise the power of either Managing Committee or General Body of VFC in this respect. In matters

of Accounts and other financial implications the VFC is never trusted with this would be highly objectionable. This would reduce the VFC to only "an extension of forest department".

Section-13 :- MANAGEMENT PLAN :

- (a) Total implication of various Sub-sections of section-13, indicate that VFC is reduced to only a consultancy level. No real powers are given to VFC in the preparation of management plan in accordance with the specific necessities of the villagers and due importance to the needs and potentialities of the locality may safely be ignored. The management plan which is drawn by Forest Officials are rather thrust over VFC.
- (b) The management plan is drawn only for 5 years. The procedure for its continuance or renewal is not prescribed. It is short-sighted. This section read with Section 11-4 would indicate rather amazing consequences of the whole scheme of JFPM. It is all a bureaucratic exercise.
- (c) Sub-section 5 of Section 13 tries to restrict the power of implementation of the plan by VFC, by saying 'The pattern of implementations of management plan shall follow instructions and guidelines issued from time to time by Government or PCCF.'

Section-14 :- DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF VFC :

- (a) Sub-section of Section 14 mentions that VFC shall 'assist' the Forest department. The spirit is contrary to the objectives of the JFPM scheme.
- (b) There is undue restriction on VFC in implementation of the scheme. Under Sub-section 4, it is also mentioned that entire responsibility of protection 'after 3 years' rests with VFC. The implication is contrary to other sections of this Annexure. The management plan is for 5 years. The expenditure to be incurred by VFC after 3 years should be met out of its own fund. But VFC will have no income, to support its expenditure during the first initial years of the implementations of the management plan. Thus the authorities of forest may take the shelter of this clause and supersede the managing committee (under section 11-4).

Section-16 : ROLE OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND OFFICERS OF THE DEPARTMENTS IN THE JFPM:

The spirit of the entire section 16 is appreciable, though undue importance to forest officials is obvious under different sub-sections. Only objection to this section may be that the spirit imbibed in this section is not supported by other sections of this Annexure.

However, sub-section 11 of section 16 purports to indicate that the existing developed area may also be brought under this JFPM scheme. But any such developed area should have to be entrusted to the village Forest Committee which is in the vicinity. The idea of entrusting any area to any VFC may lead to many complications and conflicts of interests.

Sub-section (xvi) is not clear -

Sub-section 3 of section 16 is related to problems which may arise from the interaction between different VFCs, within a VFC., and between other villagers and the VFC. The section has safely entrusted to forest officials to settle such disputes. This may become arbitrary, and bureaucratic handling of the situation may aggravate the problems. Such kind of disputes and problems must be settled before an impartial, separate panel or Board which may be suitably constituted under this scheme itself. The department officials form a party to M.O.U. under Section 13(11). So this is defective.

Section-18 :- RULE OF NGOs IN THE JFPM :

Section 18 pertains to the role of NGOs. The whole section perhaps contemplates that the NGO may function as an agent of the forest department. This is wrong, there is likely that the department may safely ignore or even avoid such NGO who are against their favour. The NGOs which either has independent view or has support to the views of VFC, may safely be avoided. NGOs should be given a free hand. Other ideas incorporated in sub-sections of section 18 may be acceptable.

Section-19 :- VILLAGE FOREST DEVELOPMENT FUND :

Second para of section 19 pertains to the operation of village forest Development Fund. It says that the ex-officio-member secretary, a forester, shall have all the responsibility of maintaining records and accounts. The approval, sanction, examination of accounts, budgeting etc., of this fund is not mentioned but mentions the Section 10(ix) and (x) and 12(1) to (iii), where also the sufficient powers are not entrusted to VFC, general body, or managing committee.

The powers and responsibilities of finance of VFC are not clear. Possess no real powers. Throughout the various sections VFC may only have to function as "an extension of the forest department". The main objectives of the JFPM are not incorporated in different sections relating to financial responsibility of VFC. So much so that the sharing of the forest produce may become meaningless.

JOINT FOREST PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT
RESOLUTION OF UTTARA KANNADA ZILLA PARISHAT MEETING HELD AT
KARWAR ON 31-12-1991

1. It is necessary to establish the village level Joint Forest Planning and Management Committee (J.F.P.M.) for the implementation of Forest Department Scheme with the active participation of people of all related programmes.
2. Environment friendly practices in livestock management, and supply of fodder should be a part of the scheme, and proper marketing arrangements made for animal products.
3. The forest resource development project should include programmes to provide permanent settlement to Gavli tribals with civic amenities and alternate employment opportunities.
4. If it is necessary, regularise the encroachments of forest lands on humanitarian grounds by giving usufructory rights to the people and encouraging them to grow tree crops so as to get them involved in forest development. Opportunities should be created for the planned expansion of villages and townships and it is essential to put a strict end to any further encroachment of forest lands.
5. While planning for rehabilitation programmes, overall situation of the forest areas has to be considered.
6. In accordance with the existing rules and regulations, the division, proper utilisation and development of betta lands should be facilitated under the direction and guidance of the J.F.P.M.
7. J.F.P.M. should be involved in the zonation of forest lands based on an assessment of their potential. For this it will be necessary to identify areas containing medicinal plants, plants which provide non-wood forest produce, and plants which meet the requirement of artisans.
8. In the low rainfall region of the district, considerable social awareness will have to be created to make a success of the forest development plan.
9. A system will have to be evolved by the J.F.P.M. to arrange for the supply of fuel wood and small timber for the needs of the villagers and adjoining towns.

10. Because of the shortage of fuel, improved and alternate technologies will have to be popularised for the use of energy.
11. The J.F.P.M. should be entitled to a reasonable share from the benefits of forest development.
12. The papers presented by the Centre for Ecological Sciences which were discussed and approved by the Zilla Parishad members and Mandal Pradhans in the meeting held at Sirsi on 17.12.1991 should be considered as a basic document for activities by the J.F.P.M.

This document first prepared in Kannada in November, 1991, sets out in detail the thinking of the people of Uttara Kannada, and it is hoped that it will be useful in finalising the J.F.P.M. programme for Western Ghats Forestry and Environment Project of Karnataka Forest Department.

Recd. 3/9/94.

**REPORT ON THE
WORKSHOP
OF
JOINT FOREST MANAGEMENT
AT AWARENESS, BHUBANESWAR
ON 5TH & 6TH MAY '94**



Organised By :

AWARENESS & ANKURAN

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INTRODUCTION

Trees and forest as a whole inspired our civilization and culture. The tradition has been taught us to live in perfect harmony with nature and secure our environment from ancient time. Protection and care of trees was being considered as a part of our daily life. Our ancestors used to worship trees as their God. Hence the trend was being maintained in its usual way and forest was being considered as a part of our life and people started protecting it as their wealth.

Consciously or unconsciously people involved themselves in protecting forest. They were depending upon forest for which they protected it from any means of destruction. From ancient time it was practised all over the world which was being clearly reflected in their culture, songs and stories.

But during last hundred and twenty years this bridge between people and forest was blown out with different Governmental policies. The British Government's policies broke the natural bondage between people and forest with their profit making policies. The same trend continued even after independence. The Indian Government tried to weaken the natural balance between the nature and living creatures. The imperialist policies took away the natural right of the people over forest and they became thieves in their own forest overnight. The National Government after independence more or less followed the same resulted in large scale destruction of forest. Birds and animals disappeared from our forest. Water level reduced in an abnormal manner. Rainfall decreasing day by day threatened the survival of mankind. It will be good enough to take steps to save our society just on this critical juncture. Otherwise the civilian will perish. That will cause natural imbalances.

This concern brings together to take many NGOs initiatives to aware all concerns regarding the evil consequences of forest destructions and urged the National and State Government to pay effective steps in that direction.

The workshop on JFM organised by the joint efforts of AWARENESS & ANKURAN in the premises of the training centre of AWARENESS, Bhubaneswar on 5th & 6th May¹⁹ is the outcome of this efforts. In this workshop many voluntary agencies of the state participated those who are involved to forest issues and its protection.

OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

- * To develop a better understanding about the need of protection of the forest.
- * To understand Joint Forest Management and Govt. order (G.O).
- * To analyse the pros and cons of Orissa Government order.
- * To conduct programmes, research-study, campaign, training for the grassroot activists.
- * To enable the people to understand the importance and necessity of forest protection through their active participation.

1 S I DAY MORNING SESSION

The morning session began with the welcoming address by Mr. Kailash Mishra, President AWARENESS emphasizing on the participation of people and NGOs for the protection of forest. Then he elaborated Governmental policies, its aims and objectives, importance in present scenerio. He emphasized upon actual planning and proper implementation of action plan in the field.

Discussion began with the self introduction of all the participants. Brief description of their parent Organisation and present activities on the issue was described by every members.

Mr. Badal Kumar welcomed all the participants to take active participation in general discussion. He stressed upon the procedure of Orissa Govt. order and its effect on the nearby villages. He also gave a brief description about his own experience in the

implementation of Govt..order on the field. Invited every member to speak on this point :-

1. Whether nominated forest protection committees are able enough to work with G.O. and villagers for the protection of the forest.

2. Whether villagers are really getting their shares from the forest produce.

3. Whether G.O. is fully accepted by the members of Forest Protection Committee (F.P.C).

4. Whether the demarcated area to be protected is accepted by the villagers.

He invited participants to share their views regarding Orissa Govt. order and if they found any difficulties in implementation, then the suggested measures will be accepted.

The president of AWARENESS highlighted the aspects of Joint Forest Management which will be discussed in the two days session of training programme as follows :-

- The National Forest Act which are being prevailing in different states and their amendments.

- The Resource Persons will share their ideas about the Governmental policy as they have been dealt with national scenerio and with reference to Orissa situation in forest sector.

In the discussion the following points are raised such as what is the real situation in the areas where the NGOs are working ? What is the role of Government ? What is our role to ensure forest protection ? What the forest deptt. is doing ? Where the Tribals stand ? Who owns the wealth of the forest ?

Probably basing on the answers of the above querries. we can formulate an action plan. Mr. Jay Prakash, Prof. of Osmania University presented a paper on JFM. According to him so far only the JFM was discussed among the bureaucrats, the NGOs who are in the business of evaluating, writing as the topic in the past but for the first time the people were take into confidence by the Government to protect forest.

After a lapse of approximately 120 years i.e. Around 1874, the Indian Forest Department was created and people living in the forest overnight became thieves in their own environment. Because the state, the Government followed by various princely states for the first time in the states in the history of this country. in the history of sub-continent declare that forest is the state property. People who had access to their immediate resources overnight became thieves. So Forest becoming the private property of the state.

Much before the creation of Forest Department the Britishers took away the laws from the hands of the communities and individual ownership was given to the people by permanent Bengal settlement. By the end of 19th century people of this country lost their right over land and forest. In their own surroundings they became thieves. They can't touch the forest which belongs to them for ages.

Pre-Independence Period :-

After independence the Government followed the British policy. In 1865 Britishers had introduced the National Forest Policy and justified the right of the state over the forest putting the following arguments :

1. Forest is the part of environment.
2. The forest is to be protected for the wellbeing of the society.

They also classify forest in four categories.

a) We should never cut the forest for the wellbeing of mankind as a whole. (Reserve Forest)

b) Forest which should not be exploited injudiciously for the wellbeing of the people. (Protected Forest)

c) To get the Revenue, forest can be cut for the commercial and urban need of the society.

d) In 1865 Policy, before this policy for their need they were depending upon forestry. So, fourth category was people cut the forest for their need. (Village Forest)

In this policy from 1950 to till now, not any tribals are used to get the advantages from the forestry.

Then Mr. Jay Prakash had cited an example as -- in 1979-80, West Godavari, East Godavari, he had talked with D.F.O.s of these places regarding the segment of forest which are marked for not cutting. But, the Officer could not able to identify these.

After 120 years the Forest Department is saying that the people are thieves, people do not have the rights to protect.

As per the statistics (Annexure) recorded forest is 23.4 % of total land area. As per scientific calculations 1/3rd of land area should be under forest coverage that means 33.3 % should be under Forest coverage.

According to Sattelite picture of India - 1991 only 6,39,182 (19.4 %) hectres forest is there in contradictory to the Government records of 23.4%.

In general forest can be classified into three categories.

First Category :- Closed Forest - Out of 100 trees in one hectre of forest if the number of trees are 40 or more, then we can call it as the Closed Forest. So, density is 40 % or above.

Second Category :- Open Forest - Out of 100 trees in one hectre of forest if the number of trees are 10 - 39 then we can call it as Open Forest. So, the density is 10 - 39 %.

Third Category :- If the number of trees are less than 10 then it is not considered as the forest. Because here the density is less than 10 %.

With reference to National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA), Mr. Jay Prakash spoke that it provides the real interpretation of forest. In Thiruvananthapuram Seminar, 1984, Scientist of NRSA, the Geographers of this country and forest officials had gathered and there was a lot of disagreement on the definitions and interpretations of the forest cover. Thereafter, at Dehradun various States pressurised the Government to establish an independent body i.e. Forest Survey of India to ascertain the Forest coverage of our country.

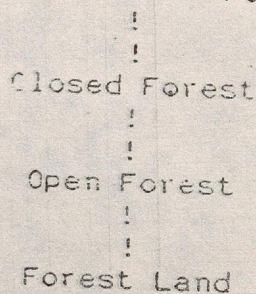
FOREST SURVEY OF INDIA & FOREST

This FSI remove the rights of NRSA about interpreting the forest cover and prevented it from sending the real picture to the people, henceforth, the FSI started to interpret this forest. FSI constitutes the officials like the Conservator of

Andhra Pradesh, D.F.O. of Maharashtra and other officials of Forest Department. According to FSI report there has been the enhancement of 560 sq. km. of forest area. As it contradicts the real data of forest cover, the view of Mr. Jay Prakash was that the Forest services is the worst services in India.

Regarding the Degradation of forest, Mr. Jay Prakash emphasised how it is being occurred? First, we are collecting Saguan, Timbers from Closed Forest which makes it an Open Forest. Thereafter, in a similar way it becomes Forest Land. The above is shown diagrammatically as under :

Degradation of Forest



This process is taking place not because of Forest Department but also in 1810 there was a need of timber for British Navy. So, from Malavar to Karachi and from Kanyakumari to Bengal, the entire forest land was exploited. After 1857 (Sepoy Mutiny) British Government had taken the programme of extending communication, betterment of transport through railway for which a lot of timbers were taken away from the forest. For Sleeper and Charcoal which were needed to run the railway were being produced by exploiting the forest produce.

POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

How Forest is Degraded :-

After 1921, the population never came down. So, Railway Services, Medical Services established for which a large number of forest is being cut down. Again the British Government had taken interest in Indian industries. So, lot of raw materials were collected from the forest. When population increased the vast forest area was being destroyed and converted into Agricultural land.

- Again each State had pressurised the State Forest Department to get more revenue from these forests.

- The contractors, politicians started looking at the forest for their benefits.

- Bamboo disappeared because Paper Mills exploited this forest materials.

- In the name of development massive projects have been undertaken. Forest and Tribals both were thrown away. Orissa is the classic example of tribal displacement in this regards.

According to Mr. Jay Prakash the more the Forest Department is increasing, the more forest is degrading in numbers. As a result 11% Forest coverage disappeared from the required 33.3%.

INCEPTION OF JFM

Since 70's NGOs, Scientists, Journalists started questioning the Forest Department about the Method of Protection of forests. Subsequently two independent events occurred by this time which really brought the efforts made by the people of the different parts of the country which brought out new phenomenon of forest protection. One is Alakananda river flood in 1971-72 and Chipco Movement had taken place because of forest destruction. After these two incidents, people started to think over to protect their forest. Inbetween the talk Mr. Jay Prakash had cited the example of a D.F.O., Mr. Banerjee of Midnapur district in the year of 1972, who had succeeded to gather 11 hamlets of tribal areas to take up the plantation programme in their land to save the forest. In return the villagers were assured of getting the 50 % profit from the forest products. Though, the villagers were not in a position to accept the proposals of Mr. Banerjee. But, by establishing the rapport he won the confidence of the people by devoting his Sundays in these tribal areas and finally the people had extended their co-operation and participated for the protection of forest. Similarly in Ballari of Kanataka district, during last 9-10 years people have been protecting the forest.

Under this circumstance, In 1988 new Forest Policy was declared which is radically different from the earlier forest policy. Here, for the first time Government of India stated that Forest Department alone can't save the forest of this country and declared that without the involvement of the people living in and around the existing forest can not be protected.

In 1988 National Forest Policy, the Government stressed on the involvement of people for protection of forest and promised to give the share of profit to people. Hence JOIN FOREST

MANAGEMENT (JFM) programme originated as Government order to actively involve people to work unitedly with the department for the protection of forest.

JFM NATIONAL OVERVIEW-STATE-WISE PROGRESS

State	Formal FPCs	Informal FPCs	Area Covered	Observation
Orissa	6085		15,16,800	
Bihar	413	1000 +	2,00,000 ha.	Recorded in Ranchi
Haryana	32	8000 +		
Gujarat	312		20,000 ha. approx.	
West Bengal	2055		3,00,000 ha.	26 % total area, 75 % registered
J & K	272			Yet to be registered
M. P.	200	1,05,000 ha.		In 6 villages FPCs are being formed.
Tripura	11	748 ha.		
Maharashtra	-			Some indigenous groups are starting FPCs.
Rajasthan	447		25,000-30,000 ha.	
Karnataka		80 +		VFCs (informal Committees)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS & JFM

Till today 16 States have issued Government Orders (GOs) for involving people in the forest protection and surprisingly our State Orissa is the first to come out with the GOs on JFM. Subsequently Haryana, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh brings the GO and formed few Forest Protection Committees in respective states. In Bengal 2000 FPC have been formed and the GO was amended five times.

Government of India formulated plan on JFM in June, 1990 and passed it to every State for implementation. On that basis Orissa Government took steps to protect forest in degraded

and reserved forest. In this policy the importance was given on the joint efforts of Village Committees for forest protection. It is also cleared that the villagers will get their share in final harvesting through Forest Protection Committees. Though it has many setbacks, still, it is the most acceptable policy than the previous one.

STATE INITIATIVES IN ORISSA

The State Government Orders of 1988 and 1990 in Orissa led to the formation of nearly 6,000 FPCs. Some of these FPCs are functioning very well but a large majority have problems and some exists only on paper.

Some major defects in the Government resolutions setting up these FPCs and the equally serious short-comings in their implementation is responsible for the poor performance of many FPCs. The GO do not provide legal power to the FPC to protect forest. Therefore, FPCs are ineffective. Secondly, the rights and responsibilities of Village Committees and Forest Department have not been clearly specified. Thirdly, FPCs rights over the forest are not specified, only certain concessions for fulfilling bonafied requirements are spelt out. There is also no mention of any share in the final harvest.

According to the 1988 Resolution, each FPC should have five ex-officio official members. The official members were the Sarpanch (Chairman), the Revenue Inspector, the Forester (Convener), the Word Member and the village level worker. The 1990 Resolution changed this by stating that the number of non-official members should be at least three, while the official members will remain five. Despite the minor change, the present FPC membership is dominated by the official members instead of the members of the local community. The Chairmanship rests with the Sarpanch, who may not belong to the same village. The FPCs have no power of their own to punish or challenge offenders. Their authority over the forest is very often questioned. Either the FPC should have legal powers or the full support of the Forest Department.

Problems in Implementation :-

Within two years of passing of the first Resolution by the Government in 1988, more than 6,000 FPCs were formed. Often, they were setup in a hurry without adequate consultation with local villagers. For instance, in a few cases, a forest which was being protected for many years by one village, got allotted to

another village which had not been protecting it. Another anomalous situation arose due to lack of orientation on the part of the forest department personnel. Formation of an FPC, for instance, is a serious task and has to be taken up with great care. Collaborating with village communities implies a total role reversal for the forestors, from that of policemen to facilitators. This basic spirit is seldom formed, and rarely put in practice. This lack of orientation and training in extension and communication skills as well as in community management aspects severely restricts the ability of the forest department personnel to work with village communities for effective implementation of JFM programme.

Demarcation and allocation of forest areas to the village communities for protection is another aspect which needs adequate attention, because it is a prerequisite of proper functioning of the FPCs. It has been found that in some cases this has not been done while in others it has not been adequately conveyed to the villagers. Demarcation and allocation should normally take the following into account: the prevailing rights and concessions in the forest area, i.e. who uses it for what purpose, is it informal and seasonal, as for example for fuelwood, MFP collection, headloading, grazing and whether the forest area is already being protected by some villages or a group of people. The first point is generally taken care of but the other two points are often neglected, leading to conflicts.

Villagers which have started protecting forests after the formation of FPCs or where the informal forest protection has been formalised, there is a sense of uncertainty over sharing of forest produce, both from the intermediate and the final harvests. This uncertainty arises from the extra-legal character of the FPCs, mutual distrust between the FD and the villagers, lack of knowledge about the legal provisions and the general casualness with which the FPCs have been formed. Discussions of the shortcomings of the resolutions and their implementation should not detract from the fact that individual forest officers have done excellent work in many instances and have initiated, nurtured and supported forest protection by communities.

The Orissa Government amended the GOs in 1993.

Forest Department have developed their thinking, the ethos for over last 120 years. However, degradation of forest resources of this country are even to this date.

According to the Resource Person the total value of our forest is four times the total debt of our country. One forest guard is guarding Rs.36,000 x 1500 ha. = Rs.5.4 crore worth of forest which is highly degraded.

As per 42nd ammendment of our Constitution it is the fundamental duty of each citizen to protect the forest besides the forest guard and forest officers. But the issues in every case Forest Department is involved in plundering the forest. Then Mr. Jay Prakash discussed how the forest personnel, politician & forest plunderer plundered the forest for their vested interest in every state including Orissa.

After 1986 Government has taken the following steps (1) to ban the cutting of trees from natural forests. Only it will be done for plantation, Forest Department can the timbers for the same. (2) Forest Department will not share the power of protecting forest. So, question arises should we allow these faulty policies to destroy the forests ?

As Mr. Jay Prakash discussed about six medias through which forests have been exploited and the tribals have been deprived of their rights. They are :-

1. Big companies like Tata, Birla etc.
2. Contractors, Forest Contractors.
3. Forest Department.
4. Other Government Employees like Police.
5. Revenue Department.
6. Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA).

No wonder then, people have been exploited by the different means of Government. As per the Code of conduct of JFM people's involvement is needed and it can be originated by the mobilisation only.

In the post lunch session of the day Mr. Jay Prakash started with the following aspects of the discussion.

GUIDELINES OF JFM

The essence of JFM is to involve the people for protection of forest through the formation of Forest Protection Committee. After forming the FPC the people and Forest Deptt. will protect their forest and regeneration work will be decided by this community. The State Government will provide the funds through Forest Department for the regeneration work. The 'Shramadan' concept will come here for protecting the forest.

SCOPE OF JFM

1. The Forest Department and the people would be the equal partners (50% share each). Conceptually the Forest Department has its own responsibilities and duties for protecting the forest. So, the State will exercise its monopoly over the forest but community will assist the Forest Department to prevent and consume the forest produce. Here, Batari System of JFM introduced.

But, NGOs should be able to look after the things that the complete resources of the forest must be vested in the community.

2. By going through the GOs we can view that the sharing mechanism is not equal in all the States. For example Orissa GO has mentioned to provide 25% of share in the final terms (1992).

3. FPC used to get all the fodder, leaves and other materials totally free of cost from the Forest Department and they will have the exclusive right to collect minor forest produce. Again they can sell these to the agencies to whom the State Government has given the monopoly.

In addition to that in 1990 December, Ministry of Home Affairs declared to provide 80% share to the tribals (exclusively for scheduled area). Ministry of Environment, in June, 1990 had taken steps to induct the local forest guard as the member of FPC. In West Bengal the forest guard is bearing the responsibility of Secretary of FPC. From State to State the Managing Committee of Forest Department differs. But, forest guard do not have the voting rights in certain States. Hence, this concept is known as JFM because people and Forest Department both are preparing micro plans, strategy to protect the forest.

Regarding the scope of JFM Mr. J. P. highlighted the matter that, if the forest guard allows others to plunder the forest resources, then people can take the legal action against him. But in fact people started to participate at the mercy of the Forest Department only.

The role of NGOs should be to educate the people to get control over the forest they should make them conscious to be well aware about the provisions of JFM.

MANAGING COMMITTEE

In June, 1992 NGOs had participated in preparing the Managing Committee. It has the One year term. It has the respon-

sibility to approve and carry out the forest management programmes with its scope. In this Committee President of Gram Panchayat, Forest Guards and elected Representatives will be there and whose number is supposed to be 6-8.

After his deliberate speech, Mr. Jay Prakash proposed the participants to go for a group discussion. Hence, the total group was divided into three smaller groups for a compact discussion on Orissa Government Order. Each and every group came out with suggested measures against the Orissa GO. The groups discussed on each and every point of the GO separately. The important things among them were taken out for further discussion which are given below as :

Suggestion Against Orissa Government Order

a) Selection of the Area :-

1. Entire forest protection responsibility should be handed over to FPC.

2. All the villagers of the adjacent village or cluster of villages will be motivated by any means to offer active cooperation in regeneration and protection of the forest tract.

3. The area of forest to be protected by FPC will be decided by the nearby villagers.

4. When Government will decide to develop any industry, natural park or any business for commercial purpose that should be discussed with the villagers and at the same time Government should invite the representatives from the villages in its management.

5. All forest cover except industrial area and national park should come under JFM.

6. Area for commercial plantation should come under the protection of villagers by JFM.

b) Forest Protection Samiti :-

Gram Panchayat will organise a meeting with all the villager by taking the help of forest officers. They will explain

everything about JFM to the villagers. The members of the committee will be selected from the nearby villages of the protected forest area. One of the villagers should be elected as the Secretary of the Committee. Regular meeting should be arranged in every three months. Forest personnel should participate as members of the Working Committee. Villagers including women should be the members of the Executive Body.

c) Duties & Responsibilities of the Samiti :-

Sarpanch should not chair the meeting but one elected member of the Samiti should be the chairman.

In contradictory to the point No. 8 (v) of Orissa G.O. it is decided that they should organise the meeting at the interval of two months each. For each such meeting the Samiti members will nominate their person.

8 (vi) In this point of Orissa G.O. it is decided that the Samiti will have the power to remove any member from the Executive Committee by a majority vote in its meeting, if the concerned Executive Committee member doesn't discharge his/her duties correctly and satisfactorily.

S E C O N D D A Y M O R N I N G S E S S I O N

Suggested Action Plan :-

The participants decided to take up action to convey the message of the discussed matter to the involved villagers, committee members and other members of the NGOs who are working on this issue. Even it is decided that an approachable GO will be presented to the Chief Minister of Orissa for rectifying previous order to get a better result in forest protection. Action Plan is as follows :

1. To create awareness among people about the concept of JFM.
2. AWARENESS, Bhubaneswar is supposed to provide all basic informations and datas regarding JFM Rules for circulation.
3. District level lobby on this issue will be facilitated by the participated NGOs of this workshop.

4. To develop awareness about the pros and cons of forest destruction.
5. To MAKE the villagers clear and conscious about their sharing of produce in final harvest.
6. Village level campaign on this issue should be activated and feedbacks will be sent to AWARENESS, Bhubaneswar, for further action.
7. Working Committee will decide the first area which has to be protected.
8. To organise District level workshop for discussing the GO and its limitations.
9. To involve mass media for propagation.
10. To propose the Government to give ownership of lands to tribals if they are shifted from their own land.
11. Final decision for any action should be taken by the villagers with the help of working committee where all village leaders and forestors will be the participants only. They should be allowed to impose their decisions.

Mr. Bharat Bhusan, Environmentalist highlighted and discussed about the action plan and suggested some of the essential measures to be taken as :

1. There is need of campaigning on forest issues.
2. To form committees where there is no committee.
3. Campaigning and lobbying for policy change.
4. To develop solidarity among the like minded groups and individual to protect the forest and campaign for people's right.

It was decided to undertake the charges of conducting meetings at district level to project the reality of JFM, Orissa GO, role of NGOs and people's participation for forest protection. Campaign will be held in different districts within this

scheduled time:-

District	Name Of The Organisation	Time
1.GAJAPATI	CCD	June 1st Week
2.KEONJHAR	KIRDTI	June 1st Week
3.SAMBALPUR	SIDI	June 2nd Week
4.SUNDERGARH	SGUP	June 3rd Week
5.GANJAM	SABARMATI SAMITY	June 3rd Week
6.RAIGADA ,KORAPUT	ANKURAN	May Last Week
7.NABARANGPUR ,MALKANGIRI	KOYA	June 2nd Week
8.ANUGUL	G.S.S.O.	June Last Week
9.DHENKANAL	AWARENESS	
10.BOLANGIR	R.C.D.C.	
11.CUTTACK ,KENDRAPADA	VARAT & ASK	
12.PURI , KHURDA	SANCHARAK JOJANA	

Due to communal conflict, the participant from CHPARM, Phulbani was not in a position to take the responsibility to arrange campaign for the time being and R.C.D.C., Bhubaneswar agreed to circulate the reports as they are working on this issue hence before.

Last Session of the Workshop

After the rigorous discussion about the Action Plan, Mr. Kailash Mishra, President, AWARENESS summed up the session with views as follows :

1. To send the message what have been discussed here to the press, mass media and newspaper.

2. AWARENESS had taken the responsibility to send the concrete report of the conducted programme to different NGOs participated in this workshop.

3. Seven members from the participants were nominated to

form a committee which will present a draft on 21st May '94.

4. Proposed draft will be posted to different groups by 25th May '94.

5. Final Report will be completed by the month of June '94 and posted to District level.

6. Postcard Campaign will be held in the rainy season.

7. Delegation will meet the Chief Minister in the month of November '94.

The workshop was formally over in two days discussion with the vote of thanks by Mr. Badal Kumar Tah.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
of
JOINT FOREST MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP
organised by
AWARENESS & ANKURAN
on
5th & 6th MAY '94

Sl. No.	Name of the Participant	Organisation	Address
1.	Ms. Rakhi Bhattacharya	CENDERET	Xavier Institute of Management Near Oberoi Hotel Bhubaneswar-751013.
2.	Mr. Prabhat K. Rath	-do-	-do-
3.	Mr. Uttam Kumar Das	CHARM	At-Pindabadi Post-Dutimendi Via-Khajuripada Dist-Phulbani Pin-762014
4.	Mr. Satrughna Samal	TEAM	L-3/123 Acharya Vihar Bhubaneswar-13.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| 5. Mr. Umakanta Mohanty | Gopinath Yuvak
Sangha | At-Sahajanpur
Po-Chapamanik
Via-Brahmayogi
Pin-752011 |
| 6. Mr. Narayana Bethagi | LIPICA | At-Godabarish Nagar II
Berhampur-760001
Dist-Ganjam |
| 7. Mr. Nela Fishore Mishra | VARRAT | At-Baulakani
Baradanga
Po/Via-Mahakalapada
Kendrapada-754224 |
| 8. Mr. A. Jagannadha Raju | Centre for Com-
munity Development | Palace Street
Paralakhemundi
Dist-Gajapati
Pin-761200 |
| 9. Mr. Baisar Sabor | Mattar Vanam Vigyana
Pracher Ashram | At/po-Ghanantri
Via-Dambosra
Dist-Rayagada |
| 10. Mr. Khagapati Sabor | -do- | -do- |
| 11. Mr. Gopabandhu Behera | Sabaramati Samiti | At/po- Rambha
Dist-Ganjam
Pin-761028 |
| 12. Mr. Cheirto Behera | Society for Rural
Awareness & Devel-
opment Action | At/po-Soudh
Dist-Ganjam |
| 13. Mr. Rabindranath Patra, | ISARA | Baikuntha Nagar
Berhampur-760001
Dist-Ganjam |
| 14. Mr. Chittaranjan Padhy | -do- | -do- |
| 15. Dr. K.C. Mishra | Gurukula Mission | Sadhana Peetha
Po-Gunadei
Via-Gadasila
Dist-Dhenkanal
Pin-750025 |
| 16. Mr. Nangay Murmu | Antyodaya Chetana
Mandal | Rangamatia
Rasagobinapur
M. B. I. |
| 17. Mr. Jagannadha Sahu | SERVE | Palace Street
Paralakhemundi
Dist-Gajapati
Pin-761200. |

18.Mr. Prabhat Ku. Sahoo	SANCHARR	Po-Banigocha Nayagarh-752081.
19.Mr. Saroj Ku. Parichha	PDC Network	107, Sarala Nagar Bhubaneswar-6.
20.Mr. Chittaranjan Champathy	LNSRD	Vill/Po-Sarghiguda Via-Tikiri Dist-Rayagada.
21.Mr. Subash Ch. Mohapatra	NEED	At-Raju Street Jeypore Dist-Koraput.
22.Mr. Rashmiranjan Jena	Antyodaya Seva Kendra	Arunodaya Nagar Cuttack-753012.
23.Mr. Badal Ku. Tah	ANKURAN	Po-Narayanpatna Dist-Koraput Pin-765014.
24.Mr. Subrat Ku. Mandal	-do-	-do-
25. Solmani Hikoka	-do-	-do-
26.Mr. Pradeep Ku. Sahoo	KOYA	Vill/Po-Salimi Via-Mathili Dist-Malkangiri.
27.Mr. Shyam Sundar Rout	SGUP	At/Po-Lahunipada Dist-Sundargarh.
28.Mr. Duskar Barik	KIRDTI	At/Po-Harichandanpur Dist-Keonjhar-758028.
29.Mr. Achyutananda Dash	Samaj Kalyan Parishad	Chatikona, B.Cuttack-765019 Dist-Rayagada.
30.Mr. Ghasi Ch. Khora	WIDA	Semiliguda M. H. 43 Dist-Koraput.
31.Mr. Dayadan Suna	-do-	-do-
32.Mr. Sanjit Patnayak	SOVA	Priya Palace Aurobindo Nagar-II Berhampur-I Dist-Ganjam.
33.Mr. Rabindra Prasad Das	JAGARAN	At/Po-Gudari-765026 Dist-Koraput.

34. Mr. Kshetra Mohan Khuntia	Furi Dt. Action Group Voluntary Organisation	Plot No. 2157 Savi Talkies Road Bhubaneswar-2.
35. Mr. Manoj Pattanail	SIDC	40a, Wheel Nagar Bhubaneswar-751007.
36. Mr. Lalit Mohan Mishra	COJANA	In Front of Central School Furi
37. Mr. Jacintha Vincent	Educational Trainer	Flat above Gram Vikas Biongas Office Palace Street Paralakhemundi Dist-Gajapati.
38. Mr. Abhiram Panigrahi	SIDI	Jamankira Dist-Sambalpur Pin-768107.
39. Mr. Basudev Jani	AUS	Jhimikiguda Selimiguda Dist-Koraput.
40. Mr. Prempatra Jani	-do-	-do-
41. Mr. Janu Khara	-do-	-do-
42. Mr. Narayan Hareka	Katapalamma Sangha	At-Kambivolsa Po-Borigi Via-Narayanpatna Dist-Koraput.
43. Mr. Bipin Bihari Bhatra	RAD	Dasini Village Po-Bandhugam Dist-Koraput.
44. Mr. Bipin Khemunda	DID CENTRE	Semiliguda N. H. 43 Dist-Koraput.
45. P. Jay Prakash Rao	Reader, Sociology Department Osmania University	108C, Rasvindra Nagar Hubsiguda Hyderabad-500 007.
46. M. Bharat Bhusan	CARPED	'Kranthi Dhamam' Rahmath Nagar Hyderabad-45.
47. Mr. Kailash Mishra	AWARENESS	Plot No. 1690 Mahatab Road Old Town Bhubaneswar-751002.

48.Mrs. Archana Nayak	G.S.S.O.	- do -
49.Ms. Saswati Nanda	AWARENESS	- do -
50.P. Karuna Priya	-do-	- do -
51.Mr. Akshaya Nath	-do-	- do -
52.Mr. Prasanna Ku. Swain	-do-	- do -
53.Mr. Pran Gopal Das	-do-	- do -
54.Ms. Puspangini Joshi	-do-	- do -
55.Mr. Suresh Ku. Ray	-do-	- do -
56.Mr. Babaji Rout	-do-	- do -

KAILASH MISHRA
President, AWARENESS

ANNEXURE - I

STATE OF THE FOREST REPORT, 1989

1985-87 Actual Land Sat Imagery, Forest Cover : 64.01 Mill. Hecs.
 1981-83 Space Data : 64.20 " " " "
 Reduction : 0.19 " " " "

1985-87 Annual Rate of Loss : 47,000 Hecs. between 1981-83 to

Dense Forest

1981-83 : 36.14 Mill. Hecs.
 1985-87 : 37.84 " " "

Difference in Square Kilometers

	<u>1989</u>	<u>1991</u>
1. Dense Forest 40 %	3,78,470	3,85,610 + 7,140
2. Open forest 10-40 %	2,57,409	2,50,482 - 6,567
3. Mangroves	4,255	4,242 - 13
Total :	6,40,134	6,40,694 + 560

Between 1985-87 and 1987-89 there has been an Annual increase of 28,000 Hectres.

Geographical area	Recorded forest area	% Forest area to Geographical area	Per capita forest area in Hect. area	Satellite figures Open + Closed, 1991.	
All India	32,87,200	7,70,078 (19.44)	23.4 %	0.09	4,32,182
Andhra Pradesh	1,70,068	63,726 (17.2)	28.1 %	0.17	47,290
Orissa	1,55,707	59,555 (30.3)	38.2 %	0.19	47,205

N.D. Figures in Brackets are actual Forest Cover as % of Geographical Area.

ORISSA - Area in Sq. Km. Forest Cover, 1991

Sl. District No.	Geog. Area	Closed Density 40 %	Open 10-40%	Mangroves	Total	% Forest Cover to Geog. Area
1. Balasore	6,311	258	92	21	371	5.9
2. Phulbani	11,094	2,973	2,984	-	5,957	53.7
3. Bolangir	8,913	534	534	-	1,068	12.0
4. Cuttack	11,142	506	379	174	1,059	9.5
5. Dhenkanal	10,827	2,392	1,274	-	3,666	33.9
6. Ganjam	12,556	1,891	2,807	-	4,698	37.4
7. Kalahandi	11,772	1,392	1,274	-	2,766	23.5
8. Keonjhar	8,303	2,033	1,697	-	3,730	44.9
9. Koraput	26,961	3,119	4,195	-	7,314	27.1
10. Mayurbhanj	10,418	3,325	737	-	4,062	39.0
11. Puri	10,182	1,567	760	-	2,327	22.8
12. Sambalpur	17,516	4,635	1,539	-	6,174	35.2
13. Sundargarh	9,712	2,724	1,289	-	4,013	41.3
Total:	1,55,707	27,349	19,661	195	47,205	30.3

Recd. 3/9/94



ALTERNATIVE DRAFT
ON
J F M GOVERNMENT ORDER

WARENESS, PLOT NO-1690, MAHATAB ROAD, OLD TOWN
BHUBANESWAR-751002, ORISSA (INDIA).

ALTERNATIVE RESOLUTION ON JFM BY THE NGOs, IN ORISSA (Draft)

Subject : Protection of Forest Areas including Reserve Forest, Protected Forest and Plantation by the community and enjoyment of rights over the Forest resources by the Community.

1. Large chunk of forest land in our state have been rendered degraded and unproductive over the years. According to a recent estimate the extent of such degraded forest land in the state is about 12 lakhs hectares. Degradation sets in on account of over use of the forest and ever increasing pressure of human and animal population on the forest. Forest are basically a local resource. The society has to address itself with urgency to the task of regeneration and rehabilitation of the degraded forests. The problem can be tackled effectively at the local level with the active involvement and participation in the adjoining village communities. germane to the question of protection and regeneration of the forest is the system of management. Forest management has to be reoriented to forge an effective partnership between the Govt. deptt. and the concerned village committee.
2. In Orissa, the tradition of community initiative to protect degraded forest goes back to the early 1950s. In August' 1988 the state Govt. had passed a resolution to formally introduce a scheme of protection of peripheral reserve forest areas with participation of the adjoining villages. The scope of this resolution was enlarged in December'1990 to include the protected forests, and it was also laid down that village level forest protection committees should be constituted by convening meeting of the concerned villages. In return for helping the forest department in protection of the earmarked forest areas the villages would be entitled to get small timber and firewood as may be available from these forest for meeting their bonafide requirement, free of royalty. For a variety of reasons, however this scheme could not make the desired impact in generating people's participation in protection of forest. After careful consideration, Government have decided to implement the following scheme of JOINT FOREST MANAGEMENT in the state in which the forest department and the villagers of the adjacent village(s) will be equal partner in the task of regeneration and restoration of the degraded forest and management of existing forest resources.

SELECTION OF THE AREA

3. The scheme will operate in all types of forest areas inclusive of reserve forest, protected forest and plantation. Only such forest area will be selected where the villagers of the nearby village or cluster of villages are willing or can be motivated to offer active co-operation in regeneration protection and manage-

ment the forest tract, and such villages shall be involved which are situated nearby to the forest area. Sanctuaries and National Parks and forest land allotted for the purpose of commercial or industrial plantation or any other departmental afforestation scheme shall ordinarily not to be excluded from the ambit of this scheme. The scheme may not have any limitation of forest area to be protected by a single village community. It would be ordinarily decided by the village community and the forest department considering the availability of forest area.

VANA SAMRAKSHANA SAMITI (VSS)

4. The forest department in consultation with the villagers will convene the meeting. After discussing the scheme with the villagers, they will constitute VSS. There may be one Samiti for a group of hamlets or villages if these are all located adjacent to the forest area to be regenerated and the group of hamlet villages are interested to form a common committee.

5. Vana Samrakshana Samiti should include as its members two adult from every household living in the village cluster of villages including all those who have been exercising any rights, concessions or privileges over the forest area. One member from each household should be a woman.

6. The secretary of VSS will be selected or elected by VSS and the person will convene meeting of VSS as and when required and will keep the minutes.

7. Constitution of the executive committee-

(i) Each VSS will form its own executive committee and terms will be decided by the VSS. The person involved in the activities forest protection can also be a member of Executive Committee.

(ii) The committee will be comprised upto 20 members and its composition will be as follows-

(a) Chairman
shall be elected/selected from among the members

(b) Ward Member(s)
representing the village(s) Ex-officio Members

(c) Upto 15 representatives
elected/selected by the
Samiti with 30%
representation of women
Member(s), Member Secretary will
be selected or elected out of these members.

(d) Concerned Forester and
Forest Guard
Ex-officio Member

- (e) VSS will nominate the NGO in Forest protection activities in the locality Member

The range officer/Forester will act as facilitator in selection/election of the members of the executive committee.

(iii) The executive committee shall select its own treasurer whose tenure shall be co terminous with that of the committee. The forester, forest guard and the NGOs representative will not have voting right.

(iv) Two-third of members of the committee shall constitute the quorum in any meeting.

(v) Term of Executive Committee shall be for one year.

8. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SAMITI

(i) The members of the Samiti individually and collectively will ensure protection of the forests against grazing, fire, illicit felling, theft of forest produce and encroachment on forest land. The Samiti will adopt its own patrolling system and will contribute in cash, kind or in labour to control and regulate access to the forest by people and by domestic cattle.

(ii) It shall be the duty of all members to prevent forest offence and pass on relevant information and intelligence in this regard to the forest officials and vice-versa.

(iii) The forest officials shall actively help the VSS when any member of the Samiti inform individually or jointly to the forest personnel regarding any forest offence the officials shall take immediate to document evidence and prosecute the culprit in the court of law. It is mandatory on the part of the forest officials to act on the advice of VSS. Criminal law may suitably amended conferring rights on the VSS to try minor forest offences and award punishment.

(iv) The forest officials shall assist the VSS in carrying out silviculture and other forest improvement work as decided jointly.

(v) There shall be a meeting of the Samiti at least once in three months and more often if required, to review the work of the Executive Committee and to decide on the future programmes and plans to be followed. For each such meeting the Samiti members will nominate their own Chairperson who will continue as such till the holding of the next meeting. The quorum for any meeting of the Samiti shall be 60% of the members.

(vi) The Samiti will have the power to remove any member of the Executive Committee by a majority vote in its meetings.

concerned Executive Committee member does not discharge his/her duties correctly and satisfactorily.

(vii) If the Executive Committee is found to be detrimental to the cause of joint forest management, the VSS will have the power to recommend dissolution of the Executive Committee to the concerned higher body.

(viii) If any forest official acts detrimentally to the principle of JFM or otherwise affects the forest protection programme the VSS can formulate charge and recommend the higher body to take appropriate action.

9. DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(i) The Executive Committee shall meet at least once in every month and take stock of the condition of the forest, the offences committed and other hurdles encountered in protection of the forest. There will be detailed deliberation on all aspects of protection and regeneration of the forest and execution of the management plan, if any prepared by the Committee.

(ii) Member-Secretary will prepare the agenda notes in advance for each meeting in consultation with other members and he will keep the minutes of the meeting. The quorum in any meeting of the Executive Committee will be two-thirds of the total number of members.

(iii) The Committee and forest officials will actively cooperate each other in carrying out all operations as per the approved management plan, in arranging labourers, in apprehending offenders and in starting legal action against them.

(iv) The Committee will be the first forum for resolution of conflicts that may arise within the village and with other villages. Information/reports on the persons committing forest offence will be discussed in the monthly meeting of the Committee and suitable action as deemed proper will be initiated by the Committee. Where the Committee can not amicably resolve any conflict or check any offence or restrain any offender, it shall bring the same to the next higher body, with its recommendation of action to be taken.

(v) The Forest Officials shall assist the Committee in carrying out various silvicultural operations, in accordance with the management plan if developed and in distribution of the forest produce among the villagers.

(vi) Divisional Forest Officer/Asst. Conservator of Forests/Forest Range Officer will frequently familiarise themselves with the work of each Committee, and facilitate for proper functioning of the Committee.

10. ROLE OF THE FOREST DEPARTMENT

- (i) The Range officer may attend the meetings of the Executive Committee and those of the Samiti, to participate in their discussions and explain the scope of JFM. He would have no voting right.
- (ii) The District Level Committee shall have the overall responsibility for implementation of the scheme, including formation of Samitis and constitution of Executive Committee.
- (iii) If Microplans/JMP will be developed and implemented then the DLC will be responsible for smooth implementation of these plans.
- (iv) The D.F.O./A.C.F. shall intervene in any village conflict arising out of forest issue or affecting forest protection and regeneration activities as per the suggestion of D.L.C.
- (v) The D.L.C. on recommendation of VSS to dissolve the Executive Committee is bound to taken action necessary for dissolving the Executive Committee.

11. ROLE OF THE GRAM PANCHAYAT

The Gram Panchayat in whose jurisdiction the scheme will be in operation shall have a sub-committee on Joint Forest Management. The sub-committee will have the advisory role for the functioning of the Vana Samrakhana Samiti.

12. JOINT FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

- (i) Micro plans will be developed by the State Body of JFM with active participation of the community as an experimental pilot project. These Micro-Plans/Joint Forest Management Plans will be implemented by the VSS. The period of the plan will be determined as per the requirement of the area in consultation with the VSS.
- (ii) Soil and water conservation measures shall form an integral part of the JFM Plan.
- (iii) The Executive Committee will assign duties and responsibilities to different members for smooth implementation of Micro-plan. At the Range level the Range Forest Officer will have the facilitate responsibility for execution of Joint Management Plan.
- (iv) The Management Plan will give the following details-
 - (a) Are to be naturally regenerated, and species expected to regenerate and establish in the area.

- (b) Action Programme for restocking the area and covering the gaps.
- (c) Nature and model of plantation and choice of species. Socially useful trees and trees catering to the need of the local people must be planted in reasonable number in consultation with the Samiti.
- (d) Details of soil and moisture conservation measures.
- (e) Demarkation of boundaries, watch and ward, and maintenance of plantations.

13. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENT

Government will bear the expenditure to be incurred for implementing the Joint Management plan if developed and Executed through the Forest Department. Financial assistance may be availed in shape of Grant-in-aid from the NAEPB of the Ministry of Environment and Forests of Government of India, and assistance from social welfare institutions, industrial and commercial houses, and foreign donor agencies.

14. USUFRUCTUARY BENEFITS

- (i) The Vana Samrakhana Samiti shall have right to enjoy usufructuary benefits. Further duties and responsibilities in the task of regeneration and protection of the forests may also be cast on the Samiti/Committee from time to time. The Executive Committee will be responsible for distribution of the usufructs equally among the members, each household being treated as one member. If a particular household has not discharged the duties and responsibilities assigned to him, the Executive Committee may lessen or do away with its share.
- (ii) Usufruct like leaves, fodder, grasses, thatch grasses, broom grasses, thorny fencing materials brush woods and fallen lops and tops and twigs used as fuel-wood shall be available to the members free of cost, other usufructs like leased out minor forest produce, Kendu leaves etc., can only be collected by the members. The minor forest produces shall only be collected by the VSS through its members and the VSS will sell the produce with the help of Forest Department and 50% of the profits will be retained by the VSS towards the wages and community development.
- (iii) All yield in shape of small wood, poles, firewoods etc. obtained from silvicultural operations will be equitably distributed among the villagers by the executive committee of the VSS. No major harvest or final fellings will be done by the VSS.

15. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

Vana Samrakhana Samiti through its Executive Committee shall execute on MOU with the concerned D.L.C. for sustaining management of forests as laid down in Joint Management plan as and when prepared. The members of the Samiti have the usufructuary rights as mentioned in the resolution.

The MOU shall be in the following form : We, the members of the Executive Committee of the Vana Samrakhana Samiti of _____ village do hereby undertake individually and collectively to perform the duties and shoulder the responsibilities as detailed in the resolution (No. 16700/ F. & E. dated 3.7.1990 of the Forest and the Environment department, Govt. of Orissa) for proper protection and regeneration of the allotted forest area as per the schedule given here under.

Schedule

1. Name of the Vana Samrakhana Samiti
2. District/Forest Division
3. Sub-Division/Forest Range
4. Police Station
5. Village
6. Name of the Forest Block
7. Legal status of the forest land
8. Area (Ha) of the forest land
9. Boundaries of the area

North

East

South

West

We, understand that the usufructuary benefits as detailed in aforesaid resolution shall be allowed only upon satisfactory observance of the duties, responsibilities and functions by this Executive Committee and by the members of the Vana Samrakhana Samiti as per the aforesaid resolution.

A copy of the aforesaid resolution is annexed herewith duly signed by us on every page in proof/evidence of our having

read/understood the same in letter and spirit. It is hereby agreed by this MOU will come into effect from _____

Signature of the Members of
the Executive Committee

Signature of the Witness

Name and Address	Signature with date	Name and Address	Signature with date
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

Signature of the local Forest Officer

Sl.	Designation	Name	Signature with date
1.	D.F.O.		
2.	A.C.F.		
3.	Forest Range Officer		
4.	Forester		
5.	Forest Guard		

16. STEERING COMMITTEE AT THE DIVISION LEVEL

(i) There should be a Divisional Committee at the division level consisting of 10 members; out of which three ex-officio members namely District Magistrate or its nominee, S.P. or his nominee & D.F.O. Two NGO representatives and 5 members will be selected/elected by VSS Executive Committee of the concerned Division. The SLC will also discuss other policy matter related to the forest conservation regeneration uses and shall recommend properly. The DLC may recommend the dissolution of VSS to the Steering Committee. The Committee may institute an enquiry commission to look into the matter.

There shall be a State Level Committee (SLC) at the state level which will meet once in a quarter to guide and direct the operation of the scheme. It will hold extensive deliberations on specific problems and hurdles and faced in implementation of the scheme. It will take up review to identify good points and shortcomings and to amend rules and regulations to steer the course of event in a positive direction. The steering committee shall be headed by the minister, Forest as the Chairman and will have the following 10 members.

(ii) Divisional Committee

Chairman shall be selected in a meeting from among the VSS representative in the meeting and continue till the next meeting. DFO shall function as the Executive Secretary of the DLC and can only act as per the guide of DLC and JFM policy.

(iii) DLC will be appellate body for minor forest offences.

(iv) The term of office shall be for two years.

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| 1. Secretary to Govt. of Orissa
Forest & Environment Deptt. | Member |
| 2. Principal Chief Conservator
of Forest | Member |
| 3. Secretary, Home Department | Member |
| 4. One representative from each
Division from among the VSS members
at Division level | Member Secretary |
| 5. Two NGO representatives shall be
included in this body as per the
selection of SLC | Member |
| 6. Two non-official Experts nominated
by Government | Member |

8. More Representative from NGOs & Vana samrakhana Samitis are to be incorporated into the state steering committee.

Once nominated to the steering committee and incumbent will have a tenure of three years.

Issues: While preparing the alternate resolution on JFM certain pertinent issues cropped up which needs more and elaborate thinking of all who are working on the lines of JFM. We put forth these issues here to get reactions of all.

1. Priority in selection of area for formation of VSS.

We all know that numerous informal groups are involved in forest protection for the last several years. They should be given priority in formation of VSS but what should be the minimum time period of protection for screening or prioritising groups involved in protection ?

2. VSS will include two adult members from each household living in the village/cluster of villages. including all those who have been exercising any rights, concessions or privileges over the forest area.

This is ambiguous. Say there were 3/4 villages utilising a patch of forest for the last several years. They all had operational right over the forest. Presently one village has started protecting the forest. Is this village supposed to involve other villagers in the formation of VSS ? This will create a lot of inter-village conflicts.

3. In the para 7 clause (V) of the 1993 Govt. of Orissa JFM resolution there is a special mention on the involvement of Gram Panchayat in the protection of Forest in no villages under the Panchayat come forward to protect the forest then the forest department may assigned the Gram Panchayat to manage the forest. Whether the Gram Panchayat would be able to protect the forest or not is a crucial question which needs serious attention.

4. Referring to the para 14 clause (ii) of the 1993 Govt. of Orissa resolution, it can be pointed out here that the community has the right over the minor forest produces but these are to be delivered to the departmental agency or lease against payment of prescribed wages. If community is going to control and manage the forest resources then why can't it have the marketing responsibility of the MFPs ? Should there be nationalisation of certain forest produces ? Whether the collection and the sell of MFP are to be leased out to private agencies or not to the State Government for successful action ?

5. reference para 14 Clause (iv)

Whether there is a need for major harvest or clear felling of the trees or not ?

Whether the community is ready to share 50% of the benefits received from the harvest with the forest department or not ?

Why there is a deal of 50 : 50 sharing between the communities and the forest department if the community takes over the entire management of forests ?

The questions are to be thought of seriously and the suggestions/reactions are to be sent for enabling us to prepare the alternative resolution on JFM.

Joint Forest Management Superior Property Rights?

Shashi Kolavalli

The forest departments in several states are collaborating with communities to regenerate forests by giving a share of the rights to revenues. This paper argues that high costs of excluding unauthorised use has compelled forest departments to accept this change in rights to forest lands. But we cannot expect forest departments to grant a meaningful role for the communities in forest management, because their primary motive is to reduce their costs.

JOINT forest management (JFM) is a new approach to forest management which forest departments in several states are employing to rejuvenate forests with the participation of the communities living nearby.¹ The essence of JFM is forest departments' alienation of some of the rights to forest produce to the communities. In exchange for participating in the management of forests, the communities gain the right to minor products of the forests and a share of the revenue from timber sales. Alienation rights to land remain with the forest departments; the communities are given only the usufruct rights. The participation expected from communities merely entails protection of forests in most cases. In some cases the communities may be given the opportunity to participate in decisions regarding how the forests are jointly managed. The most significant aspect of JFM is that by alienating some rights to forest lands which are vested in them to be managed in the national interest, the forest departments induce the communities to aid them in their management of forests.

Although experimentation in management through benefit sharing has been going on for several years in a few states such as Orissa and West Bengal, participation of people in forest management was legitimised only in 1988 by the national forest policy. Some of the basic objectives of the 1988 policy are "...Meeting the requirements of fuelwood, fodder, minor forest produce and small timber of the rural and tribal population... Creating a massive people's movement with the involvement of women, for achieving these objectives and to minimise pressure on existing forests..." [GOI 1988:2]. The 1988 policy recognised severe depletion of forest cover since 1952 although the forest policy of 1952 had set a target of increasing forest cover to one-third of the country's land area. It attributed the depletion of forest cover to pressure on forests from increasing demand for fuelwood, fodder and timber; inadequate protection measures; diversion of forest lands to non-forest uses; and a tendency to look upon forests as revenue-earning resources [GOI 1988:2]. The 1988 policy emphasised meeting local needs even at the cost of the

protective function of forests because of growing pressure on forests from increasing population [Chaturvedi 1992:187].

In June 1990, the secretary, environment and forests in a circular to forest secretaries of all states and union territories, further clarified the policy relating to people's involvement in forest management. The circular stated:

The national forest policy, 1988 envisages people's involvement in the development and protection of forests... The policy document envisages it as one of the essentials of forest management that the forest communities should be motivated to identify themselves with the development and protection of forests from which they derive benefits...

...the need for working out the modalities for giving to the village communities living close to the forest land, usufructuary benefits to ensure their participation in the afforestation programme was emphasised...

...the beneficiaries should be given usufructs like grasses, lops and tops of branches, and minor forest produce. If they successfully protect the forests, they may be given a portion of the proceeds from the sale of trees when they mature... [GOI 1990:9-10].

The nature of community participation envisioned in JFM is quite different from participation accommodated in earlier programmes. Forest labour co-operatives, for example, were initiated to put an end to illegal harvests by contractors [GOI 1988:6]. Forest labour co-operatives supply labour against wages and also receive a small share of the net proceeds from produce marketed through their own depots.² They are not residual claimants to forest revenues. Therefore, they may not have any interest in the long-term development of forests. JFM, on the other hand, grants certain rights to benefits from the forests to participating communities because of which they have an interest in enhancing forest productivity.

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PROPERTY RIGHTS AND THEIR ENFORCEMENT

Property rights over assets consist of rights, or the powers, to consume, obtain income from, and alienate these assets [Barzel 1989:2]. A person's ability to realise the potential value of his or her property depends on the nature of rights and the extent to which rights can be protected. The ability to exclude others prevents the property from becoming an open access resource and the ability to alienate and to derive income permits the owner to realise gains from exchange [Barzel 1989:85]. The extent to which the rights to a property remain undiluted is dependent on the efforts made by the owner to protect them, efforts made by others to capture the asset, and protection provided by the government [Barzel 1989:2]. Protection of one's rights involves considerable costs. When protection costs are positive, rights to assets cannot be perfectly delineated [Barzel 1989:3]. This provides an opportunity for others to benefit from the property.

Forest departments, though legal guardians of forest with powers to exclude people from making certain uses of the forests, cannot effectively do so. They could exclude people by constructing physical barriers. Costs make this option rarely feasible. The other option is to deter encroachment by making it costly for the offenders. Adequate deterrence can be created only by maintaining the probability of capture, prosecution and harsh punishments at fairly high levels. All this requires information which is costly to gather. Ineffective laws and tardy legal systems dilute deterrence. Moreover, some encroachments may take place in collusion with the staff of forest department in which case the incentives to protect the department's rights themselves may be weak.

In the absence of effective protection, forest departments' rights over forests are not fully delineated. In order to economise on monitoring or guarding costs, forest departments may prevent only those encroachments which are not costly to prevent thereby providing open access to some benefits from forests. As an example, forest departments may choose to ignore illegal grazing and firewood collection because they are numerous and difficult to prevent. The rights which cannot be fully protected become available for others to capture. This affects the forest department's ability to realise the full potential from forest lands.

The most numerous encroachments are made by those who depend on forests for their livelihood. Their encroachment may take the form of livestock grazing, firewood and fodder collection, and harvest of non-timber and timber products both for domestic use and sale. The forests in which such encroachments occur are likely to be degraded. Grazing and firewood collection in excess of sustainable capacity of forests are considered to be the major causes for forest degradation. Grazing in forest lands is extensive: nearly all forest lands in Rajasthan are grazed; UP, grazing takes place in 83 per cent of forest land; in West Bengal, over 70 per cent; in Sikkim, over 75 per cent; and in Nagaland, over 53 per cent of forest lands [Lal 1992: 42]. There is considerable pressure on forests because of the large gap between demand and supply for firewood. The estimated total quantity of wood cut in excess of silviculturally permissible limit was 3,245 million cubic metres in the 35 years between 1953 and 1987. This was estimated to have resulted in total destruction of 3 million hectares and in the reduction of growing stock in 27 million hectares [Lal 1992:40]

Less numerous are encroachments intended for harvest of valuable forest products, primarily timber. They may be less numerous than livelihood-based encroachments but their contribution to degradation is not any less. They generally take place in forests which still have valuable timber. They are also likely to take place in forests which are isolated from the communities. They are easier to control. But these encroachments may be facilitated by collusion among encroachers, politicians and forest department staff.

Encroachments could also take place due to political reasons. Forest policies create conflict between national and local needs. The 1952 policy states that "...the accident of village being situated close to a forest does not prejudice the right of the whole country as a whole to receive the benefits of a national asset..." [GOI 1952:419].³ Rural communities also see little coming back to them from their neighbourhood forests managed by the forest departments in the national interest. This conflict was parti-

cularly strong during British rule when forests were exploited for the benefit of the empire. As a result, there was a general defiance of forest laws and forests were set on fire during the movement for home rule in 1916. Resentment from forest-related conflicts with the government "lent inspiration to freedom struggle in Uttar Kannada" [Nadkarni 1988:30]. In Puri, for example, villagers on several occasions raided nearby forests to cut down trees [FRI 1961:79]. More recently, large-scale fellings by Jharkhand activists in Singhbhum is believed to be a protest against the government's apathy towards the region [Chatterjee 1933].

The costs to the forest department of preventing encroachments also differ among different kinds of encroachments. The costs include monitoring, prosecution and political costs. The more numerous encroachments such as grazing, firewood collection and harvest of products needed for subsistence which take place in degraded forests are costly to prevent. The information costs are high because they are numerous. More importantly, the political costs are high. The communities may view these encroachments as being moral in the sense of "communities having a right to a living to the extent local resources permit" [Scott 1976:176]. Smuggling and poaching-related encroachments should be easier to exclude because they are less numerous, and such efforts are also likely to receive popular support. But political support may be weak. The potential for large profits and the possibility of collusion, as is evident from sandalwood smuggling, for example, make such encroachments difficult to control. The collusion may be so powerful in some cases that the forest department may lack the incentive to protect its rights.⁴

The forest departments have adopted different measures to discourage encroachments. One of them is to reduce pressure on forests to meet grazing, firewood, and timber requirements of communities. One of the objectives of social forestry is to meet these requirements through promotion of forestry in private and village lands. The recent forest policy is clear that sufficient fodder, fuel, and pasture should be provided, especially in areas adjoining forests, to prevent depletion of forest beyond the sustainable limit [GOI 1988:3]. Policing powers of the forest departments also have been strengthened. The 1980 forest bill spells out a number of prohibited acts in preserved and protected forests and prescribes punishment for committing these prohibited acts. The bill also has provisions for the seizure of implements used in committing these acts. Forest officers were given very wide powers of arrest and of seizure of property to deal with forestry-related offences [Kulkarni 1989:150]. In Gujarat, the forest department has the authority to seize trucks used for transporting illegally cut timber.⁵ The

intention of granting such powers to forest departments is to make punishment more likely, severe and swift. As a result, policing has emerged as one of the primary functions of foresters.

Forest departments' policing has resulted in high political costs particularly when it deprives the locals of their livelihood. Conflicts have taken place as far back as 1772 [Troisi 1978:15]. The forester is perceived to be an enemy of the people in many places. In Gujarat, for example, each year an average of 18,000 forest offences are recorded. These include 10,000 cases of timber theft, 2,000 for grazing, 700 for fire, and 5,300 others [Pathan, et al 1991:3]. Since the formation of Gujarat, 20 forestry officials have been killed in confrontations. Between 1985-86 and 1989-90, there were 376 incidents of assaults in which 383 forest officers were injured and four died [Pathan, et al 1991:3]. Clashes between individuals and foresters occasionally turn into broad-based conflicts between communities and foresters. Given the potential for conflicts, the forest departments are not capable of effectively excluding people from making what they consider to be illegal uses of the forest.

JOINT MANAGEMENT

That punitive measures alone were not adequate for excluding people from the use of forests was realised in the 60s itself [FRI 1961:99]. The experience of the West Bengal forest department also suggested that traditional methods of surveillance and policing "led to a complete alienation of the people from the administration resulting in frequent clashes between the forest department and the communities" [WBFD 1988: 113]. Having realised the futility of protecting the forests armed with only punitive measures, some forest departments began experimenting with involving communities in forest management [Kant et al 1991: 2-3; Pathan et al 1991:3]. In West Bengal, Gujarat, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh, some foresters began discussions with communities to encourage them to organise and protect forest lands from further degradation. People themselves took the initiative in Orissa, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh.

Communities themselves, particularly through voluntary organisations, have brought pressure on policy-makers to recognise that they are also interested in conservation and that they ought to be involved in forest management [Bhatt 1987]. These pressures may have contributed to changes in policy which have accommodated community participation in forest management. But the principal factor which has led many forest departments to experiment with community involvement in forest management and also become receptive to joint management is their inability to prevent encroachments so as to be able to put forest land into productive uses as they perceive

them. The need to involve people in forest management was recognised in the 1952 policy itself. The policy stated:

...No forest policy, however well intentioned and meticulously drawn up, has the slightest chance of success without the willing support and co-operation of the people. The recognition of their rights to forest produce at concessional rates, or, free or royalty, is not by itself enough. What is necessary is to instill in the people a direct interest in the utilisation of forests... [GOI 1952:427].

However, mechanisms necessary to instill direct interest were not introduced by the forest departments. But as exclusion costs progressively increased because of the rising number and the severity of infringements, the forest departments have become more receptive to creating a direct interest in the communities. The shift in policy towards joint forest management has been primarily to find a property rights structure which would make exclusion more feasible and less costly to the forest departments. This is fairly evident from JFM policy statements of various states which have made some progress in implementing JFM.

Bihar:

...It is necessary to rehabilitate these forests and increase their productivity...After serious deliberations the government has reached the conclusion that the management and protection of forests close to the villages must be done with the co-operation of the village people... [GOB 1990:11].

Gujarat:

Responsibility of the village community are (i) To protect forest land from encroachment, cultivation, fire, felling and grazing... (ii) The community through its members will prevent any damage to the forest area allotted by any unauthorised persons and will inform the forest officers concerned for taking necessary action... [GOG 1991:16].

Haryana:

...Presently one of the major roles of the forest department is to 'police' the surviving forest resources. This results in a continuous confrontation between local villagers who need to exploit these resources for survival and the forest staff who are duty bound to protect them.

...The essential learnings from Sukhomajri and Nada were the following. ...that social fencing by village communities can be more effective in protecting forest areas than any amount of policing by the forest department...
...The basic philosophy underlying the proposed policy is to link the economic interests of villagers adjacent to forest areas with sustainable management of those areas... [GOH 1990:18-19].

Jammu and Kashmir:

...Whereas active participation of local people is vital for regeneration, maintenance and protection of plantation done for afforestation and rehabilitation as aforesaid, ... [GOJK 1992:26].

Karnataka:

...In spite of several measures like increase in staff, communication network and increased intensive patrolling, etc, the desired results have not been achieved. Keeping this in view the state government desires that people living in the villages adjoining the forest areas should be actively involved in the conservation, planning and protection, regeneration of degraded forests [Karnataka government order, quoted in Hegde 1994].

Madhya Pradesh:

It has been noticed by the government that damage to the government forest is increasing day by day due to illegal cutting and encroachments by some organised gangs. It has been brought to the notice of the government that in spite of adequate measure taken in such sensitive areas, such as increasing the number of forest officials, intensive patrolling and other arrangements, satisfactory results have not come so far. Keeping this in view, the state government has now come to the conclusion that until residents of villages adjoining the forest areas sensitive to damage give their active co-operation to the forest department in the protection of forests, it would be impossible to protect the forest areas fully.
...In order to get the co-operation of the villagers in the regeneration of such forest areas, it is essential to give them incentive by way of a share in the forest produce... [GOMP 1991:38].

Maharashtra:

The illicit cutting of trees from the area, is increasing for various reasons. The relevant laws and regulations imposed by the government are not sufficient to prevent the destruction of forests. People's co-operation in protecting the forest is very essential... [GOM 1992: 44].

Orissa:

...After careful appraisal, the government is of the view that the task of protecting forests is so urgent and so enormous that the rural community should be fully and actively involved in it...
...The assigned villagers shall be responsible for five protection and prevention of illicit felling, thefts of forest produce and encroachments in the assigned reserve forest areas... [GOO 1988:50].

Rajasthan:

...Since the task of regeneration of such forest lands by afforestation is quite voluminous, the success of the efforts made through the state government's resources and manpower has been limited. It has been decided after thorough discussion of the subject at central, state and other levels that for the conservation, development and management of such degraded and denuded forest land, co-operation and participation of the local villagers and voluntary agencies through gram panchayats may be sought from this year... [GOR 1991:52].

Tripura:

Whereas active participation and involvement of local people is vital for regeneration,

maintenance and protection of aforesaid forests/plantations and successful implementation of the programme;

Now, therefore, the governor is pleased to decide that forest protection and regeneration committees shall be constituted for this purpose and beneficiaries acting as members of such committees shall be allowed, as a measure of incentive, usufruct defined herein after para 4 subject to observance of the conditions provided in this resolution... [GOT 1991:57].

West Bengal:

...Whereas active participation and involvement of local people are vital for regeneration, maintenance and protection of aforesaid forest/plantations and successful implementation of the programme;
Now, therefore, the governor is pleased to decide that forest protection committees shall be constituted for this purpose and beneficiaries acting as members of such committees shall be allowed, as a measure of incentive, 25 per cent of the usufruct subject to observance of the conditions provided in the resolution... [GOWB 1989:62].

The perceptions and intentions of policy-makers in various states are explicitly stated in their policies. The forest departments have failed to maintain forest cover or improve degraded forests. They will be able to do so only if they involve the communities in forest management. Social fencing is more desirable and effective than policing. Protection from thieves requires the co-operation of the people living nearby these forests; they can assist the forest departments by providing information. A direct interest in forest development can be instilled in the communities by giving them a share of the forest revenues.

As the principal motive of the forest departments in promoting JFM is to arrive at a property right structure which reduces their exclusion costs, there may be a basis for understanding the reasons for differences in the enthusiasm with which the forest departments are initiating JFM in different states and the types of the forests which have been brought under JFM. Forest departments are least able to exclude people without antagonising the communities where pressure on forests is high because of livelihood-based encroachments. Therefore, forest departments in states where there is considerable forest-dependent population with degraded forests in the vicinity of communities are likely to be most enthusiastic about JFM. Where theft of high value products is the primary problem, punitive measures are likely to be more effective as they would not be objectionable to communities, and the forest departments are less and likely to enter into JFM.⁶

Along the same lines, one can also hypothesise that forest departments would like to bring under JFM only forest lands which they cannot manage single-handedly. Only those degraded lands, whether forest depart-

ment or community owned which have the most potential for improving productivity under shared rights will be brought under JFM. In Gujarat, for example, only forests which are heavily degraded in terms of tree cover) are available for JFM. The legal status and the condition of these lands may vary from state to state. The states are clearly not interested in sharing rights to productive forests.⁷

APPROPRIATE PROPERTY RIGHTS?

As property rights to an asset influence how it is utilised, one can think of one set of rights being superior to another in terms of the potential of the asset realised. According to Barzel (1989:5), "maximisation of the net value of an asset requires an ownership pattern which can most effectively constrain uncompensated exploitation". As there are costs associated with rights protection and these vary from one situation to another, the nature of property rights which prevail vary according to the nature of assets and the uses to which they are put. In the case of land, they may vary according to the use, resources, or circumstances involved [Baily 1992:195]. To explain the transition from common lands to private lands in New England agriculture, Field (1985:364-65) argues that the optimal commonness for using a natural resource is determined by changes in (i) exclusion costs; (ii) total value of common property externalities in the communities; and (iii) transaction costs of reaching agreements among users. Changes in exclusion costs from technological development, for example, can lead to changes in rights. The potential for reducing exclusion costs possibly through changes in the rights themselves provides an opportunity to enhance the value of an asset.

A property rights structure which vests the rights to revenues from major products of the forests with forest departments alone may yield less than the potential benefits from forests. Forest departments' inability to exclude resulting in open access to forests may lead to the unsustainable harvest of forest. It can also influence how they manage the forests. They may develop forests which yield only timber. This is done through planting of what are known as defensive species which can withstand grazing and are unsuited for fodder. The consequence, therefore, of current rights which lead forest departments to pursue timber production is a gap between the potential and actual value of output from forests. Forest lands could be put to better use when they are managed to meet both timber and non-timber needs such that the total value of output is high. Forest management decisions under the current right structure overlook the value of non-timber benefits to communities.

A change to a more productive set of property rights may come about when the prospects of getting a share of the benefits

from doing so provide incentives for interested parties to reassign property rights [Libecap 1989:15]. The interested parties who may influence policies affecting rights are (i) communities which traditionally have had access to forests; (ii) the forest department; and (iii) industry. The communities have faced both an erosion of their rights to forest products and reduced flow of benefits to which they have rights. They often attribute decline in productivity to forest policies and demand transfer of rights to communities to enable local management of forests as common properties. The industry would like greater direct control of forest lands so that supply of their inputs becomes more secure. The forest departments/government have come under increasing public scrutiny and pressure to increase tree cover following the realisation through satellite imagery that forest cover in the country is much less than actually believed. Between 1972-75 and 1980-82, the forest cover had actually gone down from 16.9 per cent of geographical area to 14.1 per cent [Nadkarni 1988:160]. All parties have an interest in changing property rights. But the interest that is of most consequence in reassigning the rights to the forests is that of the current holder of the rights, the forest department.

An optimal bundle of rights from the point of view of the forest department is one in which its power to put the land to uses which it perceives are in the national interest is not diluted, and its revenues remain the same if not grow. One option available for the forest department is to lease degraded forests to industries for captive plantations. But leasing forest land to commercial firms is not always acceptable to the public. The decision of the Karnataka state government to allot government land for developing a captive plantation was challenged in the courts [Gadgil and Guha 1992:192]. The forest departments themselves may oppose captive plantations when they diminish their control over forest resources and warrant scaling down of their operations. Moreover, they enjoy the current position of being monopoly suppliers of scarce industrial inputs at controlled prices.

The other option is to involve communities. A desirable bundle of rights from the point of view of the communities is one which gives them the access to forests which they have traditionally had and a share of revenue, if not a complete control over forests which would give them the incentive to invest their resources in forest development. However, it may also be wrong to assume that people always want forests to be developed as forests or that they should be managed by communities. Even tribals traditionally presumed to favour collectivist traditions may desire to become private landowners and therefore seek regularisation of 'illegal' cultivation of forest lands [Shah 1994].

A set of rights which would encourage cooperation between the forest department and the communities is one in which the communities feel that they have a fair share of the revenues which is commensurate with the efforts that they put into joint management, and the forest department feels that its own revenues and powers are not diluted while maintaining or improving tree cover. The requirements of the two parties can be the basis for determining an optimal share of rights between the two parties in JFM. A share acceptable to the communities is one which they feel is (i) at the least commensurate with additional efforts that they put forth; (ii) fair. If the share is not fair by the standards of the community, they will perceive the agreement to be exploitative. The conflict between a community and the forest department regarding sharing of benefits is akin to one between a landowner and a tenant.

Because of historical ownership patterns, the relationship between the forest department and the community has come to be that of a patron and client. This view may not be acceptable to those who consider communities to be the legitimate owners of forests. But it is only in this context that we can examine whether the relationship under JFM is exploitative or an unfair distribution of efforts and rewards. The existence of injustice or exploitation implies that there is a norm of justice. But the difficulty is to come up with an acceptable norm which is also consistent with the subjective feelings of the exploited [Scott 1971:158-59]. Two principles that seem to underlay what is moral are the norm of reciprocity – a notion of equal exchange – and right to subsistence (1971:167). As Scott suggests, one must examine the notion of justice and values of real actors rather than begin with abstract normative standards [1971:160]. Community perception of what is fair is reasonable. "Folk conceptions of justice... do have a rational and realistic basis, and arrangements that depart from this basis are likely to need deception and force the more they depart" [More, quoted in Scott 1971:171].

Even from a limited perspective of the forest department to buy protection through social fencing from the communities, an optimal share for the communities is one which is congruent with what is considered to be moral by communities. Unless the communities consider the shares offered to them to be fair or moral, they would have an incentive to cheat on the agreement. Unlike Scott's view that peasants are concerned only with what is left to them in a relationship, they are also interested in what is taken away. A decent return to efforts that they put forth provides only a lower estimate of what is considered moral by the participants. Our case studies in Gujarat suggest that the communities feel that a 50 per cent share of the forest department is unjust as the communities put

forth much of the effort and the forest department earns by merely being a landowner.

The sharing of revenues is not the only aspect of joint management that is of concern to communities. The right to derive income from a property also includes the right to decide what to do with the property. This is the 'empowerment' for which social activists are calling. To instil a sense of ownership, the communities should be given an opportunity to participate in planning as well. The legislation in some states – Bihar, for example – is clearly intended to 'use' people to meet the objectives of the forest department and not engage in joint management in any meaningful sense. The societies established by the district forest officers are expected to assist the forest departments. They do not even have the freedom to decide what they do with their share of benefits. Such legislation is hardly likely to instil 'direct interests'.

When the terms of contract are conducive to instil a sense of ownership in the communities, the bundle of rights inherent in JFM result in a better alignment of incentives and information about the scarcity of the resource. It will permit greater realisation of the land potential compared to state ownership. The increase in the value of output will come from (i) sustainable harvests of timber and non-timber products of forests in existing forests; (ii) increase in the value of outputs through planting of species valuable to the communities; and (iii) increased investments in new forests. On the cost side, protection costs will come down as community participation increases. As communities develop institutions to govern their behaviour, social fencing will replace policing by the forest department. The total protection costs per unit value of output should also come down. It will enable development of lands which would not have been developed otherwise. Without joint management, the forest department can only retreat back to forests which it can protect effectively.

There are several reasons to expect productivity of land to be higher under JFM compared to forest department ownership. All grazing of forests, particularly unlimited or uncontrolled grazing, is considered to be incompatible with scientific forestry [GOI 1952:424]. That the forest departments consider controlled grazing to be important for increasing land productivity is evident from the fact that JFM agreements in most states insist that communities control grazing. The total value of products produced from forest land could be significantly higher under JFM when what is of value to the community and the land capability become the prime considerations in the selection of species. Our case studies of JFM in Gujarat show that choice of species for planting has been done in consultation with the communities; production of timber has not been the only consideration.

The states also recognise that even with sharing of output with the villagers, their revenues will not be reduced as increase in productivity will more than compensate the loss from sharing with communities. Moreover, what the communities will get is a share of output from forests which were not productive prior to JFM; the forest departments are not giving up their revenues. The policy statement of the government of Haryana is explicit:

...For the state government, there will be no loss in existing revenues (if any) from the concerned areas. The present levels of revenue will be maintained and in certain cases, there will be increase over a period of time. Simultaneously, through the government's adoption of the policy of sharing the bulk of the increased production resulting from villagers' participation, the villagers' economic status will improve substantially without any additional cost to the government... Further, with the villagers accepting responsibility for protection and management of forest areas near the villages, the department's future costs for protection and rehabilitation will be substantially reduced... [GOH 1990:19].

The gist of this policy statement is that under JFM an increase in the value of production and a decrease in the transaction costs of enforcing rights can be expected. When forests are developed with the involvement of people, the potential for increasing the value of forest output would be significant. Property rights modified for joint management make it possible to invest in land improvement or afforestation hitherto considered unviable because of high protection costs. JFM also provides a means for the state to create social capital utilising labour in rural areas.

OPEN ACCESS TO COMMON PROPERTY VIA STATE CONTROL

The state's involvement in forests began with Chandra Gupta Maurya (300 BC) when there was a superintendent of forests, part of whose duty was to protect wild life in forest areas [FRI 1961:72]. The forests under the Hindu rulers were classified for various purposes with limitations placed on their use. Subsequently, during the Muslim rule only specified species of valuable timber were proclaimed by local rulers as 'royal trees' and royalty was collected for their extraction. Property rights were developed only for valuable species. Otherwise, the forests were open to everyone. But there was customary regulation of rights over forests [Kulkarni 1989:140].

Subsequent to appointment of a commission to enquire into the availability of teak in Malabar forests in 1890, regulations prohibiting the felling of teak below 6 inches in girth were introduced. In 1805, a forest committee was constituted to enquire into the capacity of forests and the status of proprietary rights in them. The committee

found that the more accessible forests had been overworked. A proclamation declared royalty rights over teak trees in the south and prohibited unauthorised harvesting of teak [FRI 1961:73]. As population pressure increased, forests which were open access resources were brought under state control. Even under state ownership communities had free access to forest lands.

Private ownership of forests was also not considered to be in the interest of the state. In 1864, the governor-general suggested to the secretary of state that allowing proprietary rights to forests to individuals should be abandoned, as such rights were almost certain to lead to destruction of the forests. He also suggested that all government forests should be strictly set apart and made inalienable; some provision should be made for existing private rights and it would be good policy to extinguish even those rights on equitable terms wherever possible [FRI 1961:76]. State control was used as a solution to forest degradation under both open access and private control of forests.

Though forest lands were brought under the state control to be managed by forest departments, district administration or village panchayats, they effectively became open access resources to various degrees because of high protection costs. JFM is an attempt now to make them common properties of communities with clear boundaries to exclude non-members and institutions which govern how members use the resources. The institution of common property is being employed as a solution to degradation of forests due to open access [Ciriacy-Wantrup and Bishop 1975].

JFM may be a step towards the development of "forest policy as if people mattered, balance of power, and people's power as a check for bureaucratic power" as articulated by Baxi (1983:103). The evolution of JFM, particularly in terms of changes in the position of the forest departments, is not driven by any desire to bring about participation in any sense larger than building social fences. Therefore, it is perhaps too much to expect JFM to meet the criteria of participation along the lines suggested by Arora (1994:697), viz. principles of empowerment, autonomy, self-realisation, and effectiveness [p 697]. In a recent case in Karnataka where the forest department is implementing joint management with the support of ODA, the forest department fenced off the forest and terminated the involvement of a community which was not pliable [Hegde 1995]. Even under the proposed bill, the communities will play a subservient role [Kulkarni 1994]. The forest departments' alienation of some rights to communities in exchange for their participation is not an act of generosity. The forest departments would retain all the rights if they could regenerate forests without co-operation of the people; they have no choice given the current technology of exclusion.

Notes

[Rolf Mueller made valuable comments on an earlier draft of this paper. I have also benefited from discussions with my colleagues Samar Datta, Gopal Naik and Devi Tewari. Responsibility for deficiencies still lies with me.]

- 1 The number of forest protection committees or community organisations engaged in joint management in different states were as follows: 413 in Bihar, 200 in Gujarat, 36 in Haryana, 272 in Jammu and Kashmir, 1,181 in Orissa and 2,110 in West Bengal. The area under protection in Orissa where joint management has been in practice the longest is about 3 per cent of the total forest area [SPWD 1992:83-87].
- 2 The performance of these co-operatives has not been consistent. The societies have difficulty working with the forest departments as the forest departments prefer to work with contractors. Control of many societies has also been seized by unscrupulous elements. They have worked satisfactorily only in a few places such as Dangs district in Gujarat where all timber extraction is done through these co-operatives [Gadgil 1983:124].
- 3 There can be legitimate conflict between local and national needs when there are externalities. For example, Himalayan forests are treated as national assets whose degradation have serious consequences for agriculture in the plains.
- 4 In such situations, some communities in Assam have taken it upon themselves to protect the forests [see Raju et al 1993].
- 5 Timber from four good trees can be expected to yield Rs 1,20,000 [Sainath 1993]. Small fines alone cannot deter activities which have high expected returns.
- 6 Forest protection committees are also effective in assisting the forest departments in controlling smuggling. Recently a forest committee in Palamu area apprehended a forest officer smuggling timber [Sainath 1993]. The forest departments are finding effective allies in people. Tribals have been hired as forest watchers in forest reserves in Tamil Nadu. They have used to their advantage tribals' understanding of forests, ability to endure long hours of work, familiarity in dealing with wild animals and knowledge of poaching [Padmanaban 1993].
- 7 This has the potential danger of creating incentives for communities to hasten degradation of forest which they would like to have brought under joint management.

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Constructing the 'Local'

Decentralising Forest Management

Ajit Menon

While the concept of joint forest management is certainly a step forward from the centralised state-centred management systems, is it as participatory and decentralised as it has been claimed to be? What has been the experience of Tamil Nadu in implementing the concept?

THE latest Draft Forest Act (The Conservation of Forests and Natural Ecosystem Act) has over the last year once again brought to the fore debates with regard to principles of forest management. Since the late 1970s and the 'Arabari experiment', increasing emphasis has been placed on people's participation and joint forest management (JFM) strategies. The 1990 central government order directing state governments to encourage the involvement of village communities in the regeneration of degraded forest lands was in a sense an official acceptance of such strategies. The Draft Forest Act, to many, therefore is a blatant challenge to that directive as it not only has no mention of joint forest management but restricts discussion of people's participation to the chapter on village forests and that too with far-reaching powers to the state.*

Despite endorsing the critiques of the Draft Forest Act, our intent here is to refocus the discussion on JFM in the hope of prompting further debate. While JFM is undoubtedly a step forward from centralised state-centred management systems, is it as participatory and decentralised as many profess it to be? If not, should we not pay more attention to improving it rather than positing the future of forest management as a simple choice between the Draft Forest Act and JFM? In what follows, we attempt to re-examine some of the criticisms made of JFM which seem to have fallen on deaf ears with reference to the Tamil Nadu notification. This critique suggests that while JFM intends to decentralise decision-making to the village level, the decentralisation process itself is based on a 'strait-jacketed' notion of what the 'local' is and should be. As a result, instead of allowing for 'local' solutions, JFM is in danger of imposing these solutions from the outside.

A wide range of literature already exists on joint forest management. These have generally been of the case study variety examining the actual functioning of JFM. Consequently, criticism of JFM has been largely restricted to the 'particulars' as opposed to the 'generals'. These particulars have been of three kinds. First, criticisms have focused on the process of imple-

mentation itself. Wide divergencies seem to exist based on individual initiatives of forest officials and local leaders. Thus, in cases where local initiative is greater, the implementation of JFM has proceeded more smoothly. A second criticism is that the devolution of powers to forest protection committees (FPCs) has often been restricted to providing employment opportunities and a few usufructuary benefits as opposed to involving people closely in the planning process. It is suggested therefore that it is necessary for the forest department to actively help village communities develop their own micro-level plans. Third, in many cases, what has happened is that though JFM has meant to decentralise, the imposition of a definite structure in terms of a state order has restricted the flexibility of local involvement. (This has been reported in various issues of *Wasteland News*.)

However many of these problems stem from a conceptual problem with JFM itself. Chhatrapati Singh in one of the few far-reaching critiques of JFM made a number of relevant points. He pointed out that many of the usufructuary rights guaranteed under the notification already exist, most often in the form of customary rights which were 'legalised' at the time of the settlement. Therefore, by constituting village forest protection committees (VFPCs) and giving them special or overriding rights to particular forest areas, it is possible that others who do not fall within the domain of these FPCs are denied rights which might have existed previously. Moreover, it is possible that the rights given to FPCs conflict with rights which already exist amongst other local bodies such as community panchayats.

These shortcomings, as Singh rightly pointed out, is because the process of decentralisation in JFM itself has been packaged in an externally imposed framework. He says: "On the one hand the government talks of decentralisation and strengthening of rural institutions, such as the panchayats, and on the other the constant practice of setting up non-statutory, government-dependent committees in most areas of developmental work (Chhatrapati Singh, 'JFM: Analysis of Forestry

Notifications', *Wasteland News*, August-October 1991).

A careful look at the central government order will support this view. While the order calls for the involvement of village communities and voluntary agencies, this involvement is not free of 'supervision' from the forest department. In all state orders, forest officers are to play an important role in the constitution of these FPCs, in the functioning of them through range officers in the executive committee and in overseeing the functioning of the committee through divisional forest officers and conservators of forests. Moreover, the distribution of benefits between local communities and the forest department is determined by the latter (Government of India, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Order No 6-21/89-FP, June 1, 1990).

The Tamil Nadu government order on interface forestry (TN's version of JFM) dated October 21, 1993 is no exception to the rule. In terms of constituting the village forest council (as they are called in TN), "the forester in charge of the concerned Interface Forestry Unit Area as a convener will initiate the process of forming Village Forest Council." (section 2). The forester in charge of the developmental activities will be the secretary of the executive committee. Furthermore, the divisional forest officer will have the authority to disband these councils. With regard to benefit-sharing, the forester/ranger/divisional forest officer in consultation with the executive committee will decide who are to be the beneficiaries and the quantity of the benefits per household (section 3). Furthermore certain items such as bamboo and small timber (classified as category B) will be extracted departmentally not locally and sandalwood remains exclusively the state's property (section 6). Finally, the divisional forest officer will monitor the functioning of these councils while the chief conservator of forests (social forestry) is empowered to modify any guidelines (section 7).

It seems therefore quite clear as Singh suggests that the content of decentralisation itself is limited. At one level, JFM seems to be giving more power to the local, but at the same time the state through the forest department assumes significant powers in terms of constituting, organising and monitoring FPCs. The proponents of JFM argue that it is a step in the right direction. And no doubt there is a noticeable attitudinal difference between those who function in the interface (social forestry) wing of the forest department in Tamil Nadu and those who belong in the territorial division. But that surely should not mean that JFM should not be scrutinised more carefully.

Singh's critique of JFM is essentially that decentralisation is embedded in centralised structures and therefore goes against the

spirit of panchayati raj. But his argument can be taken one step further if we look at how the 'local' itself is problematised. In JFM, the unit of functioning more often than not has become the revenue village or hamlet. Decentralisation or empowering the local involves giving certain rights to VFPCs who in exchange are involved in protecting the forests. Furthermore a defined area of 'forest' or 'jurisdiction' is given to these VFPCs in order to form a 'unit of management'. The question therefore should be as to whether this 'local' is a functioning whole or not, and if not, what the consequences of constructing it as such would be.

CONSTRUCTING THE 'LOCAL'

Let me give an example. The Kolli Hills, where I am undertaking research at present, is an offshoot of the eastern ghats located in Namakkal and Rasipuram taluks of Salem district. It is primarily inhabited by Malayalee tribals (Malai hills) who are agriculturists. There are substantial forest areas bordering the village settlements. It is important to note here that this area is not under interface forestry. Nonetheless, as more than 20,000 ha of reserved forests exist, mostly on the slopes of the hills but also on the plateau where the 14 villages are located, it is an area in which the concept of JFM is ripe for testing. If used as a testing ground, what would the implications of it be?

Traditionally, Malayalees of the Kolli hills had their own administrative system based on 'oor' panchayats. These panchayat bodies were part of an overall administrative system which governed the Kolli hills. They were locally constituted bodies autonomous from any other body outside the hills. Interface forestry seeks to create village forest protection councils. But in doing so, it is possible that the 'village' as an administrative category used by the forest department supersedes these locally constituted oor panchayats which might not always function within the same 'jurisdictional' limits. Though it might be necessary to have a locally-constituted body, that can best be decided by the local people. But by speaking specifically in terms of village committees in interface forestry, the final decision seems to rest with the forest department. Even if panchayats were to assume an important role as in West Bengal, these 'government' panchayats are something very different than the oor panchayats mentioned above. Moreover, in the Tamil Nadu case, these government panchayats have not had elections for many a year. Thus if forest protection committees are part of a package of decentralisation as they are meant to be, these committees should emerge locally. In many cases, traditions of collective action might already exist though perhaps not specifically with regard to forest management.

Let us briefly highlight a number of other dangers in constructing a local from the outside. The assumption within JFM seems to be that areas of reserved forest can be given to villagers to protect and manage. It is assumed necessary to give VFPCs very clearly defined areas of jurisdiction. But it might be the case that the dynamics of the local economy results in local inhabitants getting produce from different forests. One example that comes to mind from the Kolli hills is that the administrative categories of the forest department have little meaning for local people. Not only do people enter different forest areas for obtaining different forest produce, but there is also no clear sense (based on my preliminary research) that particular hamlets have areas exclusively designed for themselves. Defining forest areas therefore is problematic given the fact that perceptions of what a forest itself is might vary. JFM in its present form is a management package. Giving a particular village or hamlet a defined forest area is simpler in terms of practicality. But it might not represent the local reality. It is also important to keep in mind that the Kolli hills is a biodiverse area. To what extent does JFM give communities substantial guarantee that their usufructuary rights will be granted in the wake of debates on intellectual property rights and potential legal changes with regard to use and ownership of resources? After all these committees are non-statutory and the villagers' rights simply that of usage.

Finally, in constructing the local, it is important also not to examine the forest independent of its larger whole. Though in many areas of the country it seems to be the case that usufructuary rights have changed people's relationship with the forest, assuming so might not be correct. Preliminary analysis of land use data in the Kolli hills seems to suggest that certain forest lands have become either cultivated lands or cultivable wastes. Under the directive of the Tamil Nadu order, the forest department could conclude that 'local' people are performing their operations (preservation) unsatisfactorily. But how are we from the outside to decide that preserving forests as opposed to granting patta rights to forest land is preferable? Would it not be better to see how people's relationship to the forest is linked to their dependence on agriculture and how preserving forests might be linked to security of land ownership. JFM does not seem to leave space for this.

No doubt JFM is better than what preceded it. But the 'local' that is constituted within JFM is a local which has been constituted by the non-local. As a result, whether the local itself represents in any real way the immediate concerns of those who constitute it is unsure. Though methodologies such as participatory rural appraisal (PRA) are increasingly being used to highlight local

concerns, one must remember that these too still do not change the rules of the game set forth by the state. It would be more useful if the local could first define itself and then a structure be mutually determined as to how to engage in JFM.

This is not to say that the non-local does not have a role to play. There are very few studies which actually examine whether the traditions and principles of local use are ecologically prudent. Moreover, one has to keep in mind that the local has significantly changed not only due to external pressures but also due to internal ones which all has implications as to how the local will act when it comes to forest management. Nonetheless, attempts to restrict the local by assuming that the state knows better which is what not only the Draft Forest Act does but also JFM to a great extent is not the solution. Though JFM has spread to large areas of reserved forests throughout the country, only time will tell if these externally constituted FPCs will sustain themselves. And even if they do, one must ask the question as to whether the local is being fairly represented as most environmentalists and concerned others have tended to assume.

Finally, though our focus has been on the external construction of the local and its impact with specific reference to decentralisation, another important concern which we have only briefly touched upon is whether there is a single local in the first place. Though many argue that tribal societies are still relatively homogeneous, at least in the Kolli Hills an initial look at village records seems to suggest otherwise though to what extent is unsure. In our mind, however, these internal contradictions and tensions within the local will have to play themselves out. At best, what forest management (in terms of JFM) can do is to try and represent as best as possible the composite local. That composite local might take shape in the form of village forest protection committees as is the case with JFM at present. But it may also be the case that in order to 'protect' forest areas, different configurations have to take shape which not only looks at forming forest protection committees and giving usufructuary rights and employment opportunities, but also addresses more fundamental questions of security of land tenure and ownership rights. If externally constructed solutions are to be the answer, they at least have to be locally specific. Does JFM allow for such flexibility?

Note

- * See Sharad Kulkarni (1994) 'Proposed Forest Act: An Assessment', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol 29, No 30, pp 1909-12 and Ramachandra Guha (1994), 'Forestry Debate and Draft Forest Act: Who Wins and Who Loses?' *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol 29, No 34, pp 2192-96.

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PROMOTING ACTIVE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION
IN COMMUNITY-BASED CONSERVATION

NATRIPAL CASE STUDY

by: Eufemia Felisa L. Pinto

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PHILIPPINES

I. Background and Context of Project

In the province of Palawan, the indigenous people's struggle to uplift their socio-economic condition took a momentous turn in 1989 when a federation of indigenous people's organizations across the mainland was formally launched.

NATRIPAL, short for Nagkakaisang mga Tribu ng Palawan (United Tribes of Palawan), has since evolved into a proactive federation which envisions a consolidated and strengthened province-wide organization of self-determined indigenous communities. Since its inception, NATRIPAL continues to expand its membership. At present there are already 53 local indigenous people's organizations affiliated with NATRIPAL.

As a result of a series of consultations, table discussions, planning workshops and area visits, NATRIPAL had developed programs and projects aimed primarily at organizing and strengthening the capabilities of indigenous communities in managing community-based enterprises that would:

- a) uphold the land and resource rights of the indigenous communities of Palawan;
- b) promote and ensure the sustainable utilization, production, marketing and management of natural resources especially the non-timber forest products (NTFPs) in Palawan;

- c) strengthen the economic self-reliance and cultural integrity of the indigenous communities in Palawan; and
- d) protect the over-all biodiversity of Palawan.

This over-all program objective is based on the realization that though the central issue may be socio-economic, it is closely linked and actually rooted in the issue of rights to ancestral lands / domains and the sustainable use and management of the natural resources found therein.

Thus, in 1993, the KKKK¹ concept was born. It is hinged on the premise that linking incentives such as secured land and resource rights (KABUHAYAN), community-based enterprise development (KAPALIGIRAN), and capability-building for the indigenous communities (KATUTUBO), can and will ultimately result in raising the socio-economic well-being of the indigenous communities, and over-all biodiversity conservation.

Todate, NATRIPAL consistently receives significant support from its partner-organizations like the Tanggapang Panligal ng Katutubong Pilipino (PANLIPI)² and the Tribal Filipino Apostolate (TFA), in the implementation of its program. Together they form a consortium currently carrying out the following specific program objectives:

- a) to strengthen the institutional capability of NATRIPAL and its local member-indigenous people's organizations in organizational and project implementation skills;
- b) to pilot DENR's DAO#2, Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claim (CADC), as an effective tenurial instrument for the indigenous communities in improving access and control over the natural resources within their ancestral domains;
- c) to develop and implement comprehensive resource management plans within delineated ancestral domains that will provide for

¹ KKKK (Karapatan, Kapaligiran, Kabuhayan para sa Katutubo), directly translates as Rights, Environment, Livelihood for Indigenous Communities.

² or Legal Assistance Center for Indigenous Filipinos.

the sustainable use and production of natural resources especially of NTFPs;

d) to further identify and apply environmentally sound, culturally acceptable and economically viable practices and principles for community-based conservation and enterprise or business development in both the federation and local levels;

e) to improve the socio-economic conditions of the local indigenous communities through enterprise development;

f) to monitor, evaluate and document the socio-economic, cultural and environmental impacts of the projects; and

g) to replicate the successful experiences and models developed in the projects to other parts of Palawan and possibly the rest of the Philippines.

Funding to facilitate the fulfillment of the above objectives are pooled from the Vienna Institute of Development and Cooperation (VIDC), USAID / Biodiversity Conservation Network (BCN), NOVIB and CEBEMO.

II. Culture and Livelihood of Local Communities

Of the 6.5 to 7.5 million indigenous Filipinos, 60,000 to 70,000 inhabit the island of Palawan. They are spread out in 21 out of 23 municipalities in the province. The three (3) main indigenous groups found here are the **TAGBANUA**, mainly in the central and northwest regions of the province and in the Calamianes group of islands; the **BATAK** in the central-northern parts of the mainland, and the **PALA'WAN** in the southern portion of the province. Other groups like the Agutaynin, Cagayanin and the Cuyonin have increasingly become acculturated and assimilated into lowland and Christianized cultures, thus may not be anymore considered as "indigenous."

NATRIPAL currently has affiliated indigenous people's organizations in 11 municipalities, 10 of which are found in the mainland. There is an average of 40 to 50 indigenous families per local community, averaging 5 members per household. These affiliated groups are predominantly Tagbanua and Pala'wan communities although around 5-6 local associations are composed

of members either of pure Batak or combined Batak-Tagbanua indigenous descent.

They are generally of low income and prone to diseases such as malaria, bronchitis, pneumonia and gastro-intestinal infections basically because of poor nutritional status and unsanitary living conditions. More often than not, health facilities are absent or inaccessible in the area.

Through the years, these indigenous communities have been sustained mainly by swidden agriculture or "kaingin", hunting and gathering of forest products. Fishing also played an important role particularly with the Tagbanuas, since they are traditionally coastal dwellers. In the last decade though, the dislocation of these indigenous communities to the uplands has been so rapid because of an expanding lowland population.

As space required under the traditional fallow system have become scarcer, planting of permanent crops combined with fruit trees and other agroforest crops as coffee and cashew became quite common. Consequently, they became less nomadic in nature.

They adapted to a combined subsistence and cash economy at the onset of both legal and illegal logging, rattan, almaciga and honey ventures in the areas by mostly migrants from Luzon, the Visayas and other parts of Palawan such as Cuyo island.

One of the biggest breakthroughs in the history of NATRIPAL was the awarding of 14 negotiated rattan contracts, starting in 1991, to NATRIPAL-affiliated local people's organizations. At that time, NATRIPAL had hoped that this would set the precedent of turning over the preferential rights over the regulation and use of the natural resources in the indigenous areas to the indigenous communities themselves.

Meanwhile, the process of their assimilation into mainstream society continue as the pressures of migration and exploitation of the natural resources in these areas occur, including intermarriages and entry of religion and other groups. NATRIPAL is challenged with the task of ensuring that this process of assimilation shall not undermine the preservation of their indigenous culture and the recognition and enhancement of their knowledge, systems and practices.

seagrass beds and the surrounding sea). In order to systematize the governance and implementation of policies across the components, committees were formed within the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD). For tribal ancestral lands, the Committee on Tribal Affairs (CTA) is currently chaired by TFA's Executive Director, Fr. Armando R. Limsa.

In January 1993, the DENR issued Department Administrative Order (DAO) #2, which mandated the delineation and recognition of both ancestral land and domain claims of indigenous Filipinos nationwide. In recognition of their claims, the indigenous communities are issued Certificates of Ancestral Domain Claims (CADCs), as opposed to land titles. Although it merely recognizes prior claims of the indigenous communities, it can eventually be used to establish ownership rights.

Through the PCSD-CTA, the DAO #2 is provided with a stronger legal basis, R.A. #7611 or the SEP, as it was adopted in the PCSD ECAN implementing guidelines, particularly in the tribal ancestral lands component. In Palawan, the DAO #2 opened up opportunities for mutually beneficial collaboration between the NATRIPAL and its member-indigenous communities, PANLIPI, TFA, PCSD, DENR and other government agencies, local government units, and foreign and local donor organizations.

Such a dynamic policy setting in the province served as one of the critical entry points for NATRIPAL for capability-building at both the federation and local levels in light of their mounting problems, to include those related to land tenure, livelihood, access to use of resources especially of NTFPs, and education.

NATRIPAL's current experience is unique in the sense that organizational strengthening at both the federation and community levels is carried out simultaneous with project implementation. Lessons learned from the earlier years of NATRIPAL helped shaped their current belief that the process of social preparation of participating indigenous communities not only entails information dissemination, awareness-building and education. For the most part, it actually depends on the presentation of concrete socio-economic benefits that would justify or merit the community's active participation in the whole process. The principles of equity, social justice, cultural integrity, productivity and sustainability are already inherent in their culture and traditions. In the face of poverty, however, applying these

based on a more long-term and wholistic development perspective, proves to be very difficult but equally challenging for NATRIPAL.

In active partnership with TFA and PANLIPI, NATRIPAL launched its integrated banner program on the sustainable production and marketing of non-timber forest products, and community-based conservation and enterprise development for indigenous communities in Palawan in 1994. The program built upon the existing organizational structure of NATRIPAL where it is governed by a set of leaders or Board of Directors duly elected by the General Assembly.

But given NATRIPAL's problem of an inactive board at the onset of program implementation, a transitional management structure was designed to somehow aid NATRIPAL in developing a model of effective leadership through the actual exercise and relevant application of democratic and participatory decision-making processes in program implementation.

An interim management committee³ was set up to provide overall program direction and leadership. Concurrently, the group's function involves conducting a thorough structural review and assessment of NATRIPAL, the formulation and establishment of systems and policies that would facilitate the institutionalization of NATRIPAL and the local communities it serves.

Specialized service units at the federation level act as the program's implementing mechanism. These units are as follows: 1) Legal Rights and Services Unit (LRLSU), 2) Resource Management Unit (RMU), 3) Enterprise Development Unit, (EDU), and 4) Institutional Development Unit (IDU). They provide integrated support to the local member-associations and project areas in relation to the identified key program components or issues such as a) land tenure and legal services, b) natural resource management / conservation, c) enterprise development, and d) institutional capability building / development.

At present, 15 out of the 22 program staff are of indigenous origin. Though not yet highly skilled, the employment and on-the-job training of indigenous staff is one of the clear

³ The committee is composed of the members of the NATRIPAL Board of Directors and a representative each from PANLIPI and TFA.

manifestations of the capability-building process NATRIPAL is currently undergoing.

NATRIPAL's wide coverage of areas and of work do not allow staff to fully integrate themselves in each community. In light of this, however, NATRIPAL is still determined to assure the participation and representation of the community majority especially in the project activities by tapping and developing local community organizers (LCOs). These LCOs could either be the traditional leaders, elected association leaders, or even community members that show leadership potential.

NATRIPAL's ongoing experience in CADC delineation likewise illustrates several constraints and opportunities in building active community participation and local empowerment.

The Provincial Special Task Force on Ancestral Domain (PSTFAD) serves as the highest provincial body who will endorse all valid ancestral domain claims to the Office of the DENR Regional Executive Director for further review and evaluation.

Here in Palawan, the PSTFAD is headed by the PENRO and co-chaired by the PCSD-CTA Chairman. The membership is composed of NGO representative - PANLIPI, PO representative - NATRIPAL, Office of the Southern Cultural Communities (OSCC), Provincial Planning and Development Office (PPDO), PENRO - Land Management Services (LMS) and the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR).

The PSTFAD conducts regular meetings every month. These meetings provide a venue for the discussion of the status of pending claims as well as related issues affecting the claim.

Groundworking for the validation of proofs and ocular inspection is assigned to a team headed by the PENRO-LMS. His team members include designated representatives from the PENRO-Forest Management Services (FMS), NATRIPAL and PANLIPI. The actual survey is headed by the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development Staff (PCSDS) and joined by designated representatives from the PENRO-LMS, PENRO-FMS, NATRIPAL and PANLIPI.

PANLIPI and NATRIPAL's implementing role is played to its advantage by the group, not only in terms of providing logistical coordination, and in ensuring active community participation throughout the delineation process, but of late, also in terms of

developing the technical capability and process orientation of the group. This is with the end in view of building a more solid ground for PO-NGO-GO partnership and directing PSTFAD towards a more proactive, definitive and a truly participatory delineation process.

Following NATRIPAL and PANLIPI's experience in mapping the first five (5) CADCs in Palawan: Kayasan, Cabayugan, Rizal, Brooke's Point and Irawan. At present, they are at different mapping stages, with each site learning from the one before them.

The Kayasan CADC was surveyed using the GPS, based on a table survey map prepared by the PENRO as a result of the ocular inspection / validation conducted in the area using the spot mapping method. An angular map was produced from connecting the 11 GPS points taken by the survey team.

The angular map earlier produced was seen as arbitrary and presents potential conflicts in terms of defending the domain from the St. Paul Subterranean River National Park, migrants and encroachers. Thus, recommendations for changes were made following natural boundaries and known landmarks. As a result of these changes, the Kayasan CADC was adjusted from 7,500 has. to approximately 8,800 has. A supplementary description was submitted to PSTFAD in this regard.

For Cabayugan, NATRIPAL's GIS component developed base maps for the area to include physical features such as coastlines, rivers, peaks, elevation contours, the Cabayugan GPS points vis-a-vis Kayasan GPS points. This avoids the development of an angular map similar to Kayasan.

The composite team of PCSDS, DENR, NATRIPAL, PANLIPI and representatives of the local community simultaneously conducted the ocular inspection / validation and delineation of boundaries in the municipality of Brooke's Point. The claim covers the contiguous areas of Egys. Amas, Imunlod, Mainit and Aribungos, Brooke's Point. It took the team around one (1) month to complete the validation / survey. At this point, the survey notes are still being processed and the final map have yet to be produced.

The Rizal CADC is bound to maximize the provisions under DAO2, where a CADC may be issued after proper submission of pertinent

papers provided also that an indicative map be submitted subject to actual ground truthing.

Taking lessons from the cases of Kayasan, Cabayugan Brooke's Point and Rizal, the Irawan delineation follows more improved steps by first conducting a field mapping activity facilitated with the overlaying of the prepared community sketch maps with the developed base maps of the area.

This step is expected to minimize the uncertainties about border conflicts and identify where the borders are actually being claimed by the community instead of drawing the interpretation of the boundaries directly from the staff or the members of the survey team.

Right now the process continues to evolve. It is possible to estimate the number of hectares being claimed by the indigenous communities and click away with the GPS, connect the points and have CADCs all over the island. However, NATRIPAL and PANLIPI's experience shows that the CADC, for the community, should be more than just a collection of GPS points and mounting CADC monuments across Palawan.

Probably, NATRIPAL's experience in setting up a functional enterprise development unit is one of the most, if not the most problematic of all components. One of the fundamental reasons here is that the principles of successful entrepreneurship basically do not have a social context. The end goal of profit generation for enterprises does not necessarily rest on socio-political indicators such as health, socio-political consciousness or awareness nor of structures for democratic participation and the like. However, NATRIPAL and the local communities could be in danger of reducing itself to mere profit centers once it loses its socio-cultural perspective. Thus, the crucial need to simultaneously strengthen the other project components to ensure that the integration or complementarity of both principles is achieved. In simple terms, the EDU will take care of business while the IDU will take care of strengthening the leadership, the RMU of ensuring we will have sufficient amount of resources for tomorrow and the LRLSU will help the local communities secure their land and their access to the use of the resources within.

V. *Lessons Learned and Challenges for the Future*

NATRIPAL's current experience, may provide as yet a weak basis of active community participation in conservation projects. However, lessons learned thus far, lays an emphasis on the fundamental need for NATRIPAL, as a federation, to define clearer and responsive organizational functions, mechanisms, strategies and targets. Before it can even begin to undertake program activities that are expected to create a measurable socio-economic, cultural and ecological impact to the communities, its internal systems and structures have to be set firmly in place.

Likewise, skilled support in the federation level particularly within the service units is crucial in matching identified strategic interventions or project approaches to critical conservation and development-oriented issues at the community level.

The identified program interventions include the following:

- 1) CAD/C application, community mapping and GIS,
- 2) NTFP licensing
- 3) resource management planning
- 4) credit extension, savings mobilization
- 5) capital build-up
- 6) NTFP trading
- 7) merchandising
- 8) training / education

These interventions were determined based on the following considerations somehow found to be interlinked with each other. These and other socio-cultural factors all form the basis of setting relevant indicators of the program impact.

1) The indigenous communities differentiate between ancestral domains and lands, the former referring to all parts of traditional territory including adjacent areas subject to traditional use, and lands as those where they have resided or have their farms.

2) The indigenous communities know the boundaries of their domains, are able to identify natural landmarks such as mountains, ridges, rivers, creeks that form its natural

boundaries. They are also able to map these areas and plot and overlay them in topographic maps.

3) The indigenous communities in general, wish to save for themselves only portions of the domains that are still under their control. Though they wish they could still recover the lands their forefathers have either voluntarily bartered or were forcefully taken from them, their practical sense and non-confrontational nature would prevail, and would then decide to just respect the land disposition made by their forefathers.

4) The indigenous communities are rich in indigenous knowledge, and still have maintained their traditional systems and practices especially with regard to the harvesting of non-timber forest products. These could form the basis for careful study and validation of their capability to sustainably manage their own NTFP concessions.

5) Credit-for-NTFP gathering is already embedded in the community system. Community members could not gather NTFPs in the forest if they have nothing to leave for their family's subsistence.

6) More assimilated indigenous communities are likely to have at one point or another been exposed to short-lived government projects that have negatively inculcated a "dole-out" mentality to the communities.

7) Emerging political leaders in indigenous communities are likely to be relatively more well-off economically than the rest of the community members.

8) A need to strengthen the awareness-building, information dissemination and education component particularly within indigenous communities undergoing delineation should be immediately addressed. Community organizing is seen as a vital activity in helping to secure the people's participation in the process.

9) Various methods and procedures should be further clarified and explained to the indigenous communities as well as to the staff. There is a need to review the whole process to truly ensure that technical processes should not supercede planning processes that are receptive or complementary to free and informed decision-making.

JFPM CASE STUDIES 4

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WESTERN GHATS FORESTRY PROJECT

A Case Study of

ISSUES RELATED TO THE COLLECTION OF
GARCINIA CAMBOGIA (UPPAGE)

IN A FEW VFCS OF THE JANMANE RANGE

By

K.S.SAIBABA, IFS

I.M.NAGARAJ

K.G.SATYANARAYANA

Edited By

T.H.MALLIKARJUNA

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SUMMARY

Garcinia cambogia, popularly known as "uppage" locally, has suddenly shot into prominence as an important NTFP for its use as pulp in culinary preparations and medicines in Kerala, Tamilnadu and the Gulf countries. The use of pulp was unknown till very recently but its seeds were collected in small quantities for extraction of "uppage Tuppa" (an edible oil). Since this NTFP is collected in the form of "dry fruits" (commonly called 'rind'), a huge quantity of firewood is consumed in the drying process. When a fabulous sum of Rs.3.00 lakhs was offered for the right of collection of this fruit in one range, it opened the eyes of all concerned.

A study was conducted in 4 VFC areas in Janamane Range - where it is collected in large quantities - to analyse the issues related to its collection, marketing, impact on VFCs, and forests. The study revealed that for every rupee it brings in as revenue to the exchequer there is a loss of Rs.4 in the form of illicit consumption of firewood besides damage to the trees. This loss is not for a social cause but for the betterment of an individual (contractor). The suggested remedies are - the sale of the NTFP be abandoned for the time being until an alternative form of drying is evolved or the right is sold for the collection of the fruits in 'raw form' with a stipulation that the drying is the responsibility of the buyer using non wood heating substances.

LESSONS LEARNT

1. The collection of this NTFP provides employment to the poor. However, at the same time it deprives them of the essential forest produce (firewood). Thus the wider ramifications of its collection need to be studied.
2. The 'drying system' should be modernised so as to save firewood.
3. The VFCs should try collection of this NTFP in the fruit form only.
4. The contractors must be made to use only non wood substances for drying eg. paddy husk, coconut shells, arecanut husk, flint, electricity etc. (In other industries, firewood consumption has been replaced e.g. tiles are manufactured at Gullapur using cashew shells).
5. The exact and multiple use and destination of uppage needs to be studied.
6. The collection of this NTFP generates employment for the poor. Agriculturists complain that labour is becoming more expensive resulting in a fall in agricultural output.
7. Improved devices for drying fruits may solve these problems.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Contractor/VFC should be encouraged to collect the fruits only in the raw form and dispose of it in this form.
2. If this is not possible, the sale of uppage should be suspended until a scientific method is evolved to dry it.
3. This NTFP should be sold under the specific terms and conditions that it should be collected from the forests in raw form only and dried by the contractor outside the forest at a centrally located place preferably at the Section Forester's headquarters without using firewood.
4. Collection in raw form should be tried initially through the VFCs.
5. If none of the above suggestions are implemented immediately the sale of uppage should be abandoned forthwith.

INTRODUCTION

Garcinia cambogia or 'Uppage' belongs to the family Guttiferae. It is found in the evergreen forests. Though it is believed that it is found alone other species of the genera associated with it are *Garcinia indica*, *Garcinia beddonii*, *Garcinia morella*. Among the Garcinias, *Garcinia indica*, locally known as 'murgal', has several uses. But it is not the case with uppage. Nowadays uppage is in great demand and has become a major NTFP. A study was conducted with the following objectives:

1. To find out the use and utility of uppage.
2. To study the economic impact of uppage collectors in the VFC areas.
3. To study the requirement of firewood in the drying process.
4. To understand the problems connected with collection, processing and marketing.
5. To understand the role of the VFC in collection and marketing.
6. To understand the problem connected with the contractors.
7. To understand the problem connected with agricultural land holders.
8. To understand the impact on the forests.

METHODOLOGY

The information was collected through:

- Interviews with 20 VFC members on a random sampling basis through a questionnaire;
- Conversation with VFC members, Management Committee members, non collectors, traders/contractors;
- Field case study.

AREA OF STUDY

4 villages in Janamane range where uppage is collected in large quantities were selected:

Hallibail VFC Manjuguni VFC	where NTFP is collected and sold through VFC
Hukli VFC Hutgar VFC	where uppage is collected individually and sold to traders/contractors directly

METHOD OF COLLECTION

The fruits are collected during the months of June, July, August when they are ripe. Both men and women are engaged in collection. While men have the advantage of climbing the tree and can therefore collect more, the women collect only the fallen fruits during morning hours. The quantity of raw fruits collected by a person varies from 2 – 3 quintals to 10 – 15 quintals for the season. The Contractor buys the fruits in dried form only (rinds) @ Rs 20/- a kg. It is found that 10kg of raw fruit yields 1kg of rind. So a person who collects 20 quintals of raw fruit in a season (120 days) earns Rs 4000/- which works out to Rs 33/- per day. Raw fruit works out at Rs 2/- per kg.

PROCESSING

The raw fruits are cut into 2 halves and the seeds inside are removed. The pulp of the cut fruit is spread out on a raised platform made of brush wood and bamboo and dried by building a fire beneath the platform. It takes 24-30 hours to fully dry.

RATIO OF RAW FRUIT – DRY FRUIT (RIND) & FIREWOOD CONSUMPTION FOR DRYING

A case study was made from the practical experience of a VFC member and the findings are:-

Quantity of raw fruit collected	20 Qtls / 2000 kg
Firewood consumed for drying	50 Qtls / 5000 kg
Quantity of rind obtained	200 kg
Ratio of raw fruit to rind	200:20 = 20:2 = 10
Firewood consumed to obtain 1 kg of rind (5000/200)	25 kg
1. Every 10 kg of raw fruit gives 1 kg of rind	
2. To get 1 kg of rind 25 kg of wood is consumed	

COST OF FIREWOOD

- The rate for firewood obtained during 95-96 timber & firewood sale at Chipgi depot Rs 650/- per tonne
- Deduct firewood collection charges as firewood is used at site Rs 300/- per tonne
- Net cost of firewood (650 – 300) Hence the cost of firewood to get 1 kg of rind 25kg x 0.35 Rs 8.75 Rs 350/- per tonne

REVENUE VERSUS FUELWOOD COST ANALYSIS FOR JANMANE RANGE AS A WHOLE

As per records the contractor has collected 200 tonnes (approx). The contractor collects only dry fruits (rind). The tender amount offered for 1995-96 is Rs 3.00 lakhs

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| • Quantity of rind collected | 200 tonnes |
| • Quantity of firewood consumed @ 25 kg of firewood per 1 kg of rind as per case study | 200,000 kg x 25 kg or 5000 tonnes |

(People in the region have to dry their 'kamblis' which they use in the rainy season. Study indicates that not much time and quantity of wood is needed to dry kamblis. A rough assessment shows that 30% of wood is required for this. Hence the quantity required for drying uppage is 70%)

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| • Hence net quantity of firewood used for drying uppage (70% of 5000 tonnes) | 3500 tonnes |
| • Total cost of firewood @ Rs 350/- per tonne as already worked out 3500 x 350 | Rs 122,5000 |
| • Revenue to KFD tender amount for 95 – 96 | Rs 30,0000 |
| • Net invisible loss per year (12.25 – 3.00) | Rs 9.25 lakhs |

In other words it can be said for every rupee of revenue there is a loss of Rs 4.08

IMPACT OF UPPAGE COLLECTION ON FOREST

1. Branches are ruthlessly cut.
2. Some unripe fruits are collected. As seeds are also collected for extraction of edible oil, natural regeneration is hampered.
3. Wild animals like monkeys, squirrels, rodents suffer from shortage of food.
4. Dry wood in the forest is completely removed leaving nothing for improvement of the soil.
5. All the above together may cause the extinction of the species.

IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE

A few land holders who do not collect uppage were interviewed. Their concerns were:

1. Labourers are not available during the most essential months of June, July, August, which coincide with the collection of uppage. This affects agricultural production.
2. Due to complete sweeping of firewood by the uppage collectors they are deprived of it for their legitimate use.

VIEWS OF VFC MEMBERS

The members of VFC who had the privilege of collecting uppage expressed their views:

1. It is difficult to check trespassers (other than VFC members).
2. VFCs are unable to collect dry rinds from their members as they want immediate payment.
3. Clear cut demarcation of access areas is essential so that they know their area.
4. Huge usage of firewood for drying uppage may lead to destruction of forests as after the supply of fallen dry wood has been exhausted, green trees will be cut.
5. The members feel guilty of failure to protect their forests as per JFPM G.O. as they themselves are indulging in destruction rather than protection.
6. Women VFC members said that KFD had introduced smokeless chullahs to avoid smoke hazard and thus improve the health of rural women. However, the uppage drying emits more smoke thus affecting their health.

THE VIEWS OF CONTRACTORS / TRADERS

1. Tender notification stipulates that the tender holders should collect uppage in the areas 'other than VFC access areas'. But the names of VFCs and their access areas are not notified nor demarcated on the ground. This leads to conflicts between contractors and VFCs.
2. VFCs collect uppage outside the limits assigned to them.
3. VFCs are the safest places to keep the materials collected by the unauthorised merchants/traders.

USES OF UPPAGE

Earlier the seeds of uppage were being used for extraction of edible oil. The other recent known uses are:

1. As a condiment for fish curry, beef in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Gulf countries.
2. Extraction of acidic essence used in medicines (which reduces fat of the human body).

Other uses are not known.

INFERENCE

Collection of uppage fruit in the form of rind is not an environmentally friendly activity. The VFCs, VFC members, and agriculturists including the forest users do not welcome it. On the other hand there is resistance from all quarters except from those actual uppage

collectors who get some labour during the collection season. More harm is caused to the forests than its uses (revenue). Large-scale removal of uppage may lead to the extinction of this species. Similar species like Gulmavu (*Machilus macrantha*), Halmaddi (*Ailunthus malbarica*) and Dalchinni (*Cinnomonum xylanicum*) have already been banned from the use of any of their parts.

CONCLUSION

Sale of uppage fruits by tender sales may be banned in order to conserve the limited stocks available and to prevent further damage to the forest.

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Joint Forestry Management
Programme In A Tribal Village of Maharashtra

J.J. Roy Burman

Tribals comprise of about 9-10 per cent of the population of Maharashtra. They are largely distributed in the forest areas of the state. It is believed that traditionally by and large survived on the forest economy. They collected fruits, roots and timbers for food and medicine, used many leaves, flowers and barks for their medicines, used the wood as fuel wood and construction of their houses. However, in spite of their dependence on the forests, the tribals hardly used them in a destructive manner and rather evolved social institutions for their sustained use. But in the recent years mainly due to rapid industrialization and unbridled interference of the international hegemonic forces this symbiotic relationship has been throughly impaired. The tribals became extremely suspicious about the intents of the state machinery and this led to serious conflicts.

In the last decade or so, the government realised some of the fallacies of the state managed forests and so as to minimise the tension with the forest dwellers it introduced a policy of participatory management of forests or popularly known as Joint Forestry Management Programme. These policies were designed to facilitate the emergence of collaborative forest management systems which respond to national needs and local resource requirements" (Poffenberger and Singh 1992: 5)

The programme was first started in West Bengal at the instance of a forester as long back as 1971-72 in the district of Midnapur. According to the programme introduced there, in return for the community's commitment to protect degraded forests from fires, grazing, illegal cutting, and agricultural encroachment, forest officials agreed to share forest products with village

members or Forest Protection Committees. According to the 1989 state resolution the FPC was entitled to receive 25 per cent of the harvested wood at the end of the tenure and also collect the grass and fallen leaves every year.

In spite certain limitations of the JFM in West Bengal the Central Government felt encouraged to introduce the programme nationwide. It passed a resolution in this regard in 1990. The resolution encourages non-governmental organisations (NGOs), State forest departments, and community groups to collaborate in the management of State Forest lands. The resolution gives considerable latitude in the types of community groups which might be involved specifying panchayats, cooperatives and informal village organizations.

It notes ^{that} no restrictions should be placed on membership and referring to ^{the} 25 percent share of timber allocated by the West Bengal Forest Department to the participating community groups. It also suggests that management groups be involved in the formulation of working plans for the forest area under their protection" (Proffenberger and Singh, 1992: 5-6).

Taking into consideration of the national resolution of 1990 the Maharashtra state government too frame a policy statement in 1992. The resolution is almost totally in keeping with the national policy. It states that since the programme will be implemented with the help of local village panchayat, the production from the identified forest area which will accrue because of protection and afforestation, will be made available, on priority, to the local people to meet their daily needs. The underlying principles of the scheme will be as follows :

- a) Reforestation of the denuded forest, which is adjacent to a village will be done through a Forest Protection Committee. The representation on the above said committee will be available to nearly all families of the village.
- b) The Forest Protection Committee will accept responsibility for protection and maintenance of forests.
- c) The Forest Protection Committee will appoint one Executive Committee which will prepare the details of the scheme, and take necessary decisions for the implementation of the scheme. However, all policy matters will be finalised with the consent of the Forest Protection Committee.
- d) The benefits of the forest produce which will accrue after the development of the denuded forest will be given to Forest Protection Committee/local people according to certain norms. The usufruct to the extent of 50 per cent will be shared between the forest department and the FPC.
- e) It is possible to take help of autonomous voluntary institutions for implementing this scheme. But these institutions will not be eligible for any benefits.

The Maharashtra JFM scheme has one exception from the other states such that the scheme can be undertaken even on revenue lands adjoining the forests.

The JFM programme in the state at present is rather in a state of infancy. It is only in 1992 that the first village was selected for its implementation. Thakar wadi village in Ambegaon taluka in Pune district happens to ^{provide} ~~provide~~ this glory. This village is about 90 kms from Pune. It has seven hamlets with 175 households and a population of 1200. Almost all the inhabitants are scheduled tribes belonging to the Thakar community.

Thakar wadi is an, extremely poor village with almost all the residents being agricultural labourers. Previously they were all working as bonded labours of the rich Maratha land lords of the neighbouring villages like Giraule and Chas. Even now after receiving parts of vested land of the rich landlords, the Thakar wadi people have very little land and have to basically eke out their living by working as daily labourers. During agriculturally lean seasons they go to the neighbouring villages to cultivate tomato and grape. Thakar wadi also has very little or no village commons as on almost all the sides ^{are} ~~is~~ surrounded by lands owned by the forest department. These lands were fully wooded even a decade back and have become totally barren today ever since clear ^{was done} felling by the forest department. The Thakar wadi people in fact had been hired by the department to fell the trees.

The JFM programme at Thakar wadi did not appear just out of the blue. Some of them came across Baba Pansare, a bohemian ^{and Secretary of an NCo (Parivartan Prashodhani)} social worker at Narodi village, just about 15-20 kms from Thakar wadi, while working there for tomato cultivation. Pansare knowing the plight of Thakar wadi was actively trying to mobilising the people for their alleviation. He also happened to have learnt about Joint Forestry Management resolution of the country and the state.

He influenced Vilasrao Salunkhe another social worker experienced in developing watershed programmes in different parts of the state to talk and advise that tribals of Thakar wadi to take up the JFM programme. Starved of village commons, the the Thakars were most thrilled with the idea and they along with the social workers moved the state administration to introduce the scheme. Mejpokina, an Ao Naga from Naga from Nagaland, the Meipokim

then Deputy Conservator of Forests, Ghor Project Division, Officer in charge of the area was most receptive to the idea. He encouraged and helped to form a Forest Protection Committee, fully comprising of the local villagers and frame a working plan for a area of 120 hectares. The FPC which was thus formed comprises of 11 members including two women.

The Working Plan chalked out a programme to plant 2.24 lakh plants. A mixed plantation was envisaged. Although a few exotic species were included it was mainly planned to grow local species like Neem, Chinch (tamarind), bamboo, Mohwa, Umber (fig), Hirda (myrabalan), fanas (jackfruit), mango and sag (teak).

Ever since the Working Plan was approved, the Thakar wadi people divided different patches of the demarcated forest land. The division was made on the basis of clan affiliation which are mainly hamlet centred, i.e. each hamlet is predominated by members of one particular clan. This reveals the ingenuity of the people to make use of their traditional social institution for the purpose of modern development.

The Thakars of Thakar wadi also revealed their faith on self reliance by refusing the saplings of plants which the forest department was very eager to provide. ^{In the first year} The Thakars also refused any financial assistance from the forest depart man and carried out all the work of pit digging weeding, soil mulching mainly through ^(voluntary labour) shramdan. The Thakars infact also dug trenches and made gully plugging as a part of watershed management through shramdan.

In the subsequent year, however, the fervour of shramdan got considerably dialuted as Vilasrao Salunkhe is reported to have invited CASA (principally a Christian donor agency) to donate wheat for digging ponds as a part of minor irrigation programme and also for planting the seeds.

Thakarwadi had for the first six months employed one of the villagers to guard the patches under plantation. Subsequently, the protection was taken up collectively. The survival rate of the seeds is reported to be not less than sixty percent. Ample grass too has grown and has been sold out side for about Rs.1 lakh in three years.

The social fall out of the programme seems to be quite positive in spite of some intial hiccups. It was reported that there mere some altercations among the Thakar wadi villagers over the issue of cattle intrusion. Similar altercations also took place with the adjoining village of Ramwadi. In fact there were reports of physical fights and police case being recorded twice. The cases were later withdrawn and a compromige being made. Similar wranglings also occurred with the other adjoining village called Giraulte. Besides these, some problem of grazing by the nomadic Dhangars also is reported to have occurred. In spite of the compromise, the Marathas of Girauli have decided to forbid the Thakars of Thakarwadi to collect fire wood and timber from the Reserved and Protected forests (managed by the forest department) adjoining their village (Girauli).

Thakar wadi

All is not well even within ~~Girauli~~ itself as it has been reported that the group opposed to Vasant Kedre, the chairman of the FPC has not joined the FPC and also that they have not been allotted any plot of forest land. People belonging to Kedre's group, however, rule this out and state that these

people are extremely poor and are unable to provide shramdan since they have to move out to get wages as daily labour. Vasant Kedre states that rifts within the Thakars are an exaggeration. The village has a long tradition of unity and community work. In fact Thakar wadi was the first village to have initiated the system group marriage in the area as long back as 1960s. He of course admitted that the programme has compelled them to sell off the cattle and goats, today only 15 to 20 families are owning these animals and they have to be stall fed.

The whole exercise of JFM certainly thrives on a positive note. People are extremely optimistic about the outcome of the project. In fact says Rambhan Yadav, a village elder that since the forest department has made no contribution to the programme, 100 per cent usufruct will be reaped by the villagers. Some of the others think that by any means they will start cultivation between the rows of trees as they grow bit bigger, agro-forestry is the right solution to the problem. Some of the villagers aired their discontent that the agreement with the forest department is for only 10 years and think since the plants take time to mature, ^{the} that agreement should have been for at least ^{they} hundred years. A.V. Ashtekar, the present Deputy Conservator of Forests, in charge of the region is highly apprehensive of the programme at Thakarwadi and he finds no jointness about the programme. He thinks that the programme is completely one sided and that the Thakars are all for land grab. It seems that he forgets the plain truth that these forest lands were once deceitfully grabbed by the British Government from the Thakars.

The favourable position of the Thakars, Thakar wadi is, however, unlikely to be repeated in other villages which are now being brought within the fold of JFM. In Girauli, for instance a proposal for JFM under the World Bank project has been envisaged. The project first of all has been initiated by the forest department. The JFM plans to include protection of the trees which have grown in the last 8 years on the gairan (grazing land) though under the management of the forest department. This means to seriously effect the poor families who will be compelled to stall feed their animals and many finally have to sell them off. This project is also going to seriously effect the Thakars of Thakar wadi as they will be forced to move further away to collect firewood and timber. It has been also reported that the FPC at Girauli has been mainly formed through the manipulations of the forest department. Radha Vittal Sayed and Alka Devendra Rakshe, the two women members of the FPC are supported to have been included at the behest of the forest officials. Both of them incidentally happen to be wives of two forest guards working in the region. The Girauli villagers are unwilling to accept them as FPC *executive* members. It also came to our knowledge that neither at Girauli nor at Thakar wadi the FPC members have been elected as per the 1992 resolution of the Maharashtra government. The provision to include the sarpanch of the village in the FPC as per the state resolution could also not be complied with since the last panchayat election took place ^{in the state} more than six years and thus invalidating the panchayat. The nominated members even do not know for how many years are they be supposed to remain in the FPC. All these indicate that what S.B. Roy et al state about the JFM is quite apt, "In some cases FPC has been formed as 'target' programme of the forest department. This focusses the ideology of government or 'outsiders' neglecting community

members' aspirations, their values and creativity. In such cases FPC members do not consider it as their own programme and hence it is not socially institutionalised" (S.B. Roy et al, 1992:49). The case of Thakar wadi of course not fully come into the purview of this belief. In case of Girauli, it is simply an effort of the forest department to fit in the village into the programme as per the plans submitted to the World Bank and for which the loan has ^{is expected} been sanctioned. This definitely is a dangerous trend. The situation is quite like Karnataka where the JFM sponsored by Overseas Development Agency, U.K. has been planned out mainly according to the directive of the donor ^{agency} and village plans have been fitted into it. While Thakad wadi could contribute some amount of self-help, Girauli needs paid labourers to do the same and add to the debts of the country by mortgaging the future.

The concerned NGO 'Parivartan Prabodhani' has certainly rendered yeomen service to the cause of Thakar wadi. But it too escaped their notice that the JFM planning requires a regional planning with regard to resources. They would not have otherwise left out the neighbouring villages - Chas, Ramwadi and Girauli from the plan of Thakar wadi. This could have helped in framing a regional plan and avoid the inter-village skirmishes. The most obnoxious act of the NGO was also to make the people of Thakar wadi to refuse financial assistance from the government while it had no qualms about receiving doles from foreign missionary agencies (whose aid I do not believe is fully out of charity considerations). The nature of the donor agency was also not shared by it with the villagers. Professional volunteers of the ^{Parivartan} NGO should also ^{seems to have gained a feeling as if} avoid feeling that Thakar wadi is their fief and they ask visitors to get prior permission from their office at Manchar (as one of their workers expected me to get one). In fact the involvement of the ^{as intermediaries} NGOs in the JFM is totally unwarranted when the village panchayats ^{who can} already have elected members.

ensure people's participation

To conclude, the JFM programme at Thakar wadi certainly opens a new vista for forest management in the state. It definitely provides ample opportunity to the local people to manage their own resources, through ^{incorporation} mobilisations of a few of their traditional institutions. There are, however, certain limitations like ignoring the regional aspect of resource management or not being able to overcome the tenets of petty village politics. The Thakar wadi case stands in stark contrast to Girauli as here the people have tried to assert themselves against the state, while ^{in the latter} there the state is trying to empower the people within the limits drawn by it. The Thakar wadi case if successful, will certainly be handy to thwart the international hegemonic design backing up the JFM.

However

EXTRACT OF THE PROJECT DOCUMENT ON JOINT FOREST PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

3.1 PROJECT PROCESS

The project is designed around the need for sustainability in the face of the numerous pressures on the forests' resources. The enhanced management capability required to achieve the objectives and to resolve conflicts between the different demands on resources requires both a multi-disciplinary approach and a means of solving conflicts. Local people, who are responsible for much of the biotic pressure on the forest, must play a major role in the planning, management and protection of the forest.

The fundamental instrument for delivering sustainability is Joint Forest Planning and Management (JFPM). This concept builds on practices already being developed by KFD, and other forest departments in India, and seeks to provide a framework within which those practices can be strengthened. The essential elements of JFPM are :

a. Joint Planning - a consultative process by which KFD, local people, and other forest users jointly discuss the ecological and environmental condition of a specific area of the forest, and the scope for it to meet one or more of their specific needs. The plan that emerges should as far as possible reflect all the views expressed. However, the weight given to the different views will depend on the location of the area of forest in question, and the types of vegetation it contains.

b. Joint Management - for certain areas of forest, as described under zonation, it will be appropriate for the planning process to decide on joint management. Under the management, KFD and forest users will divide responsibility for forest management function between them. They will also agree a division of the proceeds from the area to reflect the division of management. The precise division of management and proceeds will vary from one specific area of forest to another. As appropriate, joint management may apply to all plants, or only to certain categories of vegetation within a particular area. Management agreements will set out :

- the key services or investments to be jointly managed ;
- the size and nature to the associations proposed for partnership arrangements;
- the principles of benefit sharing, and their application to the specific area covered;

- the pattern of support and technical advice which the JFPM teams will be able to provide the partner associations.

Introduction of JFPM will necessarily be a gradual process. It is constrained by the level of detail in the joint planning process, the need for KFD staff to be trained and then to proceed methodically while learning from their experience, and because joint management can only develop once joint plans are in place.

The progress of JFPM depends on the institutional changes in KFD which the project introduces, and which will change KFD's relations with people who depend on the forest. But this progress cannot be measured by physical or financial indicators. Instead it is necessary to develop project milestones, describing key stages in the development of JFPM. These milestones will change and develop as the project progresses. Initial milestones, as set out in Annex I, have been determined to reflect preliminary activities. They will need to be reviewed and updated throughout the course of the project, as appropriate.

Implementation of this approach will be an iterative process, involving frequent reflection by all those managing the project to assess how it is developing, how its progress compares with its stated objectives, and progress against specific milestones. The project contains a number of mechanisms to facilitate this process, culminating in the annual joint KFD/ODA review.

A prerequisite for JFPM is the provision of an adequate legal framework covering the rights of local groups to forest usufructs. The Government of Karnataka are promulgating an order authorising the principles of JFPM for forest reserve resources in a manner consistent with the approach set out in this document.

3.2 ZONATION

Zonation is the process of describing the physical consequences of the management plans which have been developed through JFPM and the greater understanding developed under the project. It is the link between management objectives and physical operations on the ground. The key feature of zonation is that zones are defined, over time, by the management objectives which result from JFPM.

As set out above, the overriding principle is sound and sustainable environmental management. Within this general objective, three broad categories of forest management objectives can be identified; ecological, economic, and local needs. In practice, for each area of forest for which a JFPM agreement is drawn up, these general management objectives will need to be defined into objectives specific to that area.

Zones relate these management objectives to different forest sites. Five different types have been identified initially, as examples of the range of types that will be developed. These are, as set out in Figure 1:

- I) Ecologically important areas
- II) Main forest with good potential
- III) Main forest with pockets of settlements
- IV) Edge of forest reserve, near settlements
- V) Outside forest, near settlements

Figure 1. Forest Management Zones

Main Management Objectives			
Environmental and Sustainability			
Site Characteristics	Specific Management Objectives		
	Ecological	Economic	Local Needs
Ecologically Important	I : Core Zone		
Main forest	II : Main Zone Without Dwellers		
Main forest with pockets of dwellings	III : Main Zone With Dwellers		
Edge of forest reserve near settlements		IV : Boundary Zone	
Outside forest and near settlements		V : Common / Revenue Land	

Ecologically important areas are not restricted to uninhabitable and unexploited areas. In practice ecological areas will need to be identified on the basis of information supplied by local people, and any ecological management plan will need to be agreed with those communities affected.

The first stage in zonation is the preparation of range and block profiles by field staff and JFPM, WP and PMC staff. This will enable preliminary, rough zones to be identified, and as a result priority areas for JFPM will be decided. This exercise will form part of the on-the-job training programme to be planned and organised by the training consultants. These profiles will include a map illustrating,

(a) Settlements, and the nature and degree of their dependence on the forest.

(b) forest stock quality, including identification of degraded areas with good root stock, and therefore high potential for community protection and management.

(c) ecologically important areas from both a vegetative and wildlife perspective.

(d) environmentally sensitive areas.

The second stage, following selection of priority areas, will involve the identification of existing village groups, community institutions, and NGO's who may have either a direct or catalytic role to play in the formation of forest user groups, with care being taken to ensure that the disadvantaged are not excluded. The JFPM teams will consult with and jointly develop micro-plans with these local communities or user groups.

The third stage will involve direct consultation and discussion with user and community groups, the outcome of which will be clearly defined micro-plans. The plans will involve not just planting proposals, but address all land use and access issues within the Reserved Forest area. These plans will need to relate to existing practices, as well as the legal framework, and link to land use options outside the forest area. The approach will be community based and take a holistic and integrated view of the local socio-economic situation and its relationship to the forest. In particular, the requirements of livestock for fodder and grazing will need to be set against the need to protect forest saplings (see below).

Other Government departments (such as Horticulture, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry) will be consulted and involved, as well as Panchayat leaders and officials, NGO's community institutions and interested individuals.

The consolidation of the microplans resulting from JFPM with existing working or other plans will produce an overall zonation of each Range and consequently of the Circle.

The fourth stage is the drawing up of Management Contracts or Forest Agreements between KFD and user / community groups which

will be registered with the appropriate authorities. This will legally establish villagers with a stake in the assets. It also avoids any weakening of KFD's ownership of forest land. If the land and asset are subject to a management contract it will be quite clear to both parties that the services provided are specific and related to the maintenance of the asset, to the harvesting of products, or to their distribution depending on local circumstances.

The precise form of management contracts will evolve during the project. It should clearly define the land in question and the management objectives, specify the rights and obligations of all parties and state how the agreement may be reviewed and be precise about the following points :

- the composition and nature of the community or user group
- the key services or investments to be jointly managed.
- rights over produce and its distribution
- the organisation and reward of labour
- day-to-day management responsibilities
- provision of technical advice, extension and other inputs
- performance monitoring and review

Specific terms will vary from one locality to another. The capacity of the user group to carry out its contractual obligations, including the distribution amongst members of its share in benefits, would be a condition of entering into the contract and of adhering to the programme launched by the project.

The fifth stage will involve monitoring and review of both the outcome and maintenance of these agreements as well as the procedures used to establish them. This will be closely linked with staff training.

Territorial staff will be responsible throughout and in particular for post agreement implementation and liaison with user groups and the provision of advice. Joint Planning and consultation is to become a feature of all project activity. Which impacts on local communities, including any change of access / use that might arise. This includes the establishment of areas which are to be managed for ecological purposes.

Joint Management is likely to develop slowly as it will be depend on the formation of user groups and forest committees. This is appropriate since if the process is too fast, disadvantaged group such as the poor might be excluded.

3.3 Non Government Organisations

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) can play an important role in assisting the JFPM process. The JFPM staff will need to identify and consult with existing NGOs, Particularly with respect to the identification and formation of user and community groups. Further , NGOs have a role to paly in the provision of information to these groups in order for them to be better able to plan with KFD.

3.4 Livestock Management

The present level of livestock holding is unlikely to fall significantly over the next few years despite a general trend towards stall feeding. This socio-economic reality will need to be addressed by the JFPM teams, and it is therefore proposed to appoint a specialist livestock consultant to act as an adviser on animal husbandry and improvement in the context to joint management. Terms of reference for initial advice are at Annex VI. Apart from the advisory role, funds will be available to carry out or sub-contract experimental development work or to commission in-depth studies of particular issues or problems.

3.5 Working Plans

The bottom-up demand oriented planning process described under JFPM will require changes in the present practices and procedures of working plans. The micro plans, will need to be prepared at greater resolution and will involve smaller and more dispersed areas, to be covered over longer period more top-down long-term and centralised planning of areas to be managed for ecological purposes, for the provision of commercial timber and for fuelwood for urban and semi-urban populations.

The present arrangement for 10 year working plans has fallen behind and many areas are now operating on the basis of annual working schedule.

Under the project the information required for preparing working plans and schedules and for monitoring field operations and the state of forest will be reviewed and modification proposed.

The Working plans Division which is based in the Circle on temporary basis and attached to a Working Plan Wing based in Bangalore will become Permanent and report directly to the Circle CF. The DCF in charge of Working Plans will join the PMC team. The division will be responsible for planning, surveying, mapping, demonstration and monitoring, and report directly to the CF. Professional support will be supplied from the working plan wing in Bangalore, for which additional equipment is provided under the project.

3.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

Internal Monitoring

An internal monitoring and information system will be established to enable the project to operate bottom up planning and target setting. The system will consist of 2 elements :

Physical Monitoring

Physical monitoring and data collection will become a Circle level responsibility under the project. WPD will report to circle CF, rather than the Working Plan Wing in Bangalore, and be responsible for the maintenance and analysis of a database, using modified control forms. Data will also be available from the

GIS. Data entry staff will be provided to each Division to maintain computersied records.

Community and Institutional Monitoring

This will be the responsibility of the DCF (JFPM) and involve both the setting up of mechanisms (workshops and meetings) for feedback from both staff and community user groups, and the establishment of project milestones, for institutional development.

This participative monitoring system will lead to the modification and updating of project guidelines. The system envisaged is seen as an integral part of project management, as a result of which project procedures will be amended and adapted and the experience gained shared amongst all Circle staff.

Terms of reference for a consultancy to design a management information and reporting system which will support the needs of both JFPM and WP are given in Annex III.

External monitoring and reporting

A major project innovation is the direct involvement of local communities and people in planning in all zones and management as described in para 3.1 This is the bottom level of a process of monitoring and consultation. The project will also establish a series of committees at different levels to monitor progress and provide policy advice. These committees, which will meet periodically, are :

- 1) Working Committee -
at Divisional level, chaired by the DCF , consisting of local community and forest user groups.
- 2) Advisory Committee -
at Circle level, meeting quarterly and chaired by the CF, consisting of local representatives of other government departments, the Zilla Parishad, NGOs, scientific institutions, forest user groups and ODA.
- 3) Steering Committee -
at state level , with full and final authority to approve recommendation arising from project reviews and agree necessary action. The committee will be chaired by the Development Commissioner and consist of representatives of KFD as well as other Government Departments, the ODA, and any other organisations deemed appropriate by the Development Commissioner.

The PMU and PMC will be responsible for servicing these committees with information and reports on a regular basis.

— JSK F8

LEAD PAPER ON JOINT FOREST PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT.

BY

B. Shivanagowda, Conservator of Forests, Kanara Circle, Sirsi.

Joint Forest Planning & Management is a system of operations at community levels which will organise the exchange of informations, when it is feasible and acceptable to both parties, then the consultation may lead to jointly managed forest protection / development services and / or to jointly managed planting, improvement and investment schemes / plans. Thus the Joint Forest Management schemes of plans are those in which there is an agreement between forest department and a partners group or set of individuals within a local community (user group) to contribute to the development of the scheme / plan and to share the produce and/or revenue generated.

“Active Participation” is pre-requisite for successful JFPM practices. FAO (1982) defines participation as a process by which the rural people are able to organise themselves and through their own organisations are able to identify their own needs, share in design, implementation and evaluation of participatory action.

Uphoft and Cohen (1979) consider it as the active involvement of people in decision making process in so far as it affects them.

In contrast to the above, passive participation is a process which only involves people in actions which have been thought out and designed by others and are controlled by others.

After having gone through the real meaning of participation in JFPM process, it is necessary to address various issues which have been emerging as we proceed.

1. For effective implementation of JFPM concept.

a) Orientation and attitudinal charges for Forestry personnel is necessary. This can be accomplished by periodical training, exposure trips, in built training component at the beginning.

b) Motivation and sensitisation of members of community - by training, exposure trips, frequent interaction, rapport development etc.

2. Shared vision amongst the members of organisation and members of community.

3. Active members Vs passive members.

For passive members - need for recognising small homogeneous usergroups while conducting PRA exercises. Self-help group concept can make more active members amongst passive members.

4. Gender issues - mere co-membership would not only serve the purpose,- empowerment of women of women usergroup, wealth ranking recognition and self-help group concept etc can

contribute for active participation of women members.

5. Equity amongst the members need to be addressed - need for recognising usergroups for different wealth ranking.
6. Non Foresting issues - entry point activities, small service activities through other department and through the Forest department, watershed development, water supplying, common assets, electrification, communication etc.
7. Alternate means of livelihood - Skill training, NTFP processing, value addition etc.
8. Bottom up planning and SSPs Vs central planning and controls.
9. Decentralisation and empowerment of Front line staff (FLS).
10. Sustainability of JFPM system: this is possible through - identifying need based resources, entrusting protection works, fire protection income generating activities for the institutions and individuals, regeneration efforts for coppicing plants, tending root stocks, fodder management linking entire Forest protection with NTFP management.
11. Establishing some kind of strong linkage with Panchayat Raj instructions (PRI), recognition for VFCs in sub-committees, village planning, rural development programmes.
12. Recognising overall land use plan village in the Micro-plans.
13. Bringing policy changes:-
 - Co-membership Vs membership for all adult members.
 - Concept of Joint Secretaryship for members of VFCs

PSE F8

A REPORT ON CONSTRUCTION OF OFFICE BUILDING FOR VILLAGE FOREST
COMMITTEE KOTEKOPPA, BANAVASI RANGE

When the flora and fauna of Western Ghats started dwindling due to various reasons, the people and the Government thought to have a joint venture in preserving the eco-system. The "Joint Forestry Programme & Management" is the outcome in 1993, with the helping hand of ODA of U.K.

Kotekoppa village in Banavasi Range is the first village among the ten villages selected during 1993-94 under the Project in Sirsi Division. Now, it has become the first V.F.C. in the entire Circle to have its own building, built with own labours of its members.

The village is mainly an agricultural village having small holdings of 9 Gouda families, 3 Naik families, 2 Kuruba families and 2 Havyak families. The total population of the village is 150 whereas, that of cattle is 153.

The VFC was registered on 23/01/1994 and Sri. Shiva Huliya Gouda was selected as the President of the VFC unanimously. The MOU was signed between the VFC and the KFD on 28/08/1995.

Initially, the villagers had doubt on the Project and several clarifications were necessarily made by the forest officials regarding the Project. As the days passed and with repeated interactions, the villagers came closer and began to understand the benefits of the joint venture. With the frequent visits of the NGOs, Vikas of Malgi, the gents and ladies have formed separate self help groups in the name of the village deity Naga-Chowdeshwari. Each group have 12 numbers. They meet every Monday and contribute Rs. 5/- each member. The Mahila self help group has collected about Rs. 3000/- and the Yuvaka Sangha has collected Rs. 2000/- so far. The Money is being used to meet the urgent needs of the villagers such as meeting, medical expenses, for bringing ration, purchase of seeds etc., and rapid immediately.

A multipurpose plantation raised during 1993 in 34.00 Ha. may start yielding the benefit to the members in about 4-5 years. The KFD has helped in installing 16 Astra Chullas and 9 Bio-gas plants in the village. The formation of VFC in the village made the villagers to approach other departments using the VFC as village level institution. This approach could help the villagers in getting a metalled, all weather road, a borewell for drinking water and desitting of the tank in Sy.No.12 with the assistance of the Taluka Panchayat body

The monthly meetings of VFC were being conducted in the house of the President. Apart from this the two self help groups were also in need of an independent place to conduct their weekly meetings. The matter was discussed with the Forest Officials. The out come of the discussion was an office building and the dream became reality due to whole hearted involvement of the villagers with consistent support of the KFD. The foundation stone was laid by Sri. K. Prabhakar, Dy. Conservator of Forests, JFPM Sirsi on 09/12/1996 and the building was inaugurated by Sri. B. Shivangowda, IFS., Conservator of Forests, Kanara Circle, Sirsi on 09/06/1997. Thus the dream of having their own building of Kotekoppa VFC came true. The details of work done, the amount spent with the contribution of the villagers and voluntary (Shramadana) labour work done by them is detailed in the enclosure. On going through the details of costs the work has been highly costs effective. If we venture to construct about 3750 Sq. feet building (with raw bricks and mud plastering) we need to spend at least Rs. 94,000/- at the rate of Rs. 250/Sq. feet for such good quality of work. Today the VFC building is a piece of pride for the members of Kotekoppa VFC. The building is used for conducting weekly meetings of SHGs and monthly meetings of VFC. The VFC plans to use the building for imparting skills training, NTTP marketing for running Anganawadi classes and such other common uses of village.

VILLAGE FOREST COMMITTEE KOTEKOPPA, BANAVASI RANGE.

Details of works - Contributions and Voluntary labour for the Construction of VFC Building.

Sl.No.	Particulars of Works carried out	Quantity	Contributed	Voluntary labour		Remarks	
			Amount Spent Rs.	Labour	Cart		Monitory Equivalent in Rs.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Digging of foundation of 2 feet wide and 2 feet deep for the plinth of 25 feet and 15 feet	288 Cft		6 Nos		300	Approximately Rs. 50/- has
2	Rubble stones for foundation - Collection, transportation on carts & laying into the foundation.	200 Cft		8 Nos	4	800	been taken as labour cost/day Rs. 100/-as
3	Laying earth and water, consolidating and leveling the foundation.			4 Nos		200	cart rent/day
4	Collection, loading & unloading of laterite stones from neighboring private quarries, donated by the quarry - owners, transportation of the stones on a tractor - owned by Sri. M.C.Naik, chairman Village Panchayat, Bankanal claiming only Diesel charges Rs. 350/- from villager's contribution.	550 Stones	350	6 Nos		300	(Cost of Stones @ Rs. 3/stone
						1650	
5	Moulding raw bricks for the walls - Digging earth mixing with water, moulding bricks, drying and carrying to the site in carts. (Out of 1180 bricks prepared, 200 destroyed due to untimely rains)	1180 bricks		65 Nos	5	3750	
6	Collection & transportation of Sand from Banavasi River - only diesel charges of Rs. 200/- paid to Sri. M.C. Naik, owner.	1 Bharas 100 Cft	200	6 Nos		300	
7	Procurement of cement - 4 bags from Dasankop	200 Kg.	585				
8	Construction of 8 pillars of 7 1/2 ' height, laying one course of laterite stones allround the plinth and construction of front wall - labour charges to the mason.	550 Stones	1137.5	9 Nos		450	
9	Construction of wall on the remaining three sides with raw bricks.	980 bricks		15		750	
10	To meet the requirement of wood the villagers contributed the old material they had. Permission obtained from the Department to convert the old materila in situ and to us for the building.	Matti-0.573 Nandi- 0.057 Nerandu 1.384 cum				13840	
	a) One door and two window frames with shutters making charges to the carpernter		851				

	b) Beams - rafters & reepers laying them after finishing - labour charges to carpernte	1.384 cum	6400	6 Nos	300
11	Materials required for the doors-window & the reepers viz Nails, hinger, towerbolts. bolts etc.		520		
12	Old tiles provided by Forest Department for roofing on recovery of Rs. 2000/- for 1000 Nos.	1000 Nos			2000
13	Laying of tiles.	1000 Nos		4 Nos	200
14	Purchase of cement for plastering.	110 Kgs	358		
15	Labour charges for plastering.		250		
16	Mud plastering to the walls & flooring.			* 34 Nos	1700
17	Purchase of lime & paint for white washing & painting.		250		
					26540

JOINT FOREST PLANNING & MANAGEMENT WITH REFERENCE TO LIVESTOCK IN THE FARMING SYSTEMS OF UTTARA KANNADA

A DISCUSSION PAPER

Wider Context

1. To cope with projected continued population growth, India's agricultural production must increase by at least 3-3.5% per annum over the next 20 years. The contribution that the expansion of irrigated cultivation has made to food crop production in the recent past cannot be repeated, with the result that the necessary increase in agricultural production will have to come from Rainfed Farming Systems (RFS). These currently represent some 70% of the country's cultivation area, but contribute only 40% of agricultural production.

2. There will, therefore, need to be sustained efforts to increase the productivity of RFS. In this one of the major constraints will be soil fertility, which needs to be increased in many cases. Much can be achieved with chemical fertilisers, but they alone are not enough to ensure sustainable production. Research results indicate that composts made with animal dung are superior to green composts alone, confirming the rightness of traditional farming practices in this respect. India places maintenance and improvement of soil fertility as one of its topmost priorities for agricultural research and development, with particular emphasis on the role of organic fertilisers. Livestock are a critical element in the production of these and other key elements in farming systems.

Uttara Kannada Circle

3. The report of the recent consultancy mission headed by S D Ashley *A study of the role of livestock in the livelihoods of communities in Uttara Kannada* confirms the vital importance of livestock to rural communities. Over three-quarters of the 12 lakhs of people living in the Circle derive their livelihoods wholly or partially from the local farming systems, all of which are rainfed farming systems. There are three near certainties about this population:

- it is not going to go away
- it is likely to increase in size
- for the foreseeable future it is going to remain dependent on the farming system for its survival

Furthermore, unless the capacity of the farming system to support the local population is enhanced, pressure on forest resources will get greater.

4. The report confirms the critical importance of livestock to rural livelihoods, with up to 70% (and more in some areas) of households owning animals. These animals are fully and vitally integrated into the farming system, since less than 5% of the total livestock owned are principally managed for the production of market-oriented animal products. Rather, the key roles of livestock are in the production of farming system and household inputs:

- dung for fuel, fertiliser, household and ritual purposes
- draught power
- milk and ghee

Livestock also offer an investment resource that provides a form of security to many poor farmers. Sale or other disposal of livestock forms the basis of many coping strategies for handling household and family crises as well as more general cash flow problems.

5. The report also clearly highlights the importance of the forest resource in the provision of feeds and grazing for livestock, with over 70% of the already insufficient feed resource coming from the forest. For poorer farmers this will be even higher, approaching 100% in many cases. It is only the largest and best resourced farmers, whose lands exceed their needs for self sufficiency, who can produce or buy more of their own animal feed resources. Very few of even these make no demands on the forest to support their livestock.

6. Despite this, the current trend is one of decline in the livestock population, both in terms of the total and in the size of individual holdings. This decline is also being accompanied by a decline in soil fertility, a decline in efficiency and timeliness of cultivation, and a decline in crop yields. The overall result of these trends is likely to be increased levels of poverty for smaller and marginal farming households which form the majority of the rural population. Reduced availability of grazing and fodder is the major factor in this decline.

Joint Forest Planning and Management

7. If JFPM is to be effective it will need to contribute to the goal of maintaining and conserving the forest area and its environment on a sustainable basis. To achieve this a proper balance will need to be struck, both now and in the future, between the needs of the forest, the environment, agriculture and rural livelihoods. This is not simply a matter of providing adequate and suitable areas for cropping, but also, within the compass of each village area, the development of an adequate and appropriate mixture of agro-forestry, fodder and grazing resources to provide the farming system and livelihood needs for non-timber products and livestock feeds. Furthermore, this provision will need to recognise the differential needs and dependency on such resources at different levels of the village and farming system.

8. In the longer term it will be important for the farming system itself to be developed to increase and intensify its productivity. Only in this way will it be possible to ensure that the extra agricultural output that will be required is not achieved at the cost of further expansion into the forest.

9. If mutual and sustainable benefit is to be obtained from this participatory approach to the use and conservation of lands in the forest zones, then the Forest Department must not be restricted to the role of passive benefactor allocating parcels of land for the benefit of agriculture and other aspects of village livelihoods. Rather, the Department needs to be an active participant in the development of such lands for forestry, agro-forestry, fodder, grazing and cropping use. Ultimately this will require collaboration not only with local populations, but also with other departments and agencies dealing with agriculture, livestock and fisheries development, as well as those with social, environmental and ecological concerns.

Livestock

10. It is vital to remember that the major contributions of livestock to the economic viability and sustainability of the farming system are in the form of nutrient recycling/soil fertility and draught power. In respect of the crop lands of Uttara Kannada, it is essential for their continuing fertility that the bulk of the nutrients re-cycled are derived from other lands, principally the forest resource. To otherwise maintain cropland fertility, which cannot solely or even mainly be maintained by chemical fertilisers, would require the cultivation of considerably larger areas for grazing and fodder production, or even a reversion to some form of shifting cultivation.

11. Nor is it reasonable to suppose that the farming system can be supported by the much greater intensification of livestock production, such as stall-feeding systems employing cut-and-carry provision of nutrients. These are neither economically viable nor sustainable in terms of their labour requirements as far as the great majority of households are concerned. This is not to deny that some of the livestock in some of the households could be more productively developed for milk and dairy products. However, this would be as much an addition to the farming system as an improvement to it, since in economic and resource terms such intensive approaches seem to take out more than they give back, according to the evidence of this report (Table p.129).

12. The report also suggests that farmers do not view grazing livestock as damaging to the forest resource, though this is derived from their approach to the value, character and use of the forest resource. It is undeniable that livestock must have some impact on the forests in which they graze, but in the long term it may be better to manage such areas of forest in ways that accommodate grazing and browsing needs, rather than try to exclude livestock in an attempt to confine nutrient provision to cutting, gathering and sweeping of the forest floor. In the latter system none of the nutrients taken from the forest are re-cycled back into the forest, whilst the extra input costs of feeding mean that livestock holdings can only be viable if they are larger and/or produce more. In either case they will need to consume more.

Ways Forward

13. These must essentially be determined, to mutual advantage, in a fully participatory manner at the local level. This will entail recognising the needs and goals of both the forest and farming systems, as well as emphasising the necessary interaction between the two, which is largely facilitated by livestock.

14. They will encompass not just allocation and use of lands within the village's reach, but also mutually and environmentally beneficial niche and micro-niche use and planting of such land. This will cover uses for forestry, agro-forestry, grazing, fodder and cropping systems. The collaborative expertise required to optimally assess and develop this process will include:

- forestry
- agro-forestry
- farming systems
- land use assessment
- socio-economics
- livestock production
- grassland ecology
- environmental ecology

They will also require rehabilitation of degraded lands to appropriate productive purposes.

15. Research will be required into:

- fodder trees, bushes and shrubs for forest, agro-forest and grazing use
- control and eradication of Eupatorium, which is currently a major depressant of forest grasses
- tree species and planting densities for mixed forest and grazing management
- compost production and the livestock/nutrient recycling/soil fertility complex
- total, seasonal and differential feed requirements for livestock in, and at different levels of the farming system
- social and economic factors, with particular emphasis on the problems facing women and disadvantaged households
- sustainable lopping rates for compost production
- environmentally and ecologically sustainable practices of forest and farming systems

These and other themes could usefully be considered by the Research Working Groups being established under the project and pursued by the Forestry Research Committee.

16. For longer term sustainability there is a need to study and develop the farming system. In this it would be useful to collaborate with other ODA-funded projects in India which are adopting a similar approach, such as the rainfed farming projects being implemented by Hindustan Fertilisers and KRIBHCO. The Department should see it as being in its own interests that such farming systems studies are pursued, otherwise the needed increases in agricultural output will be achieved at the expense of further encroachments into forest lands.

Guy Freeland
ODA Senior Livestock Adviser
New Delhi
January 1994

ANNEX: LIVESTOCK INPUT TO SOIL QUALITY FOR SUSTAINABLE CROPPING

1. Indigenous technical knowledge and farming practice in Uttara Kannada indicates that the best and most appropriate fertilizer for sustainable cropping is a compost comprising 50% leaf matter and 50% animal dung. For optimal sustainable yields this is applied to paddy fields at between 7-11 tonnes per hectare and to Areca gardens at the rate of 50-80 tonnes per hectare. Using the official figures on land use given in Table 1 of the Ashley Report, this would imply total need of about 1,200,000 tonnes of compost for the cultivated land in Uttara Kannada District.
2. Even if dung collection could be maximised by the permanent housing and stall feed of all animals in the District, the total dung production required would be 600,000 tonnes per year; and even if assume a food digestibility as low as 50% then the animals producing it must consume 1,200,000 tonnes of vegetable dry matter.
3. According to Dr Desai, the DDG for Animal Husbandry in Karwar, his Department is currently recommending the use of Congo Signal Grass as a suitable fodder crop for the area and this yields about 10 tonnes of dry matter per hectare per year. If all the nutrients for these stall fed animals were to be produced from such fodder plots, then 120,000 hectares of land would have to be diverted to the cultivation of fodder grass to support the soil fertility requirement of the 114,000 hectares of land currently cultivated for crops. a further 1,200,000 tonnes of leaf material would still need to be collected from the forest to complete the compost mixture and of course, over the above all this the fodder plots themselves would need some fertilization if their production is to be sustained over time.
4. To allocate enough land to fodder production, to meet these requirements, would necessitate that the currently afforested area was reduced by 10%. In practice of course this fodder production stall feeding process is unlikely to achieve peak efficiency and thus still more land would be required. Furthermore, if other productive purposes livestock over and above dung production are also to be met, then still further nutrition is required and the nutrients would necessarily have to be of higher digestibility which in turn would mean that still more animals and more land would be needed to meet the basic requirement for the dung and work and other products. Going to this extreme of stall feeding would clearly of agro-forestry, pastures, fodder crop production, and mature woodland grazing, on forest land within the village reach.