

Dear CAA - (I have sent these
2 letters, after reading a Campaign
appeal in "The Ecologist".

Rob Foxcroft MA Cantab
5 Ilay Avenue
Bearsden
Glasgow G61 1QF

RF.

H R H The Prince of Wales
Highgrove
Gloucestershire

PSK
PBC

21st July 1994

May it please your Royal Highness

I am concerned about the British-funded forest project in
Karnataka, India, the Western Ghats Forestry Project.

I note the discrepancy between how this project is seen by the
British Aid Minister, and how it is seen by the local people:
the British Aid Minister calls it a leading example of

"the participative approach endorsed by Rio";

whereas a local organisation, the Chipko-Appiko Andolan group
(CAA), say that the project is

"once again nothing but growing trees for commercial purpose
in the name of the people", that

"tribals will be thrown out of the forest", because the
forests will be zoned so that "the best areas are declared
inaccessible and uninhabitable", and that

the project "will destroy rich bio-diversity and will plant
mono-cultures".

I draw your attention to the plight of the forest-dwelling tribal
groups, the Siddhis, Gowlis and Halakki Vokkaligas, whose way of
life is falling under the control of outsiders, and whose
centuries of experience of these forests should not be
disregarded.

I deplore the numerous forestry projects being introduced into
India by international agencies, including the World Bank, UNDP
and FAO.

The replacement of ancient and diverse forests, used by tribal
peoples as common lands from time immemorial, by plantations of
teak, poplar and eucalyptus, is not acceptable.

- British aid should not be used to uproot the lives of tribal
peoples.
- British aid should not be used to destroy the world's
natural habitats.

I beg you to do everything in your power to prevent this
destructive project (and others like it) from going forward.

Yours sincerely

Rob Foxcroft

(see note overleaf)

Rob Foxcroft MA Cantab
5 Ilay Avenue
Bearsden
Glasgow G61 1QF

The Right Honourable John Major PC
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

21st July 1994

Dear Prime Minister

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I note the discrepancy between how this project is seen by the British Aid Minister, and how it is seen by the local people: the British Aid Minister calls it a leading example of

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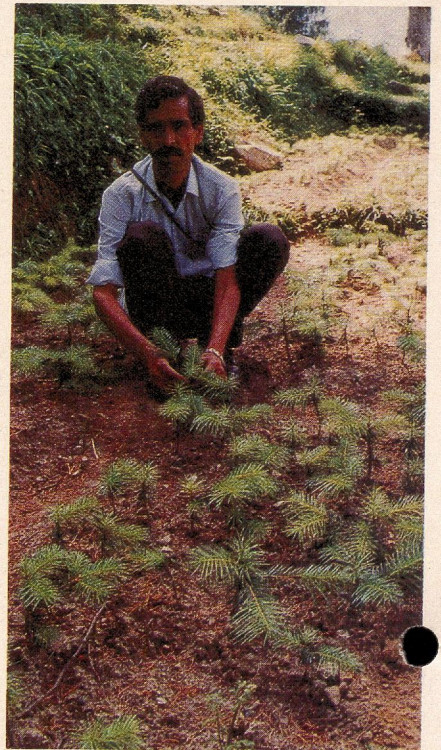
British Aid For Forestry Projects

Under the British Government's bilateral aid programme, the Overseas Development Administration is helping to ensure the long-term survival of India's forests through a Joint Forest Planning and Management approach

In recent years environmental and forestry issues have been headline news, both in India and elsewhere in the world. With the increasing prominence of these issues, concern has been expressed about the decline of India's forests. That decline has now been arrested through major efforts by state governments and private landowners' initiatives. However, the long term survival of India's natural forests is still greatly at risk, because of pressures caused by industrial development and population growth. The British Government's Overseas Development Administration (ODA) is committed to funding projects which address these problems, through its bilateral aid programme to India.

In 1990 Mrs (now Lady) Chalker, Minister for Overseas Development, announced that Britain would make available to India funds up to £40 million for environmental projects, especially state government forestry programmes.

In October 1992, the first project to be funded from this allocation was formally agreed with the Government of India. The ODA agreed to provide £ 23 million, over six years, for the Western Ghats Forestry Project. This project, which is being implemented by the Karnataka Forestry Depart-



Tending saplings in a Himachal Pradesh forest department tree nursery.

ment, is the largest forestry project that the ODA has ever funded.

The ODA is now working on the design of the next project under this fund, which will be in Himachal Pradesh, and a third project is planned for another region of the Himalayan forests. The ODA thus hopes to fund significant forestry initiatives in all the major natural forest areas of India which are currently under threat.

The ODA's forestry projects in India will adopt an approach known as 'Joint Forest Planning and Management' (JFPM). This approach involves forestry management through collaboration between government and forest users. Over the years, demands on forests and forest products have greatly expanded, both as a result of industrial development and because of population growth. The JFPM approach involves devising plans for forestry protection and development on the basis of consultations with local populations. The plans should provide for their needs whilst at the same time protecting the forest areas which are managed by the

The unique Western Ghats' eco-systems, site of ODA's largest-ever forestry project.

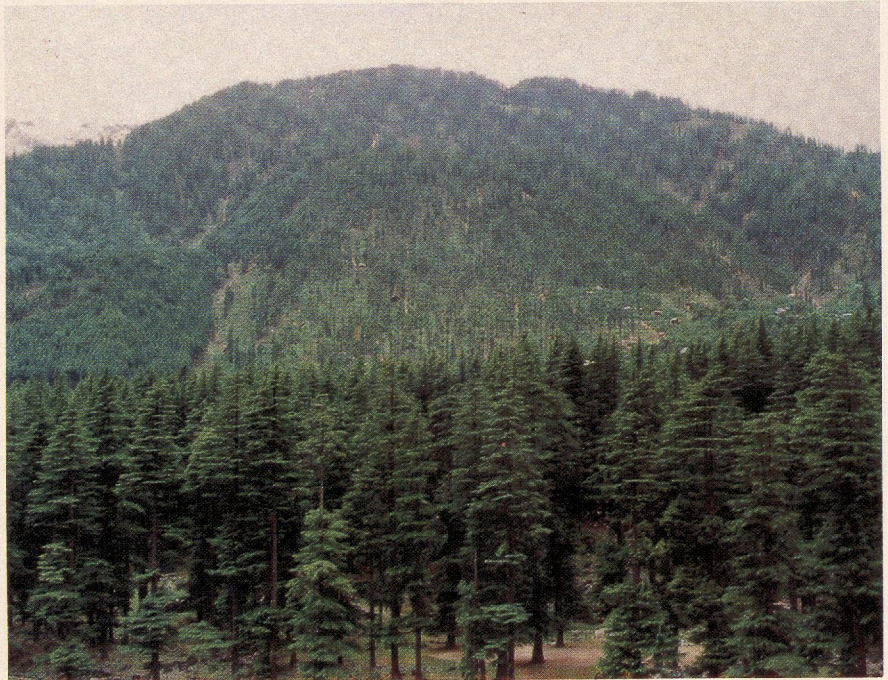


state governments' Forest Departments. It is an approach that has been pioneered in India, but not been tried on this scale before.

As well as the new scale, the JFPM concept involves a change in role for the Indian forestry services. The protection of natural forests in India is the responsibility of both the Indian Forest Service and the various State Forest Services. These are among the oldest such services in the world, and their role has traditionally been a 'policing' one. Because the JFPM approach involves closer collaboration with communities who use forests and forest products, this will involve Forest Departments in a much broader range of issues and activities than they have traditionally been expected to do. Not only will they need to know more about the ecology of the forest, but also more about the economic and social needs of those who use the forest. These new insights have then to be incorporated into appropriate policies and activities.

The key to the success of these forestry projects will lie in enlisting the cooperation of local populations and other forest users to join with the state Forest Departments, in conserving and sustainably managing the forest for the benefit of all. The ODA believes that by utilising its experience from other parts of the world, it can help India meet this new challenge. Furthermore, the Indian forestry projects are designed to provide flexible approaches to achieving the set objectives. Thus ongoing monitoring of the projects will be important, as it will reveal which approaches are best suited to successful forest conservation and management.

Both the ODA and the Indian government have recognised that the Indian forestry services will need to be equipped with new skills to meet the new challenges. The ODA will therefore soon begin another project which will restructure the training of professional foresters in India. This will involve syllabus revision, enhanc-



Himachal Pradesh, where the ODA is designing a new forestry project.

ing the teaching skills of the staff of the various forestry colleges, and upgrading the facilities of those colleges. Another feature of the project will involve establishing a greatly expanded system of mid-career training, to enable Indian foresters to keep abreast of new worldwide developments.

The ODA has also been involved with research work in the Indian forestry sector. The Institute of Wood Science at Bangalore and the Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding at Coimbatore are both collaborating with British institutions under ODA funding. The ODA has also funded research into the effects of fast-growing trees, particularly eucalypts and acacias in Karnataka. This project has recently published its scientific findings, and the research has been a significant contribution to the global environmental debate.

The scale of the task faced by India's Forest Departments is huge. India's forests are an irreplaceable resource yet are also very much at risk. Their conservation and management is an issue of global importance, which the ODA is committed to helping India find ways of successfully achieving.

For details please contact

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