

PRESS RELEASE

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COLONIALISM IN THE NAME OF JOINT FORESTRY PROGRAM

The region of Western Ghats popularly referred as Malnad is the only narrow strip that still has one of the best tropical forests in the world. This rich forest belt has been the place of origin for many of the rivers like Kaveri, Tunga Badhra, Sharavathi and Kali.

These Western Ghats, which are a life line ecologically, economically and for sustaining the vast tracts of irrigated area in the deccan plateau are facing threats from various developmental projects. Up till now, if the power projects were the biggest threats to the forests, of late, the so called guardians of the forests, namely the forest department itself has come up with a developmental project with the assistance of Overseas Development Administration (ODA), which is posing a big threat to the survival of forests in the Western Ghats. This program by the name of Western Ghats Forestry Project (WGFP) has received an assistance of Rs. 842 millions from ODA.

History

ODA is not new to Karnataka. It had the credibility of funding the most infamous, controversial and anti-poor Social forestry project. Which was opposed by the enlightened public of Karnataka. Having bitten dust in that project this British aid agency seems to be back with a vengeance to fund the WGFP. However, in this attempt, at the initial stages itself ODA had to face opposition by the Voluntary Organizations (VOs) of Karnataka and by the enlightened public of United Kingdom for not providing any space for peoples participation. When Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, the then Prime Minister of UK conceded the view of VOs of Karnataka, ODA and the forest department of Karnataka had no alternative than to create a space for peoples participation. While granting the demand of VOs, the forest department and ODA grabbed the emerging trend in forest management called Joint Forest Planning and Management (JFPM) with the users of forest, especially the local people. This had become obligatory on the part of Forest Department of Karnataka. After the run away success of experiments in West Bengal and Orissa, the Ministry of Environment and Forests at the center had issued an order to all the states form JFPM. Thus being forced into the concept of JFPM, forest department of Karnataka launched WGFP with lot of publicity and fanfare and called the entire project with a budget of Rs 842 million as a process of learning to establish JFPM. Such an expensive learning seems to have been loaded with several short comings. We wish to throw light on such short comings and how does the process of learning with an expensive budget of Rs 842 million help people of Karnataka.

The WGFP has laudable objectives, such as, to maintain the ecology and environment of western Ghats. At the same time, it

2

2

also speaks of sustained yield. This makes us to doubt whether the WGFP will toe the line of Social Forestry and whether the laudable objectives are a cover for the dubious activities of the sustained yield. What is this sustained yield? This can be understood by looking at the economic benefits planned to be derived. The project proposal mentions under Economic Benefits " An import parity price of teak, which is imported at present, was estimated and economic prices, net of taxes and subsidies, were calculated for other forest products and used to estimate benefit flows". What is expected from the project by the forestry department can be understood has nothing but growing teak to save the expenditure on imports. Such a doubt gets further strengthened from the way returns are calculated. For all the plantations for local needs economic returns have been calculated, whereas for the gap planting the returns seems to be sensitive to the discount rate and say that the returns will be considerably higher when "incremental productivity of existing stock which will be thinned at the time of gap planting is included..". For which process of planting the forest has to be thinned?. It is only in the case of commercial plantations like teak. Further, if it is purely thinning, it has to be in the existing teak plantations. Then why one has to call it gap filling. Is it to cut down the existing tree wealth and which is not possible in the normal course due to ban on selection felling. Is it ultimately to cut down local species and to plant teak. Therefore, the objective of ODA funding the WGFP is, as in the case of Social Forestry, to destroy the rich bio-diversity and to plant monocultures and commercially valuable trees.

Zonation

The biased objectives of the project seems to have percolated into the policies formulated for the project. One of the policies is to recategorize the forests as zones. It was our colonial masters, namely Britishers, who classified the forests and now once again the project funded by the past colonial masters is attempting at re-classifying forests into "Zones".

For ecological reasons (no where in the document what this ecological reasons are not specified) and for the development of forests, the forest department proposes to form zones within the forests

The zones are

- I. CORE ZONE: It will comprise of Ecologically important areas in hills. No human habitation is allowed.
- II. MAIN ZONE: Major forest areas (Main forests) without any human habitation
- III. MAIN ZONE: With habitation (Forests with people)
- IV. BOUNDARY ZONE: Edge of forests near villages

3

74

V. COMMON LAND/REVENUE LAND:(Outside forests)

By defining zones in the above manner access to forests for the villagers is restricted to zones IV and V, which are totally depleted and degraded. The best areas are reserved for ecological and forestry reasons declared as not only inaccessible but also as uninhabitable. Therefore, once again this, from developmental point of view, is impractical and a well thought about methodology to prevent the villagers and tribals having an access to the main forests. By restricting access to the zones I, II and III, probably, the tribals who are presently living within these zones may be thrown out of the forests. Uttara Kannada where 80 per cent of the geographical area belongs to forest department, if zonation comes into effect, it can result in displacement of many civilized and the tribals such as Siddhis, Gowlis and Hallaki Vokkaligas, who continue to live within the forests, even to-day.

Finance

The dubiousness within the objectives of WGFP comes out, if one examine the allocation of the budget for various activities.

A. Only 45 per cent is allocated for planting. Rest of the budget is for administrative purposes.

B. There is an allocation of 10 per cent of the budget for consultancies. As per the agreed terms, the consultants will be form UK, which obviously indicates that in the name of consultancies the amount gets back to UK.

There is no dearth of forest experts in our country. But ODA has insisted on foreign experts of British origin. Which creates a doubt whether the project is to create employment for the citizens of Britain. There seems to be no rationale in hiring experts or to bring in experts of alien culture for formation JFPM, wherein one has to interact with the local people, mostly tribal, either living next to the forests or within the forests.

C. If 18.87 per cent of the budget is allocated for the activities at head quarters, only 2.92 percent is allocated to the actual JFPM activities. Similarly, if 20.02 per cent is allocated for tree enrichment, ecology, tree improvement and seedling protection, to plant for meeting local needs is only 18.29 per cent of the budget is allocated. Thus in the name of joint forest management, forest officials are creating chances for enhancing their sphere of activities.

Training :

There is a huge allocation to cover the costs of training officials of forest department at UK. This raises lot of doubts on the need for training officials in UK for JFPM. When

the experiments such as Arabari of West Bengal and experiments in Orissa are being cited as the best JFPM by the forest sector of World Bank and Ford Foundation, the rationale in sending officials to UK for training appears to be as a cover for an ulterior purpose.. Is it, in any way, a gratitude paid back for agreeing to have only British consultants. The biggest joke is even to study the livestock in Uttara Kannada, a consultant was brought down from UK. When there are many anthropologists in India who have made innumerable studies on Gowlis who happen to be the major livestock owners in Uttara Kannada.

Above all these unspelled agenda in the name of JFPM, the entire costs of the project is reported as fund but in actuality it is loan to be repaid and definitely a burden which citizens of Karnataka have to bear for the so called learning process of ODA and Forest Department.

PEOPLES PARTICIPATION

Even though the WGFP is declared as an experiment in JFPM the project proposal says 'the fundamental instrument for delivering sustainability is JFPM'. The objective does not seem to be JFPM, as in the case of social forestry, it is once again, nothing but growing trees for commercial purpose, in the name of people .

The plan of enrichment of natural forests and gap filling are concepts evolved to endanger the rich bio- diversity of Western Ghats.

One of the models suggested for planting by the JFPM is multi-purpose model. The experience in the past two years does not convince us to believe that the model will be multi -purpose, since most of the plantations planted so far are monocultures of acacia or casurina.

Infrastructure Development

One of the avowed objectives of ODA is to extend funds to bring about institutional changes within the forest department. What change that has been brought about, so far in the pre-plan stage, is the creation of an another sector called JFPM wing within the department with quite a good provision for new recruitment, promotions, Maruthi gypsies and computers.

Similarly, in the name of Social Forestry, huge amounts were spent on infra-structural development. In the same pattern many positions at the top level were created and many vehicles were purchased. This makes us to doubt whether for every new project, is there a necessity to create additional posts and purchase latest vehicles on the shelf. If it is so then what happened to the posts and vehicles which were created in the social forestry project, to enhance the delivery capability of

5

the department. We have every doubt that in the name of the people, once again, certain individuals in the department are being promoted. Should citizens of Karnataka pay for the promotion of few officials.

We should not bend low to the pressures of ODA, but strive to evolve a joint management policy involving local people as carried out over several decades by the villagers of Halkar (Uttara Kannada district), Badamakanahalli (Kolar district) and Hunsur (Shimoga district). These examples from grassroots shows the practical options before forest department of Karnataka.

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For PARISARA SANMRAKSHNA KENDRA

May 3, 1994.

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Camp: Bangalore

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DERAILED FORESTRY PROGRAMME

The 'MALENAD' region of western ghats in Karnataka has the best forest resources. This region is the catchment area of important rivers like Kaveri, Tunga Bhadra, Sharavati and Kali. The state government of Karnataka earns a revenue of Rs. 60 crores every year from timber extracted from the forests of western ghats. In addition to timber the forests yield a revenue of Rs. 25 crores from plants extracted for medicinal purposes.

These forests in MALENAD (Hill regions of Karnataka) performs an important ecological function. It helps to generate power for the state from the rivers flowing across western ghats. Similarly it also helps to irrigate the deccan plains of the state. This fragile ecosystem is under stress, from various quarters.

The Overseas Development Administration (United Kingdom) is financing Western ghats Forestry Programme in Karnataka. The total amount to be spent is Rs. 260 crores.

HISTORY

ODA and World Bank has financing the Social Forestry Programme in Karnataka. This project was criticised by environmentalists and voluntary organisations due to its emphasis on planting eucalyptus trees. Karnataka launched the anti eucalyptus campaign in which thousands of activists were arrested. Nevertheless the Karnataka Forest Department (KFD) claims that Social Forestry was a success. Based on this bogus claim the K.F.D. has initiated another forestry programme funded by O.D.A. known as Western Ghat Forestry Project (W.G.F.P.)

While drafting the project proposal the K.F.D. ignored the need to involve local people in this programme. The voluntary organisations brought pressure on K.F.D. to involve people in this programme. As a result, the ~~pragr~~ project has incorporated joint forest Planning and Management with people living adjacent to forest areas.

We appreciate this change in the outlook of K.F.D., to involve local people in forest protection and regeneration.

The WGFP launched with publicity and fanfare has severe short coming which is likely to cause damage to the forest resources in western ghats. We intend to throw light on the issues not *touched* by government. This we hope will help in creating awareness about the factual situation.

OBJECTIVES:

The W.G.F.P. has laudable objectives, to maintain the ecology and environment of western ghats. At the same time it also speaks of sustained yield.

These objectives may sound high but the actual implementation may lead to something different from the objectives. This has happened in case of social forestry, which similarly had lofty objectives.

ZONATION

The project proposed envisages to define the Zones as follows:-

- I. CORE ZONE - Ecologically important areas in Hills
- II. MAIN ZONE - Without Habitation (Main forests)

- III. MAIN ZONE - With Habitation (Forests with people)
- IV. BOUNDARY ZONE - Edge of forests near villages.
- V. COMMON LAND/REVENUE LAND (Outside Forests)

Historically the Britishers during colonial divided our forests in Karnataka as Reserve Forests, Minor forest, Protected forests etc., Now, after a century the Britishers are responsible for further dividing our forest areas.

This concept of Zonation is impracticable and it is likely to alienate the people from forest resources. By defining these Zones peoples access to other forest areas will be restricted.

Obviously, this zonation is the leftover legacy of Britishers without any understanding of ground reality.

FINANCE

- A. Though the entire money is a grant in reality it is channeled through Govt. of India, which gives to Karnataka government as a loan which has to be paid to back to G.O.I. Thus, it is a loan burden on people of Karnataka.
- B. In the budgeting of W.G.F.P., only 45% is allocated for planting. Rest is for administrative purposes.
- C. There is provision for consultancies which obviously goes to British or foreign experts. 10% of Budget is allocated for consultancy.

There is no dearth of forest experts in our country. But ODA has included foreign experts, who are least aware of the local situations. Is it a means to generate employment for people in U.K.? Otherwise we do not see any rationale for hiring consultants who do not understand the culture, language of the people who live near the forests in Western ghats.

D. Training : There ~~is~~ are huge costs to cover the training of forest officials in U.K. This also is questionable, as what is the need for training over officials in U.K. to ~~manage~~ manage our forests. India has excellent trainers with deeper understanding of issues.

PEOPLES PARTICIPATION:

The main crux of the W.G.F.P. is involvement of local people in joint planning and joint management of the forests. The project proposal says 'the fundamental instrument for delivering sustainability is joint forest planning and management!

Enrichment of natural forests with economic species means destroying the natural biodiversity. Thus, these models are a definite indicator which follow social forestry line, which gives priority to economic needs than ecological needs. It is likely that these enrichment planting may lead to destruction of biodiversity in western ghats.

They have included multi purpose model. But ~~the~~ while the implementation is going on for past 2 years have not revealed any change from monoculture plantations. Thus, it exists in proposal but the reality is different.

Heavy emphasis on infrastructure development

- SF.
- JFPM

DIVIDING FOREST DEPARTMENT :

Bdg
Vehicles
etc.

O.D.A. with its huge funds has helped KFD to develop its organisational infrastructure by adding another wing *known as JFPM wing. By establishing this, the WGFP has divided the KFD in which the Territorial (regular) wing has the ~~pxa~~ powers and JFPM has to do the work but without any powers for execution. This division has created confusion among people leading to ~~chaos~~. The KFDs infrastructure has weakened due to this division. There high sounding words are hollow if we analyse the target for planting under JFPM.

Only 1500 hectares will be planted every year under JFPM. And what more, the ~~pxpx~~ peoples participation is restricted to Zone-IV, the area which is 'degraded'. The officials say that peoples suggestions will be taken while managing other zones. But the benefits which people can use is restricted to Zone-IV. Obviously, this is a trick by which KFD wants to raise forests with people as voluntary watchman. This JFPM is a self defeating term which is narrow and it hardly provides opportunity for people to participate.

PLANTING MODELS ;

The proposal envisages eight different planting models. These models are contradictory to each other. For example the proposal says economic forest management and ecological forest management' Nowhere in the project document these terms are defined. But these planting models are so absurd that they intend to enrich' natural forests! They call it 'Gap Planting and Enrichment'.

With these defects the ODA sponsored W.G.E.P. is bound to land into trouble. There are already instances where KFD is preparing for ODA plantations ignoring peoples views. In one case

(Alvalli) the plantation work was done under the threat of barrel of gun!

The politicians of ruling and opposition parties have welcomed this scheme. However, they have no time to see and learn from ground realities.

We should ^{not} set bow to the pressures of ODA, but strive to evolve a afforestation policy involving local people as being done in Halkar, Badamakanahalli (Kolar) and Hunsur (Shimoga). These examples from grassroots, shows the practical options before KFD.

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MAY 3, 1994.

WORKING PAPER

COMMERCIALISATION OF
TROPICAL FORESTS OF
WESTERN GHATS

A CASE STUDY OF
WESTERN GHAT FORESTRY PROJECT

BY
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DECEMBER 1995

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TO PROTECT THE TROPICAL FORESTS OF INDIA.

THIS WORKING PAPER IS PART OF THE STUDY OF
WESTERN GHAT FORESTRY PROJECT AS IMPLEMENTED
IN UTTARA KANNADA, KARNATAKA, INDIA.

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I. HISTORY OF DESTRUCTION OF BIODIVERSITY IN WESTERN GHATS

Uttara Kannada district (North Kanara) is known as the forest district in Karnataka. The Forest Department controls 80 percent of the geographical area of the district.

The western ghats run parallel to ^a West Coast. ^{the} The coastal strip is narrow with ^a high population density of 171 persons per square kilometre. The crestline zone has moderate hills ranging to an altitude of 600 metres above sea level with good forest cover. The population density in this region is 63 persons per square kilometre. On the edge of ^{the} western ghats, towards ^{the} deccan plains, is ^a very rich timber zone with deciduous forests. The population density ^{here} is 107 persons per square kilometre.

The forests in Uttara Kannada represent ^s one of the unique ecosystems in which evergreen, mixed evergreen and deciduous forests are found in the different regions. In ^{the} midst of these forests, people cultivate land in ~~the~~ tiny valleys. Livestock forms ^{an} integral part of the agricultural system in this region.

In the pre-British period, the forests provided the biomass inputs for agriculture. The abundance of availability of non timber forest produce is evident from the fact that wild pepper was gathered from these forest regions (Buchanan 1801). This area was known as 'PEPPER QUEEN'. ~~The~~ ^PPepper was the main product which was exported.

The traditional management of forests was in the control of communities or individual farmers. The concept of 'Kans' or

sacred groves was in existence and ^{this} these represents the traditional vision of conserving biodiversity. However, after the British conquest in 1801, the community control of forests was taken over by the Government. The 'Kana' became part of reserve forest.

The disruption of traditional forestry rights coincided with an extensive policy of exploitation of forests for valuable timber to meet the colonial demands. This led to degradation of the forests (Gadgil, M. & Chandran 1989). Large tracts of natural biodiverse forests were clearfelled to make way for monoculture timber plantations. The practice of so called scientific forestry resulted in over exploitation of the tropical forests affecting agricultural systems (Guha, 1991). This led to extensive degradation of forests and erosion of soil.

In the post independence era the colonial forest policies^y of clearfelling large tracts of natural forests was carried on with more vigour and extensive tracts of monoculture teak and eucalyptus plantations were established. It ^{was} only in 1983- that due to emergence of a strong peoples movement, Appiko Andolan brought pressure on the state government to abandon the policy of monoculture plantations (Hegde P. 1988).

Explaining the importance of Natural Forests Douglas & Robert Hart(1976) say "Trees and other animals that are native to a particular region tend, over the millennia, to build up a rich ecological association of birds, animals, insects, mosses and parasitic plants ^{for} richer than exotic species".

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The clearfelling of natural tropical forests of western ghats in Uttara Kannada led to destruction of biodiversity. The 'PEPPER QUEEN' became the 'TIMBER QUEEN' (Shiva V. et.al., 1991). The commercial forestry policy led to shortage of biomass for agriculture and livestock. The pressure on forests increased leading to conflict over the natural resources. The increasing population forced people to encroach forest land to eke out a living for survival. There is high pressure on the forests as people want to cultivate the land that belongs to forest department.

In spite of these factors which has led to over exploitation and destruction of biodiversity of the forests in Uttara Kannada, the forests are still being exploited to harvest timber and to earn revenue. This shows the priority of policy makers to squeeze out ~~the~~ revenue out of the fragile ecosystems in western ghats.

Western Ghat Forestry Project (WGFP)

The Western Ghat Forestry Project ^{name} is perhaps one of the largest forestry project^s in the world. ^{It} ~~This~~ is funded by ^{the} Overseas Development Administration ^(ODA) (UK). The first phase of the WGFP ^{being} is implemented in Uttara Kannada district, Karnataka. The implementation of the project in the region has accelerated the conflicts over access to natural resources (Hegde P. 1994).

One of the major characteristics of the WGFP is to involve people at all levels. The WGFP says ^{Karnataka Forest Dept.} (KFD, 1991) "local people will play a major role in planning, management and protection of forest". The concept ^{of} ~~the~~ ^{project} ~~planting~~ will be to meet ~~the~~ local needs like fuelwood, fodder and green leaves.

In order to involve local people in management of forests the project implements the strategy of Joint Forest Planning and Management (JFPM). Accordingly Village Forest Committees (VFCs) ^{have been} ~~are~~ established in ~~the~~ villages to involve people in forest management. These committees shall derive benefits from the proceeds of the plantations under JFPM. However, the introduction of ^a zoning process in the project (WGFP; 1991) has restricted peoples participation ~~is restricted~~ to only Zone IV (Hegde P. 1995). Zone I is ecologically sensitive

Comment: ~~from explaining~~ ^{from explaining} ~~five great~~ ^{five great} ~~each of these zones and its characteristics~~ ^{each of these zones and its characteristics} areas, Zone II is forests without habitation, Zone III is forest area near villages and Zone IV is degraded forest areas.

II. MULTI PURPOSE PLANTATIONS (MPP)

The project proposal of WGFP (1991) clearly mentions that the project will take the villagers' ⁽¹⁾ opinion in afforestation. It says that the project will adopt a strategy ~~by which~~ "ensuring poor people, women, tribals and other disadvantaged groups who are substantially dependent on the forests are not worse, and preferably better off". In order to seek participation of people, the Village Forest Committee is formed and therortically the committee ^{takes decisions on} ~~decides about~~ multi purpose plantations.

In order to look at the reality of these multi purpose plantations we have enumerated the species planted in ^{various} ~~the~~ villages. We have also enumerated the existence of natural species present in the same area. We have conducted these enumeration studies in two ecological zones of ^{the} western ghats., the crestline forest zone and ~~on~~ ^{eastern} the edge of western ghats.

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CASE STUDY

VILLAGE : HITLAHALLI

NAME OF THE VILLAGE: HITLAHALLI
 FOREST RANGE : MANCHIKERI
 FOREST DIVISION : YELLAPUR

AREA: 30 Ha
 MULTIPURPOSE PLANTATION
 YEAR: 1993

Quadrates size 20m x 20m

Common Name (Local Name)	Botanical Name of the species	QI	QII	QIII	QIV	Total	%	Mortality
<u>PLANTED</u>								
1. Sagavani	Tectona grandis	51	87	80	88	306	80.10	5
2. Acacia	Acacia auereculiformis	11	07	11	01	30	07.85	2
3. Geru	Anacardium occidentale	02	01	-	-	03	00.78	1
4. Nelli	Phyllanthus emblica Emblica officinalis	06	05	03	01	15	03.92	
5. Bidiru	Bombusa bambus ??	01	01	03	06	11	02.87	
6. Mango	Mangifera indica	01	02	01	04	08	02.09	
7. Sheege	Acacia concina ⁿ	-	01	-	-	01	00.26	
8. Gali	Casurina equisetifolia equisetifolia	-	01	-	-	01	00.26	
9. Honne	Pterocarpus monsupium marsupium	-	-	01	03	04	01.04	
10. Hunase	Tamarindus indica	-	-	-	03	03	00.78	
						<u>382</u>		
<u>NATURAL</u>								
1. Jambe	Xylia xylocarpa	02	-	-	-	02	01.22	
2. Gonasalu	Zizypus sp Ziziphys sp.	05	08	05	09	27	16.56	
3. Matti	Terminalia tomantosa e tomantosa	19	-	20	20	59	36.19	
4. Basri	Ficus infectoria	09	01	01	01	12	07.36	
5. Koulu	Kariva arborie Careya arborie	02	03	01	04	10	06.13	
6. Nurukalu	Buchanania lanzon ania lanzon	01	-	02	01	04	02.45	
7. Mulle	Zizyphus jujuba i h jujuba	03	02	02	02	09	05.52	
8. Kumusalu	Calycopteris floribunda	07	01	01	-	09	05.52	
9. Kare	Canthium parviflorum	04	07	02	07	20	12.26	
10. Sheege	Acacia concina ⁿ	-	02	-	-	02	01.22	
11. Nelli	Phyllanthus emblica Emblica officinalis	-	01	-	-	01	00.61	
12. Honne	Pterocarpus marsupium	-	01	-	02	03	01.84	
13. Kasarakalu	Strychnos naxvomica u naxvomica	-	01	01	-	02	01.22	
14. Bidiru	Bombusa bambus ? a bambus ?	-	-	-	02	02	01.22	
15. Beete	Dalbergia latifolia ^o	-	-	-	01	01	00.61	
						<u>163</u>		

Hitlahalli is situated in ^{the} midst of evergreen and semi evergreen forests. The multipurpose plantations were established in 1993 and 1994. As the above enumeration reveals, 80 percent of the species planted is teak. In addition to teak they have planted other indigenous species, but their percentage is limited to 4 percent. It also shows that there ~~exists high~~ ^{good} possibilities of ^{are} natural regeneration in the region.

The enumeration of the planted area shows that these multi purpose plantations (MPP) ^{are} ~~is~~ ^{an} in fact ^{an} extension of planting of commercial species like teak.

The VFC was formed in the village in 1993. The officer incharge of the forest division was known for his ~~pro~~ ^{people} stance. In spite of this favourable position, the KFD ignored the existence of VFC and went ahead with plantations of monoculture under the guise of multi purpose plantations. Now the VFC does not have any interest in these plantations due to ^{the} ~~an~~ absence of peoples involvement.

The negative impact of ^{this} ~~these~~ afforestation on local people ~~women~~, and the ecology is very well documented (CTE 1994). These plantations have affected ~~the~~ access to availability of wild fruits, availability of green leaves for composting and ^{an} ~~has~~ ^{the} had ^{an} adverse effect on ^{the} ecology of the region (See Appendix I).

VILLAGE: BELLANKERI

NAME OF THE VILLAGE: BELLANKERI
 FOREST RANGE : BANAVASI
 FOREST DIVISION : SIRSI

AREA: 46 Ha
 F.S.NO.: 6 (ODA)
 MULTIPURPOSE PLANTATION
 YEAR OF PLANTATION: 1994

Quadrante size 20m x 20m

Common Name (Local Name)	Botanical Name of the species	QI	QII	QIII	QIV	Total	%
<u>PLANTED</u>							
1. Acacia	Acacia ⁱ auriculiformis	52	55	48	50	205	81.47
2. Gali	Casurina ^e equisetifolia	11	07	07	08	33	13.14
3. Panneralu	Syzygiun Jambusa	06	02	01	01	10	03.98
4. Aala	Ficus bengalensis	01	-	-	-	01	00.39
5. Nelli	Phyllanthus emblica Emblica officinalis	01	01	-	-	02 <u>251</u>	00 79
<u>NATURAL</u>							
1. Matti	Terminalia tomentosa	06	11	28	25	57	30.97
2. Muttuga	Butea monosperma	02	01	01	-	04	02.17
3. Bikke	Gardenia spp	01	-	-	-	01	00.54
4. Bidiru	Bambusa bambus	01	01	-	08	10	05.43
5. Neelgiri	Eucalyptus globulus	04	33	28	22	87	47.28
6. Koulu	Careya arborea Cariya arborie	01	01	+	-	02	01.08
7. Honne	Pterocarpus marsupium	01	-	-	-	01	00.54
8. Nandi	Lagerstr ^{oe} mia lanceolata	-	01	03	09	13	07.06
9. Anethondi	Tabernaemontana dilaricata ?	-	02	-	-	02	01.08
10. Neralu	Syzygium cumini	-	-	-	01	01	00.54
11. Kumasalee	Calycopteris floribunda	-	-	-	02	02	01.08
12. Sheege	Acacia concin ^h a	-	-	-	01	01	00.54
13. Tare	Terminalia bell ^e rica	-	-	01	-	01	00.54
14. Jambe	Xylia xylocarpa	-	-	01	01	02 <u>184</u>	01.08

Bellankeri
This village is on the ^{eastern} ^{low} edge of western ghat^s with pressure on land for agriculture. The enumeration of MPP shows that almost 81.67 percent of the area is planted with Acacia auriculiformis. Out of ^a total of 5 species ~~are~~ planted by KFD two species are exotic to the region namely acacia and casurinaⁿ. ~~But~~ The percentage of local species is not even one percent of the enumerated quadrate except one species (Syzygium jambusa).
?

However the natural regeneration with 14 local species is an excellent indicator of biodiversity.

The VFC exists on paper^{only}. It has asked KFD to plant indigenous species, but the opinion was ignored.

Historically the natural forest in the village was clearfelled for planting eucalyptus. In the same region MPP ~~are~~ ^{has been} established. The people have seen the failure of eucalyptus plantations. There is excellent opportunity for natural regeneration. As the enumeration shows 14 indigenous species are growing in the same area. Do we need to plant monoculture to suppress the growth of local plants and destroy biodiversity?

^{With} While established plantations the interest of poorest people is ~~are~~ ignored, ^{It was noted that} ~~and the~~ ^{even} saplings were planted in midst of paddy saplings (Hegde P. 1995).

VILLAGE: GHATTIKAI

NAME OF THE VILLAGE: GHATTIKAI
 FOREST RANGE : SIRSI
 FOREST DIVISION : SIRSI

AREA: 30 Ha
 MULTIPURPOSE PLANTATION
 YEAR OF PLANTATION: 1994/95

Quadrates size 20m x 20m

Common Name (Local Name)	Botanical Name of the species	QI	QII	QIII	Total	%
<u>PLANTED</u>						
1. Sagavani	<i>Tectona grandis</i>	46	59	33	138	74.97
2. Matti	<i>Terminalia tomentosa</i>	07	15	09	31	16.75
3. Antavala	<i>Sapindus laurifolius</i>	01	02	01	04	02.16
4. Honalu	<i>Terminalia paniculata</i>	01	06	05	12	06.48
					<u>185</u>	
<u>NATURAL</u>						
1. Nilagiri	<i>Eucalyptus globulus</i>	-	19	38	47	20.43
2. Bidiru	<i>Bambusa bambus</i>	10	-	-	10	04.34
3. Bikke	<i>Gardenia sp</i>	25	22	08	55	23.91
4. Ichalu	<i>Phoenix sylvestris</i>	04	04	04	12	05.21
5. Holedasaval	<i>Lagestronia speciosa</i>	01	-	-	01	00.43
6. Honne	<i>Pterocarpus marsupium</i>	03	-	-	03	01.30
7. Mulle	<i>Zizyphus jujuba</i>	03	01	-	04	01.73
8. Koulu	<i>Cariya arborea</i> <i>Careya arborea</i>	05	10	05	20	08.60
9. Kaare	<i>Canthium parviflorum</i>	03	-	-	03	01.30
10. Kumusalu	<i>Calycopteris floribunda</i>	14	24	07	45	19.56
11. Sheege	<i>Acacia concina</i>	01	-	05	06	02.60
12. Mango	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	01	-	00	01	00.43
13. Neralu	<i>Syzygium cumini</i>	01	-	-	01	00.43
14. Nelli	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i> <i>Emblica officinalis</i>	-	04	04	08	03.47
15. Nurukalu	<i>Buchanania lanzan</i>	-	05	03	08	03.47
16. Jambe	<i>Xylia xylocarpa</i>	-	03	00	03	01.30
17. Tubaru	<i>Diospyros melanoxylon</i>	-	-	03	03	01.30
					<u>230</u>	

Ghattikai is in the semi evergreen forest zone. The plantations were established in 1994. It is one of those villages in which KFD/ODA's officials have regularly kept ^{ing} the contact. ^{with} The enumeration of the MPP reveals that the KFD has planted 74.97% of teak species. The total number of species planted in only four.

These MPP ^{have} ~~has~~ been established after ^{the} formation of VFC. However the decisions arrived [#] at in the process of micro plan ^{ing} ~~to~~ plant local indigenous species ^{were} ~~was~~ not adhered ^{to}. Moreover, the area given to MPP is the one in which there was eucalyptus plantations. Obviously, the coppicing of eucalyptus makes it almost difficult for any other plants to survive. The area itself is ^{incapable} ~~devoid~~ of producing biomass because eucalyptus plants hinder the growth of other species.

MPP in Ghattikai adheres to the commercial trends of KFD/ODA plantations. Historically KFD destroyed the existing ~~bio-diverse~~ natural forests about 25 years back. After replacing it with monoculture eucalyptus, the same degraded area ^{has been} ~~is~~ given to VFC for MPP. Obviously, the VFC ^{will} ~~can~~ never be able to meet the biomass needs ^{of the community} due to destruction of biodiversity and due to the loss of soil fertility.

VILLAGE : KABBE

NAME OF THE VILLAGE: KABBE
 FOREST RANGE : SIRSI
 FOREST DIVISION : SIRSI

AREA: 24 Ha
 MULTIPURPOSE PLANTATIONS
 YEAR: 1995

Quadrates size 20m x 20m

Common Name (Local Name)	Botanical Name of the species	QI	QII	QIII	QIV	Total	%
<u>PLANTED</u>							
1. Acacia	Acacia ^d auriculiformis	55	02	-	61	118	62.00
2. Nandi	Lagerstr ^o aemia lanceolata	01	-	-	-	01	00.53
3. Gali	Casur ^a ina equisetifolia	09	-	-	04	13	06.91
4. Geru	Anacardium occidentale	05	-	-	-	05	02.65
5. Honalu	Terminalia paniculata	03	10	-	-	13	06.91
6. Matti	Terminalia tomentosa	02	02	-	01	05	02.65
7. Halasu	Artocarpus ^{heterophyllus} integrifolia	-	-	06	-	06	03.19
8. Mango	Mangifera indica	-	-	05	-	05	02.65
9. Neralu	Syzygium cumini	-	-	05	-	05	02.65
10. Antavala	Sapindus laurifolius	-	-	04	-	04	02.12
11. Waate	Artocarpus lakoocha	-	-	03	-	03	01.59
12. Tari	Terminalia bell ^e erica	-	04	-	-	04	02.12
13. Honne	Pterocarpus marsupium	-	03	-	-	03	01.59
14. Nelli	Phyllanthus emblica Emblica officinalis	-	03	-	-	03	01.59
						188	
<u>NATURAL</u>							
1. Honalu	Terminalia paniculata	19	32	35	11	97	43.96
2. Kumusalu	Calycopteris floribunda	09	02	05	03	19	08.55
3. Matti	Terminalia tomentosa	05	20	02	04	31	13.15
4. Koulu	Careya ^{arborea} arborie	02	02	02	01	07	03.15
5. Anale	Terminalia chebula	01	-	-	-	01	00.45
6. Nelli	Phyllanthus emblica	02	-	03	02	07	03.15
7. Murukalu	^{Buchanania} Pulhamia lanzan	01	-	-	-	01	00.45
8. Nandi	Lagerstr ^o aemia lanceolata	02	18	05	-	25	11.26
9. Kare	Canthium parviflorum	-	20	09	01	30	13.51
10. Tare	Terminalia bell ^e erica	-	01	-	-	01	00.45
11. Bidiru	Bambusa bambus	-	-	01	-	01	00.45
12. Neralu	Syzygium cumini	-	01	-	-	01	00.45
13. Kakke	Cassia festula Cassia fistula	-	01	-	-	01	00.45
						222	

We ~~have~~ chose~~d~~ Kabbe village in which plantations ~~are~~^{were} done in 1995. ~~The objective of selecting this village is to see~~ if there is^{were} any change in the planting after the visit of mid term evaluation team of WGFP (in Feb 1995).

As the enumeration shows, there is definitely a drastic change in the species planted. A total of 14 species ~~are~~^{were} planted under MPP. This is a ~~good~~ positive sign. However, the exotic Acacia still occupies 62 percent of the planted species. Obviously, the emphasis on commercial species is still very ~~much~~ strong even after Mid Term evaluation.

The VFC feels that it was not involved ^{in the process of} ~~while~~ planting. The people ~~kept~~^{had} high hopes on ~~the~~ JFPM. But when the VFC ^{was} ~~is~~ ignored, they ~~have~~ lost ~~the~~ interest. The villagers were told that by planting acacia, the VFC ~~will~~^{would} be able to earn money within a short period, and became self reliant. (10)

III. GAP PLANTING AND ENRICHMENT

The zoning process has categorised the forests in Western Ghats. The MPP are established only in zone IV with very little forest cover (0.25 percent canopy). In Zone II & III which has some forest cover the WGFP intends to do gap planting and enrichment (Now known as mostly open areas).

According to the WGFP document (Pg. 12).

"Three models ^{exist} ~~are~~ for gap planting and enrichment of the natural forest. These models are in response to the absence of regeneration of valuable timber species in over 75% of the area. In all cases indigenous species appropriate to the forest types will be used, with ^{the} ~~an~~ aim of restoring the 'Natural' mix of the forest".

In order to check these project claims we conducted the enumeration of Gap Plantations in two regions.

CASE STUDY-I: REGION KANCHIKAI

NAME OF THE VILLAGE: KANCHIKAI
 FOREST RANGE : JANMANE
 FOREST DIVISION : SIRSI

AREA: 22 Ha
 F.S.NO.: 346
 ODA GAP PLANTATION
 YEAR: 1994

Quadrat# size 20m x 20m

Common Name (Local Name)	Botanical Name of the species	QI	QII	QIII	QIV	Total	%
<u>PLANTED</u>							
1. Mango	Mangifera indica	02	-	-	-	02	0.72
2. Gali	Casur ^a ina equisetifolia	01	-	-	03	04	1.45
3. Aala	Ficus bengalensis	01	-	-	-	01	0.36
4. Acacia	Acacia aur ^e culiformis	58	73	58	62	251	91.60
5. Nelli	Phyllanthus emblica Emblica officinalis	-	01	01	03	<u>05</u> 274	1.82
<u>NATURAL</u>							
1. Bikke	Gardenia sp	02	-	01	-	03	1.71
2. Ichalu	Phoenix sylvestris	21	24	09	14	68	38.85
3. Koulu	Careya arborea Cariya arboris	15	24	10	13	62	35.42
4. Pille	Eugenia sp	02	-	01	01	04	2.28
5. Nelli	Phyllanthus emblica	01	-	02	02	05	2.85
6. Gonasalu	Zizyⁱpus sp	01	04	01	04	10	5.71
7. Honalu	Terminalia paniculata	01	-	01	-	02	1.14
8. Honne	Pterocarpus marsupium	02	-	-	-	02	1.14
9. Matti	Terminalia tomentosa	-	01	02	02	05	2.85
10. Salle	Cordia myxa	-	01	01	-	02	1.14
11. Mulle	Zizy ^{i/h} pus jujuba	-	01	01	-	02	1.14
12. Nurukalu	Buchanania lanzan	-	01	01	01	03	1.71
13. Kare	Canthium parviflorum	-	01	01	01	03	1.71
14. Kumusalu	Calycopteris floribunda	-	01	00	03	<u>04</u>	2.28
						175	

The enumeration clearly shows that almost 91.60% of the species is acacia, ^{an} ~~the~~ exotics. ~~No doubt there has been~~ The ~~5 more species~~ of indigenous species ^{planted account for a very low} ~~however their~~ percentage ^{is less.}

There exist 14 varieties of local plant species in the same region indicating the existence of good root stock as a base for natural regeneration.

Obviously, the gap plantations are geared towards extension of monoculture plantations in the tropical forests of western ghats.

CASE STUDY-II : REGION SHEEGEHALLI

NAME OF THE VILLAGE: SHEEGEHALLI
 FOREST RANGE : JANMANE
 FOREST DIVISION : SIRSI

ODA GAP PLANTATION
 YEAR: 1994
 AREA: N.A.

Quadrante size 20m x 20m

Common Name (Local Name)	Botanical Name of the species	QI	QII	QIII	QIV	Total	%	Mort- ality
<u>PLANTED</u>								
1. Acacia	Acacia auriculiformis	38	40	48	43	159	79.89	20+ 15+ 6+5
2. Teak	Tectona grandis	04	07	03	03	17	08.54	
3. Mango	Mangifera indica	01	02	-	02	05	02.51	
4. Nelli	Phyllanthus emblica <i>Emblia officinalis</i>	01	01	02	03	07	03.51	
5. Tari	Terminalia bellerica	02	02	03	04	11	05.52	
						199		
<u>NATURAL</u>								
1. Kumusalu	Calycopteris floribunda	03	01	01	02	07	04.27	
2. Matti	Terminalia tomentosa	04	02	04	03	13	06.07	
3. Honalu	Terminalia paniculata	23	39	18	16	96	44.85	
4. Bidiru	^a Bombusa bambus	02	04	-	03	09	04.2	
5. Salle	Cordia myxa	02	-	06	02	10	04.6	
6. Gonasalu	ⁱ Zizyphus sp.	06	-	08	04	18	08.41	
7. Koulu	^a Cariya arborea <i>Careya arborea</i>	10	10	05	05	30	15.00	
8. Kare	^s Cariya carandas <i>Cariya carandas</i>	04	02	-	01	07	03.2	
9. Nurakalu	ⁿ Buchanania lanzan	03	-	04	-	07	03.2	
10. Nelli	Phyllanthus emblica	01	02	02	-	05	02.33	
11. Sheege	ⁿ Acacia concinna	01	01	-	-	02	00.93	
12. Parigi	ⁱ Zizyphus jujuba	-	02	02	01	05	02.33	
13. Kasaraka	Strychnos nuxvomica	-	02	-	01	03	01.40	
14. Basri	Ficus infectoria	-	-	01	-	01	00.46	
						214		

The above enumeration shows that 79.89% is planted with exotic acacia. Teak occupies second place with 8.54%. There has been an attempt to plant indigenous species, however their percentage is between 3 to 5 percent.

The enumeration also shows that there exists 14 local species in the same region. This indicates the possibilities of natural regeneration with good root stock.

There is high ^{?! mortality} morality of acacia saplings. This is due to the opposition of local people to exotics. They have destroyed these saplings expressing their anger against 'enrichment' plantations.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The case studies enumerated with the facts from the villages clearly demonstrates that the rhetoric of conserving biodiversity under WGFP is a myth. The WGFP (1991) says (Pg.12)

"None of the models are for pure or monocropped plantations and therefore should not be regarded as prescriptive but as a basis for development and adaptation in different places and circumstances".

The enumeration of plantations established under WGFP has clearly shown that most of the regions areas are planted with 60 to 80% of monocropped species. The most surprising aspect is that Multi Purpose Plantations, which are to meet local needs has concentrated on those species which cannot fulfil the subsistence biomass needs of the forest dwelling communities.

The narrow approach of the KFD has been one of the basic flaws that has already led to failure of WGFP. ^{According to} Sharadchandra M. Lele (1993) ~~puts it~~ "Forest Department officials have attempted to restrict the scope of JFPM type ~~initiatives~~ ^{initiatives} and the ~~modifications, in tenure and access following from them~~ to 'Degraded' forest lands, defined by forest officials with less than 30% tree canopy. The sole objective thus appears to be to somehow get tree cover back on the land. This single objective is likely to be at variance with the interest of users. Imposing it is likely to lead to the failure of the programme, or to benefit only those who have the ability to satisfy their needs in other ways; it is therefore impractical and ^{arguably} ~~agreeably~~ regressive".

sentence seems to have been used

The singular emphasis on timber species defeats the objective of multipurpose plantations. The forests provide employment through non timber forest produce like cane, gum, resin etc., (See Appendix II). It is very essential to regenerate those species that are complimentary to agricultural systems.

Similarly the gap plantations have become monoculture plantations. Instead of 'enriching' the area, they may destroy the biodiversity of the region. The gaps in the forests are filled with monoculture ^{species} which may dominate other local species, leading to destruction of biodiversity.

In these plantations indigenous species are planted but their percentage is less than 5 in the overall planted area.

These analysis clearly indicate^e the need to reorient the plantation concepts and unless a major shift ^{to} planting ~~of~~ ^{new}

indigenous species is given priority, the WGFP may ^{pave the} pay way for establishment of monoculture plantations in a rich biodiverse region.

One aspect that is revealed by enumeration is the possibility of existence of high root stock and opportunity for natural regeneration. This should be given importance in future.

The mixed plantations of indigenous trees may take ^a long time to get established, ^{However,} ~~however~~ "These three dimensional forestry is the antithesis of destructive one crop farming or the planting of single trees, which being monocultures, have to be isolated from natural factors". (Douglas & Hart 1976).

The ODA plantations emphasised ~~or~~ removal of residual stumps of trees, shrubs and other vegetational growth and burning them. In the same area quick growing Acacia auriculiformis is planted. The enumeration shows, ~~the~~ preference for the exotic or commercial species like teak. Malhotra et.al., (1991) have shown in their study that "These plantations are non ⁱ browsable, and hence can survive, while all other species are soon eradicated. They hardly yield any amount of useful product for local communities".

However, their study showed that the people can get more biomass from a naturally regenerating forest ⁱ than from plantations. In fact there are many examples of such naturally regenerated areas in western ghats. But the basic question is whether WGFP wants to learn from these successful facts ⁱ

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APPENDIX-I

(EXCERPTS FROM CTE: REPORT JAN MARCH 1994: SIRSI/DELHI)

NAME OF THE VILLAGE: HITLAHALLI
TALUKA : YELLAPUR (UTTARA KANNADA)
FOREST DIVISION : YELLAPUR

I. DESCRIPTION OF VILLAGE FAMILIES

There are about 70 families in the village. The total population is 765 (1991 census), literates-691, illiterates 74. Out of 70 families nearly half ^{are} of them belong to Havyak Brahmins and almost ~~cent percent of them~~ ^{100%} are literate. Most of the village land belongs to these people which includes paddy fields, areca gardens and betta land (semi forest land). Majority of them possess biogass plant^s, so they need ^{only a small} ~~very less~~ quantity of fuel wood which is supplied mainly by their own betta lands. Fodder for cattle is also collected through private land. [?] (Very cattle is not allowed to graze outside during summer months. Few of them allow their cattle to graze mainly during rainy season. Almost seventy percent of the cattle population belong to ^{this} these community.

^{which is the} ~~other~~ ^{35 families} half consist of Naiks, Sherugars, Gowdas and Siddis etc. In ~~these category~~ ^{among them.} Illiteracy is common. Many of them are landless labourers. Their cattle depend on forest for grazing. Fuelwood supply is also mainly from the forest. Many of them depend on ^{major and minor} forests for honey, wild spice^s ~~and~~ ^{for} fruit collection, ^{and cane.} ~~bamboo and other agricultural implements~~ are furnished through ~~major or minor forest areas.~~

Women and Forests

The dependency of women on ^{the} forest is high, especially for landless families. They collect fuelwood from the jungle. Daily ^{every day} They move around to gather dried twigs, roots, branches etc. They collect leaves to feed their cattle. Dried leaves and cow dung are collected from minor forests which are used for making Farm Yard Manure (FYM).

Collection of green leaves, vegetables, curry leaves, mushrooms, wild fruits etc., is done mainly by women folk of the village. In minor jungles fruits like Nelli (Embllica officinalis), Caramboola (Carissa carandas) etc., are collected. These fruits are the main raw material in preparing pickles, and jams. Many poor women collect leaves of Butea monosperma which are used as plates for eating food.

II. ODA PLANTATIONS

This year more than 30 hectares of minor forest land ^{was} ~~is~~ planted with teak in survey No. 200. Thousands of teak plants were planted during June-July ~~month~~ (1993). Barbed wire fence was erected around the plot to protect ^{them} against human and cattle intrusion. ^{This clearly is} ~~Thus, it is~~ an attempt to alineate part of common property resources ~~from~~ the villagers.

The hidden objectives of these plantations are:

- 1) To increase plant/Tree coverage on the area,
- 2) To stop animal grazing and fuelwood collection.

III. NEEDS

In survey number 200 it was a minor forest before fencing.

This land was mainly useful for:

- 1) Cattle grazing during rainy season since grass used to grow here.
- 2) Fuelwood ~~collection~~ ^{and} dried plant parts were collected from this land mainly by agricultural labourers of the village.
- 3) Villagers used to collect thorny plants (for fencing). Minor agricultural implements were prepared by using various kinds of plants that were grown like Kare (Carthium? parviflorum) for fencing, Gonagilu (Canthium sp for fencing), Matti (Terminalia spp), Honne (Pterocarpus marsupium), Green leaves (soppu) and dry leaves (darku) were collected from this area by some farmers who are nearer to the area. This area had lot of wild fruit bearing shrubs. Many of them giving sweet fruits like 'Paragi' (Kari mulle) and Bilimulle hannu etc. The other usefull plant which ^{was} grown here were Embllica officinalis, village women collect fruits of this plant in particular season of the year for pickles.

Today due to the fencing the access to the area is curtailed due to ODA plantations. Fuelwood collection and grazing has become impossible.

As the community members say, the area should be used for growing species like,

- (1) Timber and fuelwoods
- (2) Fodder and bamboos
- (3) Green leaves (soppu) and dry leaves (darku) from the area
- (4) Getting fruits like Jack (Artocarpus heterophyllus), Kokam etc.,
- (5) Other uses like getting soapnuts (Terminalia chebula) etc.

E
IV. AFFECTS OF PLANTATIONS

On People:

- 1) Primary ^e affect is ^{on} ~~to the~~ people who are nearer to the area. They can't use the traditional pathways, because of the fencing. They have to walk longer distances. The plantation has disrupted common bridle path used by villagers.
- 2) Fuelwood collection has become impossible due to fencing. If teak plants are allowed to grow continuously then other fuelwood ^{species} ~~plants~~ will not grow under the shade of this tree.
- 3) Animal grazing and fodder collection ^{have} ~~has~~ become impossible due to the fencing and teak plantation. Nothing will grow under the shade of the teak plant. Perhaps the fodder availability will get reduced.
- 4) Villagers are not free to collect timber for house and for agricultural implements. They are not allowed to collect thorny shrubs and poles for fencing.
- 5) Village women can not collect the fruits like Embluca officinalis, paragi or even natural dye like Terminalia chebula.

On Cattle:

Today cattle can't graze in the area. The available grazing area is reduced due to the fencing in ^{of} 30ha of ^{land} ~~area~~. This has created pressure on the other forest areas and poor people. In ~~this area~~ ^{belonging to poorer people} cattle / ~~from weaker sections~~ ^{in this area} used to graze during summer and rainy seasons. Reduction in the availability of fodder creates problems in maintaining livestock. In order to

fulfill their fodder needs the cattle try to graze on farmers fields. It has created dispute among the people. Such cases are becoming more common now. ODA plantation has aggravated the tension in the village due to increased pressure on grazing land.

On Ecology:

Growth and development of naturally regenerating plants is hindered. This land mainly consisted of grasses, shrubs, herbs and many type^s of deciduous trees. Thorny bushes themselves controlled the animal grazing ^{to a} certain extent and thus allowed natural regeneration of deciduous trees like Embluca officinalis, Honne (Pterocarpus marsupium), Matti, (Terminalia paniculata, Terminalia chebula).

Medicinal plants like Holarrhena antidysenterica will not grow here if other plants start to suppress it.

Teak plants will certainly suppress all other forms of the life including plants, animals, insects and microb^s. Nothing will grow underneath teak plants. So various needs of the farm and family will not be met.

V. Initiation of new forestry programme (WGFP) is done mainly by forest department. During ^{the months of} July-August ^(which year?) month teak plantations were established in the village. People became aware about this programme ^{only} very recently. In the beginning of ~~the~~ November 1993 villagers heard about the JFPM. Village Forest guards visited each houses^s and collected name^s of each family member. They told ^{them} that they were going to form ^a Village Forest Committee ^{was to be formed} members for JFPM. When ^{the} meeting was conducted, villagers were hinted about

~~the Joint Forest Programme.~~ Detail information regarding the project ^{was not shared} ~~is not known~~ to many people.

The First meeting of ^{the} Joint Forest Committee was held on 28th November 1993. This meeting was conducted nearly for two hours in the evening between 5 to 7 p.m. The officials were DFO, from Yellapur Forest Division and Mundgod Division, RFO (Range Forest Officer) Manchikeri, Foresters and Guards (Local). About 50 villagers attended the meeting which include^d former Mandal Pradhans (President) of the area. Both higher and lower class people euqally attended the meeting.

Village women did not attended the meeting and there was no ^a women member present ^{at} ~~in~~ the meeting.

ASSURANCE GIVEN BY FOREST DEPARTMENT

- 1) About the programme: Information regarding the programme and about Joint Forest Committee. Members are free to express their opinion regarding the improvement of forest and needs of the villagers etc.
- 2) Financial facility and plant supply is done through department. Farmers can also plant with the help of government assistance. Initial financial assistance is mainly through government.
- 3) In the selected area, teak and other type^s of (mainly acacia) timber and fuelwood plants are already planted. Other type^s of desired plants will be cultivated if farmers committee members desire (like fruit plants, bamboo, kokam plants which give green leaves, soppu and darku etc..).

the canopy cover is

4) Initially those areas are selected where ~~plant density is~~ *in degraded* ~~below 0.25 or semi-forest land, can also be used for this purpose if the farmers desire to cultivate it.~~

5) Sharing the forest income or out put is according to the rule, generally for timber plants 50% goes to department, 25% is distributed to the village forest committee and other 25% can be shared among the village committee members.

OPINION OF PEOPLE

1) D.T. HEGDE, Jalimane (Chairman of the village forest committee and former Mandal Pradhan ~~the~~ *the* area): "About *the* committee- It is good if *the* government and public people are equally involved in forest management. But *the* committee does not have any power over *any* officials. All power is with government officials.

The Committee can't decide anything against government officials.

Participation: Farmers can suggest *measures of* ~~about~~ *for* improvement ~~of the~~ forest planting. Plant supply is done mainly through forest department.

2) G.I. Bhat, Committee Member: About *the* committee- It is really a positive movement if public is involved, it gives good opportunity to the villagers to improve and share the forest products.

Participation: Farmers can plant any desired species with the assistance of government.

3) GAJANANA HEGDE (member): About *the* committee- Committees do nothing except giving some suggestion to the government.

Participation: Not exactly known. He will plant if proper assistance is given in any type of land, provided ^{he gets} ~~that~~ ^{from} some returns ~~he should get out of~~ it.

- 4) RAJU SHERUGAR (Member): ^{Did} Not participate in the meeting. No ideas regarding the role of committee.

Improvement: He will plant, any type of plant provided that he should earn something from it.

- 5) MAHADEVI HEGDE: No idea regarding committee or improvement.

- 6) PARU NAIK: She heard something about Joint Forest Programme. Committee members will be definitely helpful in improving the forest. ^{She} wants to cultivate useful plants like mango, jack, kokam, soapnut plants etc. ^{Provided} that she should get some fruits/or products.

APPENDIX II

(Excerpts from "Working Together: State, People and Forest of Uttara Kannada", SPWD, Delhi)

PLANT SPECIES WHICH GIVE DIFFERENT TYPES OF NON-WOOD FOREST PRODUCTS (IN UTTARA KANNADA DISTRICT, KARNATAKA)

Plants giving grasses, bamboos and canes:

i) GRASSES

1. Garike	Cynodon dactylon
2. Lemon grass	Cymbopogon citratus
3. Guinea grass	Panicum maximum
4. Napier grass	Pennisetum purpureum
5. Khus grass	Vetiveria zizanoides

ii) BAMBOOS

1. Female bamboo	Bambusa arundinacea
2. Yellow bamboo	Bambusa vulgaris
3. Male bamboo	Dendrocalamus strictus
4. Wate	Ochlandra rheedii
5. Chinwa bamboo	Oxytenanthera monostigma
6. Shame	Oxytenanthera stocksii

iii) CANES

1. Naga betta	Calamus rotang
2. Halu bettha	Calamus pseudotenuis
3. Handi bettha	Calamus thwaitessi

Plants and parts species used as food:

1. Mushroom	Entire plant	Agaricus compestris
2. Bael	Fruit juice	Aegle marmelos
3. Cashew	Fruit & nut	Anacardium occidentale
4. Jackfruit	Fruit	Artocarpus heterophyllus
5. Watehuli	Fruit	Artocarpus lakoocha
6. Nurukalu	Fruit	Buchanania lanzan
7. Kauli	Fruit	Carissa carandas
8. Shalle	Fruit	Cordia myxa

9. Male bamboo	rhizome	<i>Dendrocalamus strictus</i>
10. Amla	Fruit	<i>Emblica officinalis</i>
11. Uppage	Fruit	<i>Garcinia cambogia</i>
12. Amasola	Fruit	<i>Garcinia indica</i>
13. Mahua	Flower & fruit	<i>Madhuca indica</i> (<i>M. longifolia</i>)
14. Mango	Fruit & tender nuts	<i>Mangifera indica</i>
15. Ichalu	Fruit	<i>Phoenix sylvestris</i>
16. Guddegeru	Fruit	<i>Semecarpus anacardium</i>
17. Amate	Nuts	<i>Spondias pinnata</i>
18. Jamun	Fruits	<i>Syzygium cumini</i>
19. Tamarind	Fruit	<i>Tamarindus indica</i>
20. Parige	Fruit	<i>Zizyphus oenopia</i>
21. Bilimulla	Fruit	<i>Zizyphus rugosa</i>

Plant species which give gums, resins, tannins and dyes:

1. Khair	Gum & dye	<i>Acacia catechu</i>
2. Bage	Gum	<i>Albizia lebeck</i>
3. Cashew	Gum	<i>Anacardium occidentale</i>
4. Deindal	Gum & tannin	<i>Anogeissus latifolia</i>
5. Neem	Gum	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>
6. Jack	Dye	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>
7. Dhupa	Resin	<i>Boswellia serrata</i>
8. Muthuga	Dye & gum	<i>Butea monosperma</i>
9. Kakke	Tannin	<i>Cassia fistula</i>
10. Gali mara	Dye	<i>Casuarina equisetifolia</i>
11. Amala	Tannin	<i>Emblica officinalis</i>
12. Gojjal	Gum & dye	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i>
13. Henna	Dye	<i>Lawsonia inermis</i>
14. Kumkum	Dye	<i>Mallotus philippensis</i>
15. Mango	Gum	<i>Mangifera indica</i>
16. Parijatha	Dye	<i>Nyctanthes arbor-tristis</i>
17. Honne	Gum & dye	<i>Pterocarpus marsupium</i>
18. Matti	Gum & Tannin	<i>Terminalia alata</i>
19. Bilimatthi	Tannin	<i>Terminalia arjuna</i>
20. Thari	Gum & Tannin	<i>Terminalia bellirica</i>
21. Alale	Tannin	<i>Terminalia chebula</i>
22. Saldhupa	Resin	<i>Vateria indica</i>

Plant species yielding oilseeds, oil and oilseed cake:

1. Neem	Azadirachta indica
2. Honne	Calophyllum inophyllum
3. Karpura	Cinnamomum camphora
4. Cinnamon	Cinnamomum zeylanicum
5. Uppage	Garcinia cambogia
6. Lemongrass	Cymbopogon citratus
7. Amasola	Garcinia indica
8. Torate	Hydnocarpus laurifolia
9. Mahua	Madhuca indica
10. Nagasampige	Mesua ferrea
11. Campa	Michelia champaca
12. Bakula	Mimusops elangi
13. Honge	Pongamia pinnata
14. Sandal tree	Santalum album
15. Sagadi	Schleichera oleosa
16. Saldhupa	Vateria indica
17. Khus	Vetiveria zizanioides

Plant species yielding fibres and silk cotton:

1. Kathale	Agave americana
2. Buralu	Bombax ^a malabaricum
3. Muthuga	Butea monosperma
4. Ekke	Calotropis gigantea
5. Kavalu	Careya arborea
6. Bhaine	Caryota urens
7. Banyan	Ficus benghalensis
8. Peepal	Ficus religiosa
9. Kedage	Pandanus tectorius
10. Dhaman	Grewia tiliifolia
11. Charcoal tree	Trema orientalis

Medicinal Plant species

1. Khaira	Acacia catechu
2. Shige	Acacia concinna
3. Uttarane	Achyranthes aspera
4. Vacha	Acorus calamus
5. Vasuka	Adhatoda vasica zeylanica
6. Bael	Aegle marmelos
7. Saptaparni	Alstonia scholaris
8. Mullu harive	Amaranthus spinosus
9. Kadamba	Anthocephalus cadamba
10. Machipatre	Artemesia indica
11. Shatavari	Asparagus racemosus
12. Neem	Azadirachta indica
13. Mandava	Bauhinia variegata
14. Muthuga	Butea monosperma
15. Patpale	Bryophyllum calycinum
16. Ekke	Calotropis gigantea
17. Kakke	Cassia fistula
18. Chakramarda	Cassia tora
19. Brahmi	Centella asiatica
20. Aranya jeeraka	Centratherum anthelminticum
21. Karpura	Cinnamomum camphora
22. Dalchinni	Cinnamomum zeylanicum ⁱ
23. Taggi	Clerodendrum infortunatum
24. Challe	Cordia myxa
25. Garike	Cynodon dactylon
26. Keru	Cyperus rotundus
27. Datura	Datura metel
28. Dharbe	Desmostachys bipinnata
29. Bringaraj	Eclipta alba
30. Amala	Embllica officinalis
31. Halivana	Erythrina indica
32. Snuhi	Euphorbia hirta
33. Aal	Ficus benghalensis
34. Atthi	Ficus glomerata
35. Peepal	Ficus religiosa

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 36. Amasola | Garcinia indica |
| 37. Bikke | Gardenia gummifera |
| 38. Gowrihu | Gloriosa superba |
| 39. Shivani | Gmelina arborea |
| 40. Balamuri | Helicteres isora |
| 41. Sugandhi | Hemidesmus indicus |
| 42. Kutaja | Holarrhena antidysenterica |
| 43. Torate | Hydnocarpus laurifolia |
| 44. Xavana Eranda | Jatropha curcas |
| 45. Henna | Lawsonia inermis |
| 46. Mahua | Madhuca indica |
| 47. Kumkum | Mallotus philippensis |
| 48. Nagasampige | Mesua ferrea |
| 49. Campa | Michelia champaca |
| 50. Curry leaf | Murraya koenigii |
| 51. Bakula | Mimusops elangi |
| 52. Parijatha | Nyctanthes arbortristis |
| 53. Tulsi | Ocimum sanctum |
| 54. Surgi | Ochrocarpus longifolius |
| 55. Kedige | Pandanus tectorius |
| 56. Ichalu | Phoenix sylvestris |
| 57. Bhumyamblica | Phyllanthus niruri |
| 58. Pepper | Piper nigrum |
| 59. Hippali | Piper longum |
| 60. Honge | Pongamia pinnata |
| 61. Putranjivi | Putranjiva roxburghii |
| 62. Sarpagandhi | Rauwolfia serpentina |
| 63. Sandal | Santalum album |
| 64. Ashok | Saraca indica |
| 65. Antawala | Sapindus emarginata |
| 66. Keru | Semecarpus anacardium |
| 67. Bala, Albala, Mabala | Sida sp |
| 68. Kakamachi | Solanum nigrum |
| 69. Kasarka | Strychnos nuxvomica |
| 70. Jamun | Syzygium cumini |
| 71. Maddarasa | Tabernaemontana heyneana |
| 72. Tamarind | Tamarindus indica |

73. Bilimatti	<i>Terminalia arjuna</i>
74. Thari	<i>Terminalia bellirica</i>
75. Alale	<i>Terminalia chebula</i>
76. Amrithaballi	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>
77. Khus	<i>Vetiveria zizanoides</i>
78. Nityapushpi	<i>Vinca rosea</i>
79. Lakki	<i>Vitex negundo</i>
80. Karilakki	<i>Vitex trifolia</i>
81. Ashwagandha	<i>Withania somnifera</i>
82. Aramadlu	<i>Zanthoxylum ovalifolium</i>
83. Jamun	<i>Zanthoxylum rhetsa</i>

CONTENTS

Foreward by Vandana Shiva

Preface

Summary

Chapter 1 WESTERN GHATS FORESTRY PROJECT

A Sugar Coated Pill

Chapter 2 THE STRINGS OF ODA AID

The pen is mightier than the axe?

Chapter 3 THE STINGS OF AID

Participation is the rhetoric: stinging marginal groups is the reality

Chapter 4 THE IMPACT OF WGFP

Destroying the biodiversity of Tropical Forests

Chapter 5 SAVING TROPICAL FORESTS

Through commercialisation or conservation?

The Balance Sheet of WGFP

References

Preface

The Western Ghat Forestry Project (WGFP) is one of the biggest forestry programmes funded by British Government through Overseas Development Administration (ODA). This project has had major shift in its objectives and contents due to severe criticism from independent forestry experts and NGOs (Non governmental Organisations). At the project formulation stage, criticism focused on the top down approach of the project, its commercial orientation and the resulting exclusion of local people.

Due to the pressures of the NGOs and increased criticisms the project shifted towards the 'bottom up' process of forest development incorporating 'peoples participation' and conserving the ecology as major objectives. The final document of WGFP has co-opted the critique of TFAP (Tropical Forestry Action Plan) and absorbed the terminology of 'peoples participation'. The document is very well written and at first look at reader is impressed by the concern for ecology and the attempt to involve people at in forestry activities.

A closer look at the WGFP reveals the hidden agenda of perpetuating the commercialisation of forests under the sugar coating of JFPM (Joint Forest Planning and Management). It talks of local participation in conserving the forests but at the same time it also prescribes 'models' for afforestation. Before the people can participate, these 'models' are already part of the project that perpetuate the commercial forestry values in Western Ghats. But the ODA, claims that these 'prescriptions' are only 'suggestions'.

The WGFP is based on flawed assumptions. It blames the poor for forest destruction. It fails to address the root causes of deforestation in the Western Ghats. The present economic and political forces responsible for deforestation is ignored, instead it puts the blame on forest dwellers. Secondly the project is an extension of the earlier Karnataka Social Forestry Project (KSFP) funded by ODA that has serious negative impact on poorest groups and forest ecosystems.

The WGFP has invented the new concept of 'zoning' the forests through which the participation of people is restricted to only degraded areas of zone IV. It denies the access to forest resources by restricting peoples participation to a very limited area. Through the 'zoning' process the project makes way for capital intensive monoculture plantations under the guise of 'enrichment' and 'gap' plantations.

This booklet analyses the project and also looks at the implementation of the project in the forest region of Uttara Kannada district in Karnataka.

The implementation of the WGFP is a unique case history of 'forcing' people to participate in joint forest planning and management (JFPM). It has compelled people to be part of the monoculture plantations and it has also deprived people access to natural resources.

The WGFP has led to disasters at the level of forestry and people. At the forestry level it has destroyed the biodiversity of the tropical forests. At the level of society, it has affected the poorest groups by depriving them of land to produce food. It has led to evacuation of the landless people from their survival base.

In spite of this disastrous implications, the project still continues and it is extended to other forest regions. Recently a drama was enacted in Uttara Kannada in which the 'peoples participation' was shown to the team of mid term review mission from ODA, UK. Being captive 'guests' of the forest department they were forced to see the 'right'

villages. The team members saw the 'successful' implementation of the project. The 'top down' approach was shown as a 'bottom up' process of peoples participation. The team obviously will recommend the continuation of the project, but they will never understand the mute suffering of people who have suffered from this project. The WGFP has annihilated peoples initiative under the name of JFPM. This is an attempt to document the impact and assessment of the ODA funded forestry project in the tropical forest areas of Western Ghats in Karnataka, India.

Critique of Western Ghat Forestry Programme - Summary

1. The ODA funded forestry project puts the blame of forest destruction on the forest dwellers. It ignores the larger economic and political process that is the primary cause of destruction of tropical forests. The project envisages peoples participation: however, in practice, it restricts access to forest resources through 'zoning'. The project is a continuation of commercial forestry into the tropical forests.
2. The aid is attached with strings. The consultancies and training of foresters in UK helps to repatriate the aid. The most disastrous string is the perpetuation of commercial forestry through this project.
3. At the implementation stage the project has forced the forest dwellers to 'participate' in commercial forestry activities. It has evacuated poorest people from their food-growing land. It has violated the human rights by denying people access to their survival base.
4. Implementing the project has led to monoculture plantations which have eroded the biodiversity of the tropical forests in the the Western Ghats, in addition to harming local people.
5. The WGFP has become the "Death Machine" that destroys tropical forests and has disastrous impact on forest dwellers. The need is to replace the commercial orientation of the project by conservation forestry to protect the interest of forests and people.

FORWARD

Protecting Tropical Forests: Conserving *What* with *Whom*?

That tropical forests need saving is no longer a debate. Local communities have been saying this for decades and have even been willing to sacrifice their lives to save these forests, as in the case of Chipko and Appiko. Now non-local groups also have a new interest in saving the tropical forests of the Third World either because they are a treasure-chest of biodiversity and hold the genetic resources for food and drugs, or because they can act as sinks for the carbon dioxide that has accumulated in the atmosphere due to overconsumption of fossil fuels. In fact, both international treaties that were the most concrete achievement of the Earth Summit in Rio, the Biodiversity Convention and the Climate change Convention imply that tropical forest conservation is an important part of the solution.

While older conflicts over forest resources used to be between conservation and exploitation, current conflicts are between different models of conservation. For local communities, forests need to be conserved to provide ecological stability for local ecosystems and to provide resources necessary for the survival of local people. For non-local interest groups, tropical forests need to be conserved to serve as mines raw material and sinks for pollution.

Associated with different conservation objectives are different concepts and understanding of participation. Conservation, it is now recognised, cannot be a matter of policing; it must be based on participation. But preferred partnership models differ for local communities and national and global agencies. From the heart of a region of India where local people have been engaged in struggles to protect their forests and their rights for more than a century, including the 'forest satyagrahas' of the 1930s and the more recent Appiko movement, we now get a timely publication that raises a debate about 'which conservation? Which partnership?'

As the report indicates the old enclosure of the commons that was achieved by forest reservations is being deepened by new enclosures of the commons to be achieved by zonation. It is in fact this exclusion of local communities from forest use and management that is shrouded by their inclusion in the management of Zone IV which constitutes a mere 1% of the entire forest area. The exposure of this force of participation is the focus of this report, in order to ensure that authentic policies that ensure people's real participation are evolved.

Vandana Shiva
April 1995

Aid with Strings and Stings

*A Critical Review
of ODA Forestry Programme in Tropical Forests
of Western Ghats, Karnataka, India*

by

Pandurang Hegde

interlinked, with the biomass and energy needs of agriculture being met through forest resources.

The commercialisation of forests in the Western Ghats during the colonial era is the primary cause for rapid deforestation. The colonial regime established tea and coffee estates after clearfelling tropical forests in the Western Ghats. In Uttara Kannada, forest destruction can be traced to the British rule from 1802. Before the conquest of this region, the availability of wild pepper from the forests attracted British and Dutch traders. It was known as Pepper Queen. Unfortunately within half a century of British rule the area was exploited to harvest the best timber, the teak. The credit for converting the Pepper Queen into the Timber Queen goes to the resource hungry colonial rulers (Shiva, V. 1991). They exhausted natural teak from the forests by 1850s. This is recorded by British Conservator of forests of Uttara Kannada (Cleghorn: 1861). Thanks to colonial might and power, what could not be achieved by local people for centuries was achieved in a matter of half a century.

In this process of commercialising natural resources of tropical forests, the rights of communities were usurped by the colonial rulers. The community forests resources were taken away by the British. By taking control of the peoples resource base, the seeds of alienation of forests were sown. The conflict over forest resources was resisted by people in 1831 with the launch of spontaneous struggles to gain control over the resources (Campbell, 1883).

The same historical factors still play a major role even after two centuries. The commercial objectives of the state forest policy in the post-independence era has increased many fold leading to deforestation on large scale. Developmental projects like the construction of hydroelectric dams, forestry (monoculture plantations) and the promotion of forest based industries have put extra pressure on the available forest resources. In spite of these additional pressures, the forests have to contribute almost 80% of the total forest revenue to the state treasury. As a result of commercial forestry policy, the agricultural system is adversely affected. In the 1980s, local people reacted against such commercial exploitation of the forests, launching the Chipko-Appiko Andolan (Movement) (Hegde P. 1988) which spread spontaneously throughout the entire south of India. As a response to such resistance, the deforestation rate has decreased. However, the forests are still exploited to earn revenue. It is in this context that the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) of United Kingdom is implementing the Western Ghat Forestry Project (WGFP) in Uttara Kannada. The total project cost is Rs.86 crores or 24 million pounds. This is one of the biggest forestry projects funded by ODA, UK.

Western Ghats Forestry Project (WGFP)

The Western Ghats Forestry Project is intended to provide financial assistance to conserve the forests of the Western Ghats and was initiated in 1988. The entire planning process of WGFP took three years. Various project documents, each referred to by a different colour, reveal the process of contradiction from the stage of inception. The first document, known as "Red Book" and prepared by Karnataka Forest Department (KFD: 1988), was not made publicly available. It was leaked to concerned citizens in United Kingdom, however, and passed on to Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Karnataka. The anti-people stance of the "Red Book" (KFD: 1988) and the anti-ecological ideas embodied in its proposals were strongly criticised. A sustained campaign by NGOs in Britain and India forced the KFD to rewrite the project proposal. A year later, consultants from the United Kingdom produced the "Yellow Book" (OFI Consultants; 1980) incorporating their 'superior' and 'scientific' forestry knowledge.

The UK-based experts gave 'prescriptions' to conserve forestry resources of tropical forests. The main contribution of these so called forestry experts is that of introducing the concept of 'zones' in the project area. While supporting the ideas of "Red Book", the "Yellow Book" further strengthened the anti-people stance of the project. The reductionist 'scientific forestry' approach ignored the basic linkages between diverse resource functions of the forestry as survival base for forest dwelling communities. The arrogance of the experts can be gauged from the following sentences in the "Yellow Book" (OFI Consultants; 1989:26).

"Management tasks would be to withdraw privileges if good management practices for the relevant forest tract are not adhered to: provide compensation or alternative sources of fuel, fodder and green manure; arrange management contracts subject to forest legislation so that the farmers and their organisations can participate in the rehabilitation and maintenance of the lands they have helped to degrade".

The authors have missed the real nature of deforestation in the Western Ghats by putting the blame of degradation on forest dwellers.

These experts, coming on a short holiday-cum-consultancy tour to India, give out prescriptions that are socio-ecologically flawed and racist in their character. They can never understand the perspective of forestry from the point of local forest dwellers who have co-existed with forests for centuries. It is a myth that these experts would help to conserve the tropical forests of the Western Ghats, when they had in fact destroyed the same forest resources in Karnataka through earlier projects of afforestation under the guise of social forestry.

As a response to the strong criticisms to the "Red Book", the KFD and ODA drafted a second proposal (KFD:1990). This was called the "Draft Project Proposal" of the Western Ghats Forestry and Environment Project, and is known as the "Green Book". It is in this book that the experts from Britain and officers of KFD synthesised the earlier ideas and incorporated the demand of NGOs, to involve people under the concept of the Joint Forest Planning and Management (JFPM). This "Green Book" incorporated some of the concepts of peoples' participation voiced by NGOs. Nevertheless, there were two more colourful books. "The Brown Book" (Papers for discussion at Oxford Retreat, OFI Consultant, November 1990) before the final document known as "White Book" (KFD: 1991). The change in colours indicates the involvement and influence of "experts" from United Kingdom in drafting WGFP. Obviously the KFD has played a very minor role in finalising the WGFP document. The WGFP was basically drafted by ODA consultants in the UK. In spite of this overemphasis on UK-based consultants and experts, it is made out that KFD wrote the final document of WGFP. However, the chronological events as explained above, indicate the dominant role played by the ODA in the process of formulating the project.

The final document of WGFP (KFD:1991) is an excellent piece of public relations in which the issues of ecology and participation of people is very well incorporated at every level. The major objective is

"to achieve sustainability in the face of numerous pressures on forest resources".

The fundamental instrument to deliver the sustainability is 'JFPM' (Joint Forest Planning and Management). This is in tune with the policy of the Government of India, which issued a circular in 1990 calling for the formation of village level institutions to regenerate and afforest waste lands and to protect the forests through sharing the benefits with village people.

The objectives of WGFP (KFD:1991; Annex C) are noble and the strategy very sound. However, the project objectives has no relevance to the causes that lie behind the decrease in forest cover. Though the project document mentions logging as one of the

causes of deforestation, it indicates that the major causes are due to headloading, grazing and forest fires. The project proposal is based on a wrong assumption that forest dwellers and their cattle are the major cause for deforestation. In reality, the causes of deforestation in the Western Ghats is complex. It is mainly due to increasing pressure to commercialise the forest resources in the name of "development". The clearfelling of natural forests and raising of monoculture plantations, hydroelectric dams, nuclear power projects and revenue-earning forest policies are responsible for the destruction of forests in the Western Ghats. The forest dwellers and the cattle are the victims of commercialisation of forests. The causes identified for destruction in WGFP are in reality the effects of the commercial, industrial forest policy propagated since the colonial rule. The project is based on wrong assumptions and ignores the socio-political factors responsible for forest destruction.

The project proposal of WGFP embodies the 'top down' approach of other failed development projects. Though it says that "local people will play a major role in planning, management and protection of forests", in reality it is an extension of reductionist partisan forestry with a commercial orientation. The noble ideas of peoples' participation is replaced by the 'Planting Models' (WGFP: 1991. Page 9). The proposal identifies eight different models of afforestation. According to the proposal,

"Three models are for gap planting and enrichment of the natural forest. These models are in response to the absence of regeneration of valuable timber species in over 75% of the area".

Obviously, this is a ploy to strengthen the seeds of commercialisation sown by colonial rulers in 1860s and now by the same British forestry 'experts' through the ODA-sponsored WGFP. A natural forest is a 'Natural' forest, that has its non-intrinsic value, beyond the narrow perspective of 'revenue' yielding 'timber' species. 'Enrichment of natural forest' is representative of the 'reductionist' paradigm propagated by western experts. For them, the natural forests without 'valuable timber' species is useless. The needs of profit-oriented ideology ignores the survival needs of forest dwellers who depend on non-timber products that are generally only available from natural forests. The knowledge base of western experts cannot think beyond 'commercial' objectives. If these experts have ready made 'models' of plantations, where is the space for local people to plan?

Table 1 Here

In order to meet such criticisms, the experts have also included 'local needs' multi-purpose 'models' of plantations to grow fuelwood, fodder and green manure. However, when we carefully analyse the area in which these plantings are to be carried out under WGFP, we find that the emphasis is still on commercialisation of the forests (see Table 1).

As the above table reveals, the hidden agenda of WGFP is to accelerate the process of commercialisation and industrial forestry in the tropical forests of the Western Ghats under the guise of enriching natural forests. In doing this, the planners have paid lip service to local people by allocating 20 per cent of total planting area for local needs. The seeds of forest destruction is hidden in the 'noble' ideas of peoples' participation.

Zonation: The seeds of colonial policy

In the colonial era, the pursuit of British commercial interests led to the reservation of forests and the usurpation of community property. The British classified the forests into "Reserved Forest" and "Protected Forests", denying peoples ancient rights (Singh C; 1986). After two centuries, the British experts, through WGFP, have reintroduced another classification of forests called 'Zonation'. A careful analysis of various project documents shows that this concept is introduced by British forestry experts in the "Yellow Book" (OFI, 1989). In order to implement the project, the forest area has been classified into five zones:

- I Core Zone: Ecologically important areas
- II Main Zone: Main forest zone without forest dwellers (potential for commercial exploitation)
- III Main zone: with forest dwellers
- IV Boundary Zone: Edge of forests, near settlement (mostly degraded)
- V Outside forest: Near Settlements, Common or Revenue Land.

This classification is not practical and it is an instrument devised to keep out the forest dwellers from their survival base. It is a continuation of commercial ideology and denies people access to the forest resources on which they depend for their survival. The narrow perspective of the so-called experts who came out with such exclusionary classifications during colonial era is still causing havoc with tropical forests today: we now have an additional classification to accentuate the destructive process. This may be a ploy to restrict access to the people into forests and to further commercial interests.

Although WGFP claims that "the fundamental instrument for delivering sustainability is JFPM", the classification of forest into zones negates the very purpose of JFPM. Through the process of classification, the involvement of people in planning and management gets restricted to Zone IV. This is near settlements and mostly degraded. Thus, just as two centuries ago, British foresters demarcated degraded areas near settlements as 'Protected Forests', so the ODA experts with WGFP are continuing this ideology by restricting peoples management to only zone IV, the degraded areas. How can people manage in an 'area' which is totally degraded? Or is it that the ODA wants people to cooperate in replanting the degraded area with 'valuable' stock through the 'voluntary' efforts of people?

A deeper analysis of the zoning process (see Table 2, p.6) shows that commercial objectives are hidden in the classification, and that peoples' participation is restricted

to only zone IV.

The proposal talks of JFPM in every page: however, in financial allocation and in allocating the area for plantations, the importance shifts to commercial forestry activities, local needs receiving only 33% of the financial outlay.

It is essential to analyse the WGFP in the light of the KSFP (Karnataka Social Forestry project), co-funded by the World Bank and ODA in the 1980s. In the implementation of KSFP, the over emphasis on monoculture eucalyptus plantations negated the social forestry objective of KSFP. Learning from this experience, the ODA has emphasised that in WGFP, the main strategy is "process oriented" rather than "target oriented". However, as in KSFP, in WGFP commercialisation is hidden under the cover of peoples' participation.

In conclusion, it is obvious that, due to the pressure from critics in India and in UK, the ODA and KFD have changed the tone of WGFP. The criticisms have been absorbed and JFPM has become the main delivery system for the project. The WGFP project document now has all the rhetoric of "peoples participation and enhancing the lives of forest dwellers". Unfortunately, a careful analysis shows that WGFP document (KFD: 1991) is a bitter pill of commercialisation of tropical forests of Western Ghats sugar coated with high sounding words of peoples participation and JFPM. A closer look at the implementation of the project for past two years in Uttara Kannada brings out the bitterness it has left in the project area.

TABLE 2 HERE

Indeed, it is precisely the dominance of British colonial forestry expertise over the past two centuries that has led to unsustainable forestry practices in the Western Ghats. This policy ignored the skills and knowledge base of people who have coexisted with tropical forests for centuries (Arora, Dolly: 1994). The 'scientific forestry' had no place for the skills and management techniques which had evolved over centuries.

The reliance on Western experts in evolving WGFP is leading to a repetition of the same flawed approach. The people leading their life near forests have a deeper understanding of their local ecosystems than a consultant. Yet the WGFP provides no opportunity for such traditional knowledge to be used in regenerating forests. Instead it relies on 'forestry experts' prescribing policies that have already proved to be a disaster. In order to broaden the perspective ODA did involve a multi-disciplinary team of consultants (again British) including an anthropologist and sociologist. However, this does not mean that they can incorporate the knowledge base of the forest dwellers.

Another string attached to ODA funding is the allocation of funds in WGFP for training KFD officials in the United Kingdom. The number of officials to be trained (in the Draft Project document 1990) was initially only 17. However, by the final document, the number had increased to 177. The costs shot up from Rs. 775,000 in 1990 to Rs. 18,020,000 in 1991. According to the project document (KFD:1991):

"The forest officers will undergo training in UK on existing short courses covering the theory and rationale for participatory planning, extension approaches and methods, social and economic dimensions of 'local needs' forestry, gender issues and training in team building skills".

Is there any reason for KFD officials to go to UK to learn about Joint Forest Management? One wonders whether the UK has any experience in managing the forests under Joint Forest Management (JFM). It is obvious that these foreign training courses are a means to support the training Institutes and Universities in the UK. ODA has reduced the JFM to a mere component of the overall plan of WGFP.

The range of consultancies funded through the WGFP is formidable indeed. To study the livestock in Uttara Kannada, a livestock expert from Britain has to come as consultant. Similarly the project includes consultancies for GIS (Geographical Information System) and MIS (Management Information Systems) as supporting activities to strengthen the implementation of WGFP.

The amount originally allocated for GIS was Rs. 6,288,000 but this was subsequently increased to Rs. 18,301,000. A recent study (Reddy: 1995) comments:

"The cost of software in India for GIS is Rs. 400,000 and with all additional systems it is about Rs. 500,000. The need for an increased amount of Rs. 18,301,000 raises suspicion on the intention of the WGFP".

Debt and the Pressure to Commercialise Forestry

Let us look back at the ODA-World Bank sponsored Karnataka Social Forestry Project. This was a loan and the money, was spent to raise commercial plantations. The project had no 'social' component in actual implementation and resulted in worsening ecological conditions rather than improving them. It also created an additional debt burden on local people as the state had to repay back the loan amount with interest sanctioned for social forestry project.

Similarly, in WGFP, though the ODA assistance goes to Karnataka, it comes via the Central government in Delhi which gives it as 'loan' at 6 per cent interest per annum. That means the money spent on WGFP has to be repaid back by the state. Where will it generate the money to pay back with interest? Obviously, from forestry sector.

Chapter 2

STRINGS OF AID

The Pen is mightier than the axe?

According to the old saying, "The pen is mightier than sword". But after looking at the documents prepared to finalise WGFP, one has to conclude that the pen of the ODA consultants is mightier than the axe. In drafting the WGFP, these consultants have provided more than simply expertise: they have also provided substantial ideological input and a language which hides the real intention of commercialising the forests behind impressive talk of "peoples' participation" and "meeting local needs".

The project document for the WGFP looks as if the main motive for the KFD becoming involved was to obtain funds. The British Government, meanwhile, was keen on funding the project to claim that it is doing something in the forestry sector to protect the world's tropical forests. This is clear from the words of Lynda Chalker, the UK Minister for Overseas Development:

"Globally forests provide an important sink for carbon dioxide and particularly in the humid tropics, a major source of biodiversity" (Chalker: 1994).

Chalker does not mention of the patterns of overconsumption in developed nations which emit more carbon dioxide than southern countries such as India. Is the WGFP really a means through which the UK escapes its responsibilities for cutting its massive emissions of carbon dioxide by securing carbon-dioxide sinks in the South? Reading between the lines, might one conclude that Chalker's real message is: "You plant trees to absorb the carbon dioxide we emit." And what is one to make of the sudden interest in protecting "biodiversity"? Does it reflect the needs of the UK biotech industry which relies on the "biodiversity" of the South for its raw materials?

Ignoring Local Knowledge

The British aid performs two functions at the same time. It helps to build a public image that aid is given to conserve the fragile tropical forests in India; and it aims to generate employment for British citizens who are employed as experts to support the WGFP.

In WGFP, for example, "ODA is assisting the Forest department . . . through planning and training sessions in participatory approaches, as well as additional tree planting." Almost 10 per cent of the budget is allocated for 'consultancies'. India has no dearth of experts in forestry and related issues but ODA has insisted on using British experts who are paid in sterling. There seems to be no rationale for hiring consultants from abroad to frame and support WGFP (PSK: 1994). They do not understand the language and culture of the local people and their utility value is marginal. At times, they co-opt local consultants who toe their ideological line.

The strings of aid are obvious when we compare the area covered by the ODA-funded project in Uttara Kannada to the total forest area and consider the project's likely impact at macro level on forest policy.

The ODA funded WGFP has a regressive impact. Though the ODA has categorically stated that joint planning and management of forest resources will provide the main delivery system for the project, in practice the project has strengthened the oppressive nature of current forest policies, particularly for marginalised forest dwellers. The implementation of the WGFP has confirmed these regressive strategies.

Out of the total forest area of 829,295 hectares (KFD:1994) in Uttara Kannada, the WGFP is planning to fund afforestation in 4,200 hectares over five years (WGFP:1991). This is 5.06 per cent of the total forest area of the district. By providing funds to afforest 5 per cent of forest in Uttara Kannada, ODA is successfully sowing the seeds of commercialisation of tropical forests which may have multiplier impact at macro level affecting the entire region, alienating people from their forest resource. The strings of aid have to be understood from the perspective of the macro impact of the project on the forests of the Western Ghats. With micro level intervention in the first phase of project implementation in Uttara Kannada, with a marginal funding, the ODA is able to influence the developmental policies and control the genetic resources of tropical forests throughout the region. Isn't it a good bargain?

The strings of ODA aid are not only visible in the perpetuation of unsustainable forestry techniques through its experts and consultants, but also in the brainwashing the Indian foresters into this ideology. In real terms the aid is sowing the seeds of a policy that will eventually have widespread negative impact on the entire tropical ecosystem. It also undermines the capacity of local people to take care of their own ecosystems.

The aid forces the state to commercialise the tropical forests of Western Ghats to earn more revenue, reinforcing a process of non-sustainable production forestry in the region. However, this destructive process is sugar-coated by the language of 'sustainability' in the WGFP document. As in KSFP, the WGFP will push the people into debt and accelerate the process of ecological degradation.

A Vicious Circle

The foreign funded WGFP sets in motion a process of development which is beyond the control of the state. Once the aid is withdrawn, the infrastructure and management personnel involved in the project have to be kept going, thus adding unproductive costs to the state treasury. The state also falls prey to the charity of ODA by agreeing to take the assistance and accepting the terms and conditions of the financing agency. This ideological subjugation ties up the major time of the government in catering to the needs of the financing agency, without any time left for genuine work. A vicious circle is initiated and the government finds it difficult to come out of its clutches. Though the policies may not be written in London, the ideas come from experts based in London. This perpetuates the colonial ideology of the so called scientific experts. The strings of the ideology attached to aid are the most dangerous, since they have a negative impact on the capacity of local government and people.

At micro level the affect of the ODA funding has already been detrimental. The allocation of resources by the state government for forestry work has been reduced, with negative consequences. In Uttara Kannada district, where the first phase of WGFP is being implemented, the funds allocated for the forestry sector from the state treasury has almost dried up. The rationale for denying the funds is the presence of the ODA project. Unfortunately this is a major destabilising factor for the forests of the Western Ghats. The district which contributes almost eighty per cent of the total forest revenue for the state is being stripped of its precious tropical forest cover, without providing for either its regeneration or conservation. The forests have to continue to yield revenue and face the onslaught of commercialisation which will result from 'enrichment' planting. This double attack on the forests of Uttara Kannada is much more disastrous than the colonial British policy.

TABLE 3

Chapter 3

THE STINGS OF AID

**“People’s participation” is the rhetoric:
stinging marginalised groups is the reality.**

In response to criticisms of the “Red Book” which first outlined the WGFP, the final document — or the “White Book” (KFD; 1991) — has co-opted the principle of “people’s participation”. It is sprinkled in each section so as to give the feeling that peoples’ participation is the crux of the WGFP. The rhetoric reads as follows:

“Local people, who are responsible for much of the biotic pressure on the forest, must play a fundamental role in the planning, management and protection of the forest”.

The document also claims:

“The main instrument for achieving sustainability is Joint Forest Planning and Management” (JFPM).

The rhetoric is noble, but the reality is deeply oppressive. All the talk of peoples’ participation gets narrowed down in the next paragraph of WGFP project document. It states:

“In certain areas of forest, as described under ‘Zonation’, it will be appropriate for the planning process to decide on joint management”.

The ‘participation’ will only be practised in the ‘zones’, especially in zone IV, consisting of degraded areas near the village. The seeds of colonial forest policy have made deep inroads into the concept of “people’s participation”. The classification of forest areas into zones has been used to restrict peoples’ participation in the forest proper. The western consultants, with their ingenuity, have incorporated the concept of “participation” to use people as pawns to establish trees on most degraded areas. And then they call it “JFPM”.

The most surprising factor is that the colonial ideology is deeply ingrained into the Government order passed by Karnataka State (on 12/04/93, GOK, 1993). The influence of ODA can be gauged from the sentences included in the preamble to the Government order:

“The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests has stated the ‘Process Plan’ of the Western Ghat Forestry and Environment Project funded by ODA of the UK depends mainly on the JFPM and ODA authorities have insisted for a Government order authorising the principles of Joint forest Planning and Management”.

Obviously, the order is passed not to empower the forest dwellers to control and use of forest resources, but to please ODA and thus obtain funds for the WGFP. It is a manifestation of the government’s eagerness to secure funds from ODA rather than a commitment towards forest dwellers.

The government Order on JFPM and Village Forest Committees (VFCs) is a classic

case of throttling any process of decentralised decision making. It undermines the democratic principles at village level. The foremost disincentive against the JFPM process is the area covered under JFPM. The order specifically states that "it shall be introduced in degraded forest land, where the canopy cover is 0.25 and less and government waste lands, road sides etc". Why should people be interested in participating in those areas which are already degraded? There is a definite link between the concept of 'zoning' in WGFP and the allocation of 'degraded lands' under the Government Order. Zone IV is similar to the area explicitly defined in the government order. The Government has taken the clue from its ODA masters and consultants. The passing of an order eliciting peoples' participation creates an illusion: however, in reality, the order leads to restriction on peoples' participation.

Village Forest Committees

The Government Order specifies that Village Forest Committees (VFCs) should be formed in the villages in order to involve people in management of forest areas. The Secretary of the VFC is an official (Forester) from Karnataka Forest Department (KFD). He has been vested with all the powers, including responsibility for keeping records and maintaining accounts. Thus, there is a concentration of power on one person, that too from KFD. It is a step towards an authoritarian process. It gives total control over the VFC to the forest official. The KFD says that, for an initial three year period, it is essential that the department handles the VFC as it is still in the stage of infancy. However, by doing this, KFD, through the government order, has taken away the initiative from forest dwellers. It has made the VFC a passive tool in the hands of a KFD functionary.

The most arbitrary powers are vested with the Secretary of VFC. For example:

- He can recommend the termination of membership of Managing Committee members:
 - He can recommend temporary or permanent termination of membership:
 - He can terminate VFC membership for life:
 - On his recommendation the Range Forest Officer (RFO) can dismiss the VFC:
- In the event of a dispute over the implementation of the above rules, the only appeal is to a higher KFD official, whose decision is binding on the VFC and its members.

Vesting the Forest Department with such draconian powers has made the VFC a mockery of grass roots democracy and decentralised decision-making in the management of natural resources. The KFD can dismiss elected members. Obviously the KFD does not want any impartial suggestions from people. It wants the VFC and its members to agree to its ideas. This authoritarian power defeats the essence of JFPM as expressed in para (16) (i) of the annex to the Government Order (GOK 1993), namely that

"VFC should not become an extension of forest Department. But this shall be strong village bodies having functional autonomy".

A VFC cannot function with autonomy when its Secretary has the power to dismiss its members at will!

The scope for peoples' participation with an order which hinders the peoples' initiative is the biggest hurdle in management of forest resources by people. However, the forest officials claim that these shortcomings will be made good once the field experi-

ences has been gained from implementation at the village level. The ODA and KFD think that peoples' participation is possible within the framework laid down by the self-defeating, contradictory order of the government.

Participation: Luring People with Economic Gains

The implementation of WGFP with JFPM as the main delivery system is two years old. In order to involve people in the JFPM process, the KFD officials have employed a "carrot and stick" policy. The carrot is; "You (villagers) will get 50 per cent from the plantations, so you better join the VFC to get economic benefits". This encourages the people who are not dependent on forest resources to become members of VFC to make economic gains. It is sowing the seeds of commercialisation in the village. The stick comes in the form of a threat: "If you do not agree to participate, we will take the scheme to some other village. It is better that they accept it. Maybe, due to compulsion."

One important aspect of VFC formation is that the KFD team responsible introduces itself to the village through its own contact, or through politicians of a particular village.

The studies conducted have shown that the person who is familiar with KFD is often either a labour contractor who has done work for KFD (the biggest employer in the district) or a person involved in the timber trade (PSK, 1994). By using these established contacts, KFD tries to intervene in a village situation. This is more often a negative factor in establishing a VFC. The main reason for this negative feeling is due to the fact that the contact person is an ally of KFD, which represents the repressive regime of forest destruction. Thus, from the perspective of local people, the VFC is an extension of the same network. On many occasions, the KFD decides who is to become the chairman of the VFC or members of managing committee (PSK, 1994). In many villages, the signatures of people are taken in the minutes book and the actual resolutions are written later according to the whims of KFD. All these facts essentially prove that the drama of "people's participation" is a sham enacted only to meet the legal requirement of the JFPM order and to satisfy the funders, the ODA.

People, especially forest dwellers, have to deal with KFD every day. In order to resolve the conflict the forest dwellers have also evolved their own strategy to tackle the JFPM. They participate passively, being aware that their views will hardly carry any weight. In the process of formation of VFCs there is no room for dialogue with people. Even on occasions when people have expressed their views, they are ignored by the KFD. The JFPM is a process in which planning and management of forest resources is decided at the top by KFD (and ODA) and villagers have to participate in implementing decisions which have already been made for them. The people's participation is achieved through compulsion! As one VFC Chairman, Jaysheela Gowda (Bashi) commented "this is not joint management, it is in fact authoritarian management by KFD". The implementation of WGFP has proved that at village level the project is heading towards a situation that is very opposite of what is professed as the main delivery system of JFPM. The situation also indicates that there exists joint planning and management between ODA and KFD, and people are alienated from the programme, as they have no space to get themselves involved in the JFPM.

Participation: The Fact Sheet

Let us look at the actual implementation of JFPM at the village level. The formation of VFCs is one of the most important milestones in the implementation of the JFPM

process. As claimed in the project proposal:

"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".

In order to change these relations, the KFD has to make genuine attempts to convey the message to villagers. They have to introduce the idea of JFPM gradually, taking people into confidence, building mutual trust.

In order to understand the ground realities the village profile studies (PSK 1994, Annex D) prepared by Parisara Sanmrakshana Kendra shows the level of people's participation in the villages where VFC's are formed under WGFP.

The initial meetings of KFD officials with the villagers is very crucial. It is through these meetings that the officials get an opportunity to establish rapport with the people and to understand peoples' view on forestry. The study of 25 VFCs (Annex D) shows that in 14 villages, only one visit was made before formation of an VFC. In 9 villages, KFD officials visited two times. In one village (Bellanker), they visited four times and in another village, 9 times (Talgadde, see Annex A). The fact sheet of participation reveals that in most of the villages, the idea of JFPM is thrust upon people in a short span of one or two meetings. As explained earlier, it is 'ordering' people to participate. Under such circumstances, how do the people expect the change in 'attitude' of KFD to be achieved? Where is the 'institutional' change mentioned in WGFP document?

In spite of the appalling fact sheet, the KFD claims:

"Even with separate Deputy Conservator of Forests provided to each division exclusively for JFPM activity in Uttara Kannada, it has been found by experience that it has taken them not less than 50 visits to each village to form a VFC". (JFPM Newsletter, KFD; 1994).

This rhetoric can be compared to the reality of the factsheet (PSK: 1994 and Annex D). The tall claim of KFD is a deliberate lie. The visits made by its officials are obviously, an attempt to implement the top down model of JFPM. This top down practice of 'participation' is named as 'bottom up' process by WGFP.

Even on the rare visits made by officials, what message does the KFD convey to people? According to villagers the officials normally give the idea that a new forestry programme has come with ODA funds in which they have to involve the villagers. In order to do this villagers should form a committee. The emphasis is that people will get commercial or monetary benefit through sharing of 50 per cent of the revenue from plantations established under JFPM. These plantations will be established by KFD, which will be taken care by the Department for first three years. Thereafter, people will have to manage the plantations. Thus, these meetings turn out to be a one-way process, in which the KFD explains its intention of extending commercial plantations for villagers. At no point does the KFD explain about control, access and management of forest resources by the people. There is no discussion about meeting the biomass needs of local people.

The KFD could have utilised the WGFP as an opportunity to establish genuine relationships with forest dwellers. However, it has squandered away this opportunity by perpetuating the age old colonial legacy of mistrusting people and extending commercial forestry.

Participation without Villagers

Let us accept for the time being the claim of KFD that 50 visits were made to form one

VFC. How many people attended these crucial meetings? The factsheet (Annex D) provides the detail information for 25 villages. Out of 25 villages, only in 4 villages did more than 50 per cent of the inhabitants participate in the meeting to form the VFC. In one village (Gobral), the villagers were compelled to attend the meeting! (as they were working as labourers for KFD). In remaining 21 villages, the percentage of people who attended the meeting was between 10 to 30 percent. These figures speak for themselves. They indicate the poor response of villagers towards JFPM. Even in these meetings, there was no opportunity to 'participate' actively because the people had to listen to what the forest officials had to say. The people had to participate passively.

Participation: Stinging the Marginalised Groups

In many villages (Gobral, or in the villages of Supa taluka), KFD officials said that people 'have to participate'. As most of the villagers were dependent on KFD — the only local employer — they had no other option but to comply. They had to participate in order to be in the good books of their employer. In villages like Talgadde and Yan, the people had to participate due to the 'fear' of KFD officials. They have to live in the forest and, as forest dwellers, they did not want an antagonistic relationship with KFD staff. In order to resolve this conflict, they decided to go along with the top down model of WGFP.

However, the most shocking events have taken place under the process of formation of JFPM. In many villages, people were apprehensive about the programme in the initial stages and they opposed the top down approach. In Adike Hosur village, the KFD officials arrested 47 men (PSK; 1994) who protested against establishing ODA plantations on the land they were using to grow food crops. They came from among the weakest sections in the society. There are numerous instances in which people growing food crops on forest land, without land titles, have been evicted as a result of the WGFP (see Annex B). Similarly in Jalavalli village, KFD officials had to face violent protest by people and KFD had to dig the pits for JFPM plantations under the threat of a loaded gun! Can we call this people's participation in JFPM? Or is JFPM a process to force marginalised groups into destitution by stinging them, increasing the pains and sufferings of poverty? It is more appropriate to call the ODA-funded WGFP the agent of violation of human rights, harming the interests of forest dwellers in the name of "people's participation" (Hegde P., 1994).

In contrast to this reality, the citizens in Britain have been given a rosy picture of WGFP. At the time when the WGFP was stinging the poorest groups in Uttara Kannada and violating human rights, the UK Minister for Overseas Development, Lynda Chalker, was giving a lecture to Royal Geographical Society in London. She told her audience:

"The Western Ghats are no longer able to meet the demands placed by local people on forest resources. In order to reverse this trend, new models of sustainable forest management are introduced. This requires Karnataka Forest Department to change its traditional role of policing the forest to one that involves the forest ranges planning and managing the use of forest resources together with local villagers" (Chalker L, 1994).

How would citizens in UK know that in the remote forest regions of Western Ghats, the local villagers were being evicted from their survival base and being arrested to implement the WGFP; that aid from Britain for forestry was in fact being used to oppress the poorest groups. Instead of eliciting people's participation, people have become antagonistic towards WGFP. They have participated actively in opposing the 'stinging' forestry programme funded by the ODA.

Exclusion of Women

Women are dependent on forest resources in many ways. They fetch items of utility value from the forests. In the JFPM meetings, the participation of women is negligible. Out of 25 villages, only in three did more than 20 women attend the first meeting. In all other villages, less than 10 women attended these meetings. Even in these meetings, their participation was passive. In many instances where the women are the main forest user group (like Halakki Vokkals), they have been left out of the JFPM process. In many VFCs, the women members are nominated to meet the legal requirement of the Government Order. Under these circumstances, even the consent of women is not sought while nominating them. The women have 'participated' in JFPM plantations as labourers but have not been paid basic legal minimum wages. They have worked on afforestation sites but they have never felt that it is their 'plantation'. They do not have any stake in these afforested areas. These women are interested in natural forests that provide fodder, leaves, food and medicine. For them 'plantations' are just timber mines.

On many occasions where women have explicitly aired their wish to plant multipurpose species, that demand has been ignored by the WGFP. Thus, there is no serious attempt to involve women in the management of forest resources.

The forestry project funded by ODA has not changed the KFD's relations with the people. The 'participation' achieved through implementation of JFPM process can be termed as 'passive participation', without the active involvement of people. Meanwhile, the WGFP blames local forest dwellers for the degradation of forests in the region: "Local people who are responsible for much of biotic pressure ..." (WGFP, KFD: 1994, p. 4). The responsibility for managing the forests rests with KFD which has the control over 80 per cent of geographical area in Uttara Kannada district. It has been managing this resource for two centuries. The cause of deforestation lie in the state's commercial-industrial forest policy and the so-called development projects that take toll of forests. By putting the blame of forest destruction on people and their cattle, the door to dialogue is closed. Any joint activity cannot be initiated in an environment of mistrust. The precondition for launching JFPM is to establish mutual trust between the different parties. The people have no illusions about the links between the KFD and deforestation: they are well aware of the hand-in-glove relationship between timber smugglers and forest staff. Under such circumstances, to seek people participation would be an impossible task. The KFD has to prove its ability to conserve the forest resources, building trust among people.

The rhetoric of participation as the main instrument in achieving the project objectives stands exposed at the stage of implementation. By compelling people to participate in the JFPM process, the WGFP has destroyed the self-confidence and creativity of local people. This was bound to happen when 'people' are simply used as tools for implementing a project that has already been decided by the ODA and the KFD. The most shocking fact is the effect on marginalised forest dwellers, who have been evicted from their survival base. The stings of aid on these groups are most painful and inhuman. The strings of aid have destroyed the tropical ecosystems in Western Ghats. The sting of aid has destroyed the livelihood of marginalised group in the name of participation.

— forest resources. Green and dry leaves are collected by farmers for composting. The livestock is dependent on forests for grazing. The forests also provides soil and water for the agricultural system. The colonial and post-independence forest policy has ignored the requirements of farming systems. The history of forest management in the district has been a history of conflict over the resources needed to support the survival or sustenance economy on the one hand (Shiva, V; 1987) and the market economy and the commercial, industrial needs of affluent people on the other. These are essentially two different biomass economies.

The commercial forest policy has pillaged the forests of the Western Ghats. It has destroyed the basic capital of the biomass economy. The socio-political structure prevalent in the region is deeply entrenched in supporting the interests of the commercial or market economy. In order to safeguard commercial interests, the KFD has to perform the function of 'policing' the forest, alienating people from the forest resources. Farming activities like collecting dry, green leaves poles for building huts and livestock grazing are treated as activities that destroy forests.

The conflict over forests has intensified in recent years. It is against this background that one has to understand the implementation of the recently introduced WGFP. Unfortunately, the ODA-funded project has ignored these basic realities. In doing so, it has had a negative impact on farming systems, leading to an acceleration of the already existing conflict over available biomass. By denying access to forest resources and by planting commercial monoculture plantations, WGFP has created havoc with people's livelihood systems.

The assessment of the WGFP shows that it is a clear attempt to disrupt the sustainable agricultural system in Uttara Kannada. The project, with the reductionist, narrow forestry perspective is forcing the people to shift from biomass economy into cash, monetary economy. The traditional agricultural system is based on biomass economy (CTE/NAVADANYA, 1993). The WGFP funded by ODA is deliberately creating a shortage in the biomass needs of livelihood systems through commercial forestry programmes. The agricultural system in the region is very complex and is delicately linked to the sustainable utilisation of forest resources. It involves a holistic approach to the ecosystem — in sharp contrast to the narrow approach of the ODA. The holistic agriculture practised by local farmers is being systematically disrupted by the intervention of the ODA-funded WGFP.

The ODA and the KFD are aware of the complex interlinkages between agriculture and other aspects of life in Uttara Kannada. The study on livestock mentioned earlier states (KFD/ODA; 1993):

"Livestock are therefore tied into the lives of many people, both those who have livestock themselves, and the stockless. They fit into livelihood systems in a series of complex interactions between the livelihoods, the livestock, the farming system and the forest that are integral to the functioning of the whole system".

The colonial rulers disrupted the sustainable livelihoods from 1802. The farmers then protested against the policy (Masur G.R. 1927). After two centuries, the British have once again intervened in the region with ODA funds, disrupting the sustainable livelihood systems of local people. But, this time, the powerful socio-economic interest of independent state is behind the policy. The present situation may be difficult to change, and a policy shift in favour of poor people and towards conserving the tropical forest ecosystems of the Western Ghats may never be even addressed by this project.

Destruction of Biodiversity

It is debatable whether one can assess the impact of the WGFP on the ecology of the

region in the period (two years) since the project was begun. But it is not necessary to wait until the ODA has destroyed the genetic resources of the forests to see the writing on the wall.

The commercialisation of forests through the WGFP is the most influential factor in destroying the biodiversity of the tropical forests.

As explained elsewhere, the "enrichment" and "gap" plantation models envisaged under the project are obviously steps towards the introduction of commercial forestry into natural forest ecosystems. Let us look at enrichment 'c' model of afforestation. Such enrichment "is on areas with medium canopy cover and aims to increase the proportion of valuable species". By assigning commercial 'value' to trees, the concept of natural forests and enhancing biodiversity is negated. From the perspective of ODA, the trees have to be 'valuable', which means they have to produce timber. But from the perspective of people, 'trees' mean survival, the basic capital that provides the biomass requirements for sustainable livelihood systems. They are not simply 'timber'!

Even in financial allocation, by allocating 80 per cent of funds for these commercial 'gap plantations', the WGFP has proved as a death machine to tropical forests of Western Ghats.

Assuming that the remaining 20 per cent is spent (in zone IV) on 'multipurpose' plantations to meet local needs, one should rest satisfied that they do not damage the biodiversity of the region. However, the factual assessment shows that this assumption is not true. The 20 per cent spent on 'local needs' in fact involves establishing monoculture acacia plantations. They are being planted after clearfelling the "weeds" and trees that are not 'valuable'. Thus, even under the heading of multipurpose plantations, the destruction of biodiversity is accelerated.

In villages like Yan and Manjguni (CTE/NAVADANYA, 1994), the plantations (multipurpose) are established in the grazing area. This has an adverse affect on the neighbouring tropical forests. The pressure of grazing shifts from open grazing areas to the forest areas, leading to further denudation. In effect, the afforestation carried out under the ODA-funded WGFP is actually leading to the further degradation of biodiversity in the tropical forests of the Western Ghats. In Kible village, the acacia plantation is established in the mixed natural forests which is rich in biodiversity, hindering the growth of indigenous species.

The WGFP (Green Book; KFD 1990, Part I, p. 55) states that in Zone II under the thinning and logging activity:

"In an environmental forestry project involving harvesting of the produce both from natural forests and plantations, efficiency in logging is important not only for obtaining maximum out turn but also for saving the forest from avoidable damage during the felling operations".

It further adds:

"To start with, the project will concentrate on replacing the axe with the cross-cut saw".

The tropical forests elsewhere in the world have had enough of such destructive advice. Now it has reached the Western Ghats. The forest has no voice. Otherwise they would have told ODA Consultants "No, we do not need cross cut saw. Thank you".

Let us look what prescription is given under ecological management for Zone I (the uninhabited forests). The WGFP says (KFD; 1991, p.10):

"Their management will focus on a programme of substantial forest protection in selected areas, together in a few circumstances, with active 'manipulation' of habitats".

The "Green Book" (KFD; 1990) elaborates that this manipulation may involve

reduced the availability of fodder. Similarly the spread of exotic weeds like 'Eupatorium' has hindered the growth of grass.

The drive towards commercial forestry has been at the expense of the grazing land in the district depriving the poor of scarce fodder resources. Now under WGFP, ODA funds are being used to 'afforest' the grazing land of the poorest people. Even this 'last resort' of poorest people and their cattle is being taken away by WGFP. As a consequence, in many villages people have expressed their apprehension over the ODA project. A study (PSK; 1994) conducted in 25 villages in the project area reveals that in all 25 villages, the people were using the area earmarked for reforestation for cattle grazing. The grazing land will be converted into monoculture ODA plantations.

The restriction of access to grazing land puts extra pressure on people to search for alternative sources of fodder. Fodder is imported into the region. The better-off farmer has the cash to purchase fodder from distant areas. But the small farmer and landless labourer is not in a position to do so. The cattle herding forest tribes — the 'Gavlis' — will be particularly adversely affected by the WGFP. Though the project has plans to establish fodder plantations, it is an impossible task to produce fodder to stall feed the livestock in the entire district.

The KFD has assured people that, under the WGFP, they can harvest fodder after the monsoon in the plantations. Whilst the availability of grass may increase in the short run in the plantations — due to restriction on grazing in the plantation area — it is likely to diminish after the third or fourth year when the monoculture species (of acacia or teak) start to grow and their canopy cover widens. Thus, in the long run, the availability of fodder will be reduced, affecting the livestock and increasing the hardship of the poorest groups and women.

Both the KFD and ODA are well aware of the adverse impact on the poorest groups. One of the studies which they commissioned on livestock (KFD/ODA; 1993) specifically states:

"Any attempt to control livestock access to forest grazing has the potential to recreate and enhance this affect, leading to further negative consequences, particularly for the poor".

Who is bothered about the interest of poor? The WGFP is interested in commercialising tropical forests. For the ODA and the KFD, livestock is a major contributory factor in the degradation of forests. As the WGFP says "livestock grazing through the forest has also done much damage". (KFD: 1991)

One of the basic strategies of WGFP is "ensuring poor people, women, tribals and other disadvantaged groups who are substantially dependent on the forests are not worse, and preferably better off" as a result of the project. This is the rhetoric to appease the critics. To date, however, the WGFP has led to a worsening of the situation for the above mentioned sections in society. The promise of making their life 'better off' is a distant dream that may never come true. In fact, the reality is that they are in a worse position than before the project was launched.

Impacts on Agriculture

About 80 per cent of the population of the district Uttara Kannada is dependent on agriculture for survival. The people have to eke out a living on a meagre 10 per cent of the total geographical area. The population dependent on agriculture has doubled over the past three decades: however, the area of available cultivable land has remained stagnant. Thus, there are many people who are using the forest land for survival. However, the WGFP is used as a tool to evict people from their survival base.

The agricultural system is entirely dependent on the availability of — and access to

'silvicultural treatments'. That is a nice technical term with disastrous consequences for the forests. The tropical forests in south India have seen enough of these silviculture treatments which have destroyed the biodiversity. They have had enough of such prescriptions for commercialising existing natural resources (Hegde, P. 1993).

While looking at the costs allocation for this sensitive area (in Zone I), we are shocked to learn that Rs, 28,315,000 is to be spent on this zone under the heading of civil works, transport and salaries. On questioning what kind of species will be planted in Zone I, a forest officer replied "Rosewood, and other valuable species". It shows the direction of WGFP — that is, heading towards a disaster for tropical forests.

As described above the WGFP implemented in various zones from I to IV is a prescription for destruction of the biodiversity of tropical forests in Uttara Kannada. People in this region are dependent on collection of wild genetic resources for survival. For forest dwellers the tropical forests is a treasure house of wild food resources (Chandran & Gadgil, 1993). It acts as an insurance against famines and provides protein and nutrient to poorest groups. It is the employer that gives non-timber forest produce. This multi-dimensional roles of tropical forests is undermined through the 'plantation' models propagated under WGFP. The ODA-funded WGFP is a deliberate assault on people's access to biodiversity.

Chapter 1

Western Ghat Forestry Project: A Sugar-coated bitter pill.

Tropical forests all over the world are under severe threat. The present crisis in tropical forest is the result of over exploitation of the resource leading to a process of irreversible degradation. It is only in recent years that scientists, ecologists and politicians in developed countries have realised the importance of tropical forests. The realities of global warming and the prospects of biotechnology industries has created an overall situation in which conservation of the genetic resources of tropical forests has been accorded highest priority. As part of this global concern, the tropical forests in Western Ghats, India, has attracted attention of developed nations who have come forward to provide financial assistance to conserve these fragile ecosystems.

The Western Ghats is one of the most fragile ecosystems in south India. These mountain ranges run parallel to the west coast. These hill ranges are covered with tropical forests and they represent one of the major watersheds for such important rivers as the Tungbhadra, Krishna and Kaveri. These rivers are a major source for generating hydroelectric power and thus for supporting industrial development. The forests have been exploited to meet the demands of forest based industries. The over emphasis on extraction of timber to satisfy the profit motives of powerful interests in the economy has resulted in over exploitation of the resource. In addition to this pressure, the forests supports the survival economy of forest dwellers, satisfying their basic needs, through providing biomass. The forests dwellers have coexisted with tropical forests for centuries without damaging the ecology or the region. However, the intrusion of commercial forestry has resulted in conflict over the availability of natural resources in the tropical forest regions.

Uttara Kannada district of Karnataka state is part of the Western Ghats. The hills ranging with an altitude of 500 to 600 metres runs parallel to west coast. The coastal strip is very narrow and at places the hills merge with the sea. The district is know as a forest district since approximately 80 per cent of the geographical area is classified as forests. The Karnataka Forest Department (KFD) is the legal landlord of the area. The forests are very diverse and rich in genetic diversity. They consist of evergreen forests on the crestline, semi evergreen, deciduous forests on the edge of ghats and scrub forests. The variation of rainfall from 350 cm in the coast to 500 in the crestline to 120 on the edge has led to creation of diverse ecosystems within the tropical forests in these hill ranges.

According its physical features, the district can be divided into three regions: the coastal belt; the hills; and the plains on the edge of the Western Ghats which merge with the Deccan plateau. The ecological diversity has also supported emergence of diversity of communities engaged in different occupations utilising the available ecosystems or natural resources. There are fishermen communities on the coast, forest dwelling tribes in the hills like Siddis, Halakki Vokkals and Gavlis. Similarly there are skilled agriculturists cultivating spice gardens and paddy. The major occupation of the people (about 80%) is agriculture. The forest resources and agriculture are loosely

CHAPTER IV

THE IMPACT OF WGFP

Destroying the biodiversity of Tropical Forests

The forests of Uttara Kannada district in Karnataka represent one of the most important regions of high biodiversity. The WGFP has stated that its main objective is to

“Maintain the environmental stability of the Western Ghats, to preserve their unique flora and fauna and to increase understanding of them”.

These lofty objectives have remained only on paper. In reality, the project has had negative impact on the people and it has become major agent of forest biodiversity destruction.

Impact on Poorest Groups

People have lived in the forests of Uttara Kannada for centuries. At present, only 10 per cent of the total geographical area of the district is cultivated. Moreover, local agriculture is dependent on harvesting forest resources. There are many people, basically landless or marginalised farmers, who use the forest area to earn some cash income through tree crops or to meet their needs by growing food crops.

The WGFP has had disastrous affect on this group of poorest people. There are numerous instances (Hegde; 1994) in which the KFD, under the guise of WGFP, has taken control of the lands cultivated by people to establish WGFP plantations. The forest department has used the WGFP as an excuse for evicting people from forest areas. In villages like Adike Hosur and Jalavalli, this has led to increased conflict between the people and forest officials. In Bhasi and Bellankeri, the poorest people have had to sacrifice their only resource base. WGFP is a conspiracy of silence between the KFD and ODA that has led to removal of the poorest groups in the project area from their minuscule survival base.

Impacts on Livestock

Livestock keeping is one of the subsidiary occupations of the people in Uttara Kannada. Cattle are kept as both draught and milch animals. Livestock keeping provides an important link between agricultural system, providing inputs (farmyard manure) to grow agricultural crops. The availability of fodder is in short supply and community grazing areas provide one of the major common property resources available to the poorest people in the region.

The availability of fodder was once high in the natural forest regions. The gradual conversion of natural forests into monoculture teak and eucalyptus plantations has

Co-Opting NGOs

Where are the NGOs who criticised KSFP and the WGFP in its initial stages? The NGOs have been co-opted through the JFPM concept. The credit of co-opting NGOs should go to ODA, which has left the NGOs chasing the mirage of JFPM and people's participation. It also shows the alienation of NGOs from the needs of the people. They are also not in a position to address the broader political economy of forestry destruction. What is shocking is the NGOs asking ODA to 'extend' the project to other areas! (Khare S: 1994). Even the British NGO Oxfam is co-opted into WGFP. It gets funds from ODA to run a parallel project in Uttara Kannada. The objective of the Oxfam project is "to compliment efforts in the main project, to promote awareness of the purpose and practice of JFPM" (Oxfam: 1992). The basic question is; can Oxfam 'compliment' the main project which is ravaging the interests of people and forests? It has been encouraging the forest dwellers to enhance their skills in processing non-timber forest products. But, by keeping silence on the real issues, Oxfam has been successfully co-opted into the repressive process of the WGFP. The failure of OXFAM and other NGOs to address the flaws of the WGFP exposes how divorced these organisations have become from the grassroots. Nevertheless, they are the only bodies representing the "people's" interest in the project's steering committee, the main decision-making body for the WGFP. Either these NGOs are not interested in people's issues or they have been co-opted. The critique of the WGFP has come from people's movements to protect tropical forests. Their fears have come true (PSK: 1994).

Towards Conservation Forestry

Having destroyed the basic capital of tropical forests, the commercial forestry practised since the colonial rule has failed to conserve the resource. Instead of sticking to this destructive policy, it is time to shift the emphasis and turn to conservation forestry principles that maintain forest diversity, respect nature and respect people's survival needs (Shiva V: 1987).

Uttara Kannada has an ancient tradition of 'Kan' forests or sacred groves. They are rich in biological diversity and are revered by people. For people, these 'Kans' or forests are the embodiment of 'nature' that has to be protected from destruction. Commercial forestry has made deep inroads into this ancient tradition and has destroyed the evergreen tropical forests. The concept of conservation of 'Kans' through people's participation is something rooted in the local culture — in contrast to the top down model of JFPM. There is an urgent need to conserve these ecological traditions (Chandran S & Gadgil M: 1991). These locally rooted concepts are the only way to involve people in the conservation of forests.

Similarly there are successful village level institutions, like the 'Village Forest Panchayat' in Halkar and Muroor in Uttara Kannada, where people have managed the forest resources successfully for decades. Conservation forestry, aimed at meeting the biomass needs of villagers and based on a concern for ecological values, is the only hope for save the tropical forests of the Western Ghats. The ODA-funded WGFP, if it is genuinely concerned with the tropical forests, has to reformulate the assumptions of the project and emphasise conservation forestry. In the remaining phase of the project, an attempt to wipe the tears of forest dwellers, whose land has been taken away and to reverse the trends of destruction sown by commercial forestry will go a long way to healing the damage caused by the WGFP. However the basic question is: are they willing to listen to this dissenting voice?

CHAPTER V

SAVING TROPICAL FORESTS

Through Commercialisation or Conservation?

At the time of writing, the WGFP in Uttara Kannada district has been going for two years. From the perspective of the funders (ODA) and the implementing agency (KFD), the project is making progress towards achieving its goal and it has even been decided (KFD, Minutes of Steering Committee: 1991) to extend the programme to Shimoga, the second "Forest Circle" in the Western Ghats. It seems both the actors, ODA and KFD, have the magical power to turn the failure into a success.

An impartial assessment of the WGFP in Uttara Kannada district, however, exposes the repressive nature of the project and its adverse effects throughout society. When the objectives of the project are compared to the ground realities, it clearly emerges that the implementation of WGFP has achieved the reverse of its stated objectives. Let us examine each of the objectives and its implications.

Ecology: The proposal claims that maintenance of ecological balance and environment stability is one of the basic objectives of the project. However, in actual practice, the WGFP has created ecological imbalance by implementing the policies that are harmful to the delicate ecosystems. The 'gap' plantations and 'enrichment' plantations are the classic indicators of establishing commercial forestry leading towards destabilising the fragile ecosystems of Western Ghats.

Environment: The WGFP was intended to rehabilitate and protect the major environmental resources of the Western Ghats. The major environmental resource is the forests, which provides the survival basis of the people's biomass economy. By incorporating the 'zoning' concept, the WGFP has expropriated the forest resource to satisfy the commercial demands of 'elite' groups. It has ignored the survival needs of biomass economy in this region.

Society: The project claims to assure sustainable livelihoods for those who depend on forests. This assurance has remained on paper. Yet, implementation of the WGFP has resulted in people being uprooted from their livelihood base in order to establish monoculture plantations. The project has adversely affected the living standards of people dependent on forest resources by depriving them of access to biomass. It has even denied access to land to grow food to meet the needs of the poorest sections in the society.

Economy: The project promises sustained yield so as to secure sound economic welfare for future generations. The project is based on improving the forest stock with 'valuable' timber species. Thus, the commercial foundations of the WGFP will lead to ecological degradation in the long run, affecting the survival needs of future generations.

The above clearly indicates the failure of WGFP to meet the objectives it has set. Nevertheless, the ODA and the KFD do not want to recognise this fact. Both these actors are well versed in the game of rejecting ground realities. Indeed, the WGFP exhibits

the same insensitivity to the real needs of people as the previous Karnataka Social Forestry Project (KSFP), co-funded by the World Bank and the ODA. And, just as with the WGFP, the funders of the KSFP refused to acknowledge the clear and well-documented failures of the project.

The objectives of KSFP were (GOK: 1980, p.14):

- to meet the requirements of rural population pertaining to forest produce in a shortest possible time;
- to induce village communities to involve themselves in afforestation and in forest protection activities;
- to provide a share in the plantation revenue to the village committee; and
- to provide additional employment opportunities for landless agricultural labourers.

The rhetoric claimed:

"The concept of social forestry, in brief, aims at making the villagers self sufficient and in the course of time, self reliant in regard to their forest based needs. This branch of forest activity will have sufficient involvement of the community if it were to be successful."

The difference between rhetoric and reality was clearly brought out by various independent assessments of the KSFP (Shiva V et al: 1981). The implementation went against the stated objectives, adversely affecting the poorest groups and ecology of the area due to the emphasis on monoculture eucalyptus plantations (Shiva V and Bandyopadhyay J: 1987). The people opposed KSFP through launching of a movement against eucalyptus, wherein millions of eucalyptus saplings were uprooted by farmers in Karnataka. In spite of this adverse outcome, the funders and implementing agency have rated the project as a success. A KFD official, for example, has claimed (KFD: 1988):

"The main thrust of social forestry programme is to develop tree cover in a well distributed manner and more particularly in the drought prone zone. It has fulfilled these objectives to the satisfaction of the supporting agencies viz World Bank and Overseas Development Administration in Great Britain. It has also evoked some criticisms but these are generally from the urban based environmentalists".

Through sheer magic an unsuccessful programme of KSFP becomes a successful project!

It seems ODA also learnt this magic of changing failure into success. The ODA 1992 evaluation report for the KSFP states (ODA: 1992):

"The project was judged to have been broadly successful in meeting the original targets. The overall economic rate of return was 8% and the social impact was generally positive."

In contrast to the above evaluation of KSFP, Vandana Shiva, Director of the Research Foundation for Science and Ecology, has fully documented how the planting of trees with "commercial criteria and planting with ecological ignorance . . . often worsened ecological conditions, affecting the livelihoods of poorest groups" (Shiva V: 1987).

We have to analyse the WGFP against the background of what happened with KSFP. Both have lofty, noble objectives. Nevertheless both have gone against the stated objectives. The continuation of the WGFP means the expansion of destructive activities. There is one crucial difference between KSFP and WGFP, however. In KSFP, ODA was a co-funder with the World Bank. In WGFP, by contrast, the ODA is the sole funding agency.

Independent assessments of both these projects reveal that they have not been successful in either meeting the objectives of "people's participation" or of "community

involvement". Nor have they been successful in maintaining ecological stability. The KSFP, based on commercial market-oriented forestry principles, set in motion a process of destruction of the ecosystems in the dry arid regions of Karnataka through monoculture plantations. It led to adverse affects on the poorest groups, forcing them to destitution. The same commercial forces are at work in the WGFP. In the WGFP, 'zoning' has been introduced to increase the production of commercially 'valuable' species, through the destruction of tropical forests of Western Ghats. The implementation of KSFP has resulted in anti-social and anti-ecology impacts on people and forests. Similarly, the WGFP has become a Western Ghats Forestry 'Destruction' Programme, destroying the tropical forests and annihilating people's initiatives.

Both these projects funded by the ODA have destroyed the fragile ecosystems of Karnataka. The KSFP was the agent of destruction in dry zones, whilst the WGFP is the agent of destruction in the tropical forests. In both these forestry projects, ODA money is being used to evict the poorest groups from their livelihood. These forestry projects are like a 'Death Machine' for destroying forests, as well as uprooting people from their minuscule survival resource base like land and forests.

The KFP Perspective

If this factual analysis seems prejudiced, let us for a moment put ourselves into the shoes of the KFD and see the WGFP from their perspective.

The KFD has the sole responsibility for managing the fragile ecosystems of the region and operates under various kinds of pressures. In relative terms, we should give credit to the KFD for having conserved some of the natural forests in the Western Ghats belt in Karnataka. In comparison to other southern states, like Kerala and Tamil Nadu, where forests have been decimated extensively, the KFD has a good track record. In reality, the KFD has to meet the demands of producing the revenue from forests to fuel the development of the state. The forests of Uttara Kannada contributes more than Rs.60 (60 crores of rupees) million to the state treasury. The KFD is compelled to 'exploit' these fragile ecosystems due to socio-economic pressures. This is in fact the appropriation of nature's biodiversity to satisfy the minuscule elites in society. The economic and political pressures to exploit resources are so powerful that the state government hardly understands the need to conserve tropical forests. These factors compel the KFD to adopt policies to fill the treasury with revenue from timber. With reduction in the extent of the state's natural forests over the last decades, it is a tough task to keep the revenue constant. It is against this socio-economic background that one has to understand why the KFD has become repressive while implementing the WGFP.

Since implementation of the WGFP, the KFD has to obey the orders of two masters. The state's political interests need the revenue from forests but have nonetheless reduced investment in forestry operations. The political forces think that tropical forests are a treasure house, a bottomless pit, that will yield even when the "capital stock" is exhausted. The KFD has to perform under the double pressure of the state's political masters and the ODA, which is providing funds for WGFP. In order to show that they are utilising ODA funds, they need to establish plantations that are visible, which can be shown to funders. Under such circumstances, they are forced to adopt repressive techniques to free land for afforestation from the people who are using it for growing food/tree crops. Though the WGFP says that it is not target oriented, the project's promoters surely want to see 'their' forestry expertise being implemented on the ground. It is this unforeseen pressure on KFD that has led to the destruction of forests and of the local people's resource base, inflicting hardships on poorest groups.

COLONIALISM IN THE NAME OF JOINT FORESTRY PROGRAMME

The region of Western Ghats popularly referred as Malnad is the only narrow strip that still has one of the best tropical forests in the world. This rich forest belt has been the place of origin for many of the rivers like Kaveri, Tunga Badra, Sharavathi and Kali.

These Western Ghats, which are a life line ecologically, economically and for sustaining the vast tracts of irrigated area in the deccan plateau are facing threats from various developmental projects. Up till now, if the power projects were the biggest threats to the forests of late, the so called guardians of the forests, namely the forest department itself has come up with a developmental project with the assistance of Overseas Development Administration (ODA), which is posing a big threat to the survival of forests in the Western ghats. This programme by the name of Western Ghats Forestry Project (WGFP) has received an assistance of Rs. 842 millions from ODA.

History

ODA is not new to Karnataka. It had the credibility of funding the most infamous, controversial and anti-poor Social forestry project. Which was opposed by the enlightened public of Karnataka. Having bitten dust in that project this British aid agency seems to be back with a vengeance to fund the WGFP. However, in this attempt, at the initial stages itself ODA had to face opposition by the Voluntary Organisations (VOs) of Karnataka and by the enlightened public of United Kingdom for not providing any space for peoples participation. When Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, the then Prime Minister of UK conceded the view of VOs of Karnataka, ODA and the forest department of Karnataka had no alternative than to create a space for peoples participation. While granting the demand of VOs, the forest department and ODA grabbed the emerging trend in forest management called Joint Forest Planning and Management (JFPM) with the users of forest, especially the local

people. This had become obligatory on the part of Forest Department of Karnataka. After the run away success of experiments in West Bengal and Orissa the Ministry of Environment and Forests at the center had issued an order to all the states form JFPM. Thus being forced into the concept of JFPM, forest department of Karnataka launched WGFP with lot of publicity and fanfare and called the entire project with a budget of Rs. 842 million as a process of learning to establish JFPM. Such an expensive learning seems to have been loaded with several short comings. We wish to throw light on such short comings and how does the process of learning with an expensive budget of Rs. 842 million help people of Karnataka.

The WGFP has laudable objectives such a to maintain the ecology and environment of Western ghats. At the same time it also speaks of sustained yield. This makes up to doubt whether the WGFP will toe the line of Social Forestry and whether the labudable objectives are a cover for the dubious activities of the sustained yield. What is this sustained yield? This can be understood by looking at the economic benefits planned to be derived. The project proposal mentions under Economic Benefits "An import parity price of teak, which is imported as present, was estimated and economic prices, net of taxes and subsidies, were calculated for other forest products and used to estimate benefit flows". What is expected from the project by the forestry department can be understood has nothing but growing teak to save the expenditure on imports. Such a doubt gets further strengthened from the way returns are calculated. For all the plantations for the gap planting the returns seems to be sensitive to the discount rate and say that the returns will be considerably higher when Wincremental productivity of existing stock which will be thinned at the time of gap planting is included". For which process of planting the forest has to be thinned? It is only in the case of commercial plantations like teak. Further, if it is purely thinning, it has to be in the existing teak plantations. Then

why one has to call it gap filling. Is it to cut down the existing tree wealth and which is not possible in the normal course due to ban on selection felling. Is it ultimately to cut down local species and to plant teak. Therefore, the objective of ODA funding the WGFP is, as in the case of Social Forestry, to destroy the rich bio-diversity and to plant monocultures and commercially valuable trees.

Zonation

The biased objectives of the project seems to have percolated into the policies formulated for the project. One of the policies is to recategorise the forests as zones. It was our colonial masters, namely Britishers, who classified the forests and now once again the project funed by the past colonial masters is attempting at re-classifying forests into "Zones".

For ecological reasons (no where in the document what this ecological reasons are not specified) and for the development of forests, the forest department proposes to form zones within the forests.

The zones are:

- I CORE ZONE: It will comprise of Ecologically important areas in hills. No human habitation is allowed.
- II MAIN ZONE: Major forest areas (Main forests) without any human habitation.
- III MAIN ZONE: With habitation (Forests with people)
- IV BOUNDARY ZONE: Edge of forests near villages
- V COMMON LAND/REVENUE LAND (Outside forests)

By defining zones in the above manner access to forests for the villagers is restricted to zones IV and V which are totally depleted and degraded. The best areas are reserved for ecological and forestry reasons declared as not only inaccessible **but** also as uninhabitable. Therefore, once again this, from developmental

point of view, is impractical and a well thought about methodology to prevent the villagers and tribals having an access to the main forests. By restricting access to the zones I, II and III, probably, the tribals who are presently living within these zones may be thrown out of the forests. Uttara Kannada where 80 per cent of the geographical area belongs to forest department, if zonation comes into effect, it can result in displacement of many civilized and the tribals such as Siddhis, Gowlis and Halakki Vokkaligas who continue to live within the forests even today.

Finance

The dubiousness within the objectives of WGF comes out, if one examine the allocation of the budget for various activities.

- A. Only 45 percent is allocated for planting. Rest of the budget is for administrative purposes.
- B. There is an allocation of 10 percent of the budget for consultancies. As per the agreed terms, the consultants will be from UK, which obviously indicates that in the name of consultancies the amount gets back to UK.

There is no dearth of forest experts in our country. But ODA has insisted on foreign experts of British origin. Which creates a doubt whether the project is to create employment for the citizens of Britain. There seems to be no rationale in hiring experts or to bring in experts of alien culture for formation JFPM, wherein one has to interact with the local people, mostly tribal, either living next to the forests or within the forests.

- C. If 18.87 per cent of the budget is allocated for the activities at head quarters only 2.92 percent is allocated to the actual JFPM activities. Similarly, if 20.02 per cent is allocated for tree enrichment, ecology, tree improvement and seedling protection, to plant for meeting local needs is only 18.29 per cent of the budget is allocated. Thus in the name of

joint forest management, forest officials are creating chances for enhancing their sphere of activities.

Training:

There is a huge allocation to cover the costs of training officials of forest department at UK. This raises lot of doubts on the need for training officials in UK for JFPM. When the experiments such as Arabari of West Bengal and experiments in Orissa are being cited as the best JFPM by the forest sector of World Bank and Ford Foundation, the rationale in sending officials to UK for training appears to be as a cover for an ulterior purpose. Is it, in any way, a gratitude paid back for agreeing to have only British consultants. The biggest joke is even to study the livestock in Uttara Kannada, a consultant was brought down from UK. When there are many anthropologists in India who have made innumerable studies on Gowlis who happen to the major livestock owners in Uttara Kannada.

Above all these unspelled agenda in the name of JFPM, the entire costs of the project is reported as fund but in actuality it is loan to be repaid and definitely a burden which citizens of Karnataka have to bear for the so called learning process of ODA and Forest Department.

PEOPLES PARTICIPATION

Even though the WGF is declared as an experiment in JFPM the project proposal says the fundamental instrument for delivering sustainability is JFPM. The objective does not seem to be JFPM, as in the case of social forestry, it is once again, nothing but growing trees for commercial purpose in the name of people.

The plan of enrichment of natural forests and gap filling are concepts evolved to endanger the rich bio-diversity of Western Ghats.

One of the models suggested for planting by the JFPM is multi-purpose model. The experience in the past two years does not convince us to believe that the model will be multi-purpose,

since most of the plantations planted so far are monocultures of acacia or casurina.

Infrastructure Development

One of the avowed objectives of ODA is to extend funds to bring about institutional changes within the forest department. What change that has been brought about, so far in the pre-plan stage, is the creation of an another sector called JFPM wing within the department with quite a good provision for new recruitment, promotions. Maruthi gypsies and computers.

Similarly, in the name of Social Forestry, huge amounts were spent on infra-structural development. In the same pattern many positions at the top level were created and many vehicles were purchased. This makes us to doubt whether for every new project, is there a necessity to create additional posts and purchase latest vehicles on the shelf. If it is so then what happened to the posts and vehicles which were created in the social forestry project to enhance the delivery capability of the department. We have every doubt that in the name of the people, once again, certain individuals in the department are being promoted. Should citizens of Karnataka pay for the promotion of few officials.

We should not bend low to the pressures of ODA, but strive to evolve a joint management policy involving local people as carried out over several decades by the villagers of Halkar (Uttara Kannada district), Badamakanahalli (Kolar district) and Hunsur (Shimoga district). These examples from grassroots shows the practical options before forest department of Karnataka.

PANDURANG HEGDE
PARISARA SANMRAKSHANA KENDRA
CHOWKIMATH
SIRSI 581 401 (Dist- Uttara Kannada)
Karnataka

ODA PROGRAMME AT BELLANKERI (DASANKOPPA)

Post : Dasankoppa

Taluk : SIRSI

Dvn : SIRSI

Bellankeri is almost the edge of Western Ghat with semi malnad (semi ghat) forestes. Village contains both hilly and plain areas. Water scarcity is a problem in the village during summer months. Paddy is the main crop of the village. Green grain cowpea, cotton etc., are grown on small scale, depending on the availability of moisture in the soil. Soils are red mixed brown in colour. Dasankoppa a central village is 3 kms from this village. Dasankoppa is on Sirsi-Hangal main road but Bellankeri is on Dasankoppa-Banavasi road. Village has good transport and bus facilities. Population of the village is about 750 and number of families in the village is 104. Schedules Caste, Scheduled Tribes and Lingayat community constitutes Mohammadans. Most of the families have their own land and some families are land less who work as labourers throughout the year. Some Muslim families are engaged in business. The economic condition of the villagers is not good.

Village is surrounded by medium forests on all sides. Temperature of the village is high. Forest has all type of natural plants. Some valuable medicinal plants are also found in the village, but usage of these plants for medicinal purposes is very less. Most of the villagers use English medicines. Except Muslim women all other women of other communities work as labourers in addition to their own field works. Fuelwood collection is made by mostly women folk of the village. Village has no gobar gas, in any house. Due to this villagers face acute shortage of fuelwood. Thus they collect dry woods and as well as green woods for the purpose of fuelwood, as a result villagers are losing forests around them day by day.

Villagers maintain cattles according to their land holdingx. About 15 years back green grasses and fodder availability was ample in the village but now getting green grasses became a

difficult task. Cattles rarely graze in forest areas. Earlier Eucalyptus plantations were not there but now due to this grass growth was proper. Today due to Eucalyptus plantation land has become unfit for anything, soil has become hard like stones. Acacia plantation has also same effect on the land according to the farmers of the village. These plants will not allow other species to grow on same area. Thus farmers are forced to feed their cattles in the cattle shed. Due to uneven and erratic rains paddy crop is also not harvested properly. Secondly if crop growth is proper, rains will damage them during harvesting season. This has direct affect on cattle population. Cattle population has got reduced to 50% from the 15 years. Thus villagers maintain only minimum number of cattles. Moreover price of green grasses or dry straw is also high.

ODA PLANTATION:

Near Bellankeri-Govt has decided to establish ODA plantation with the help of villagers. For this purpose 134 acres of land in the survey number 6 has been selected. 2'x2' sized trench has been dug along the boundary, and 1½ x 1 x 1½ sized pits are dug at 2' x 2' ft distance. They have plan of planting about 75,000 saplings in the 134 acre area. This particular area has some Eucalyptus trees here and there. 6-7 years back selective feeling of all these existing Eucalyptus plantation was done. Today also stumps of these plants can be seen. According to farmers and president of JFPM government has lost about 3 crore rupees revenue from this plantation, due to early felling of Eucalyptus. Now also by allowing regeneration government can earn income in future without any additional investments. By seeing illeffects of Eucalyptus plantations farmers, land lords and landless labourers decided to cultivate some plain lands in the area about 3 years back. Reasons for encroachment is not due to poverty or climatic changes or due to illeffects of Eucalyptus but to improve their economic & conditions. Farmers were growing paddy or cotton in about 50 acres area in the ODA planned 134 acre area. This area is near the tank.

ODA, RFO Gangadhar and DFO's came to the spot and informed about the establishment of plantation. The farmers who encroached the area and others objected this plan. But due to interference by local MLA Gopal Kanade, Forest Officials agreed to leave those encroached areas. But the farmers who encroached this area are mostly from Dasankoppa village and very few from Bellankeri village. Thus farmers of Bellankeri are ready to give co-operation in establishment of plantation. Farmers of neither village believe forest officials because they may plant acacia instead of request by the farmers in due course of time. Farmers desire to plant Jack, Mango, Cashew, Champaka etc., in addition to evergreen species. They also desire to plant acacia or cashew plants at the border of plantation. Now pits are dug in between four stools bushes of Eucalyptus and this may not be ideal for growth of other species. For digging pit, 60 NP per pit were given to labourers.

NEEDS

Fuelwood: At present village is facing acute shortage of fuelwood. If and only if plantation is well established and govt. gives woods to farmers then it may be solved according to the farmers of the village. Farmers has to travel atleast two miles to search fuelwoods. Every day women folk of the village travel in groups in search of fuelwoods. If Government is ready to give dry fuelwoods from the established plantation then it will be useful. ODA officials promised to cater this demand according to some members of the committee.

Fodder: Village cattles are also facing acute shortage of green grasses and fodder. Due to planting of acacia and Eucalyptus land has become barren and became unfit for growing any other species and even grasses. Farmers plant jack, mango, champaka, neral etc., to meet their demands in their lands and this should be followed in ODA planted area.

Fertilizer: Due to unavailability of green leaves and lack of knowledge about natural pesticides farmers have least knowledge

about organic manuring, by planting various evergreen plants in the plantation one can know more about natural/organic manuring and natural pesticides. Farmers are not ready to believe forest officials until they plant something in the planed area, although they recommaned mixed plantation.

Effect On Ecology:

Due to planting of Eucalyptus farmers have seen lot of changes in soil characters of the area by experiencing shortage of greengrasses and fodder. No one has observed any change in ecology of the area, perhaps they are not worried about ecology. Farmers have no objection to plant other species except Acacia and Eucalyptus in the area. Farmers want greenary to be re-established as earlier by any means.

ASSESSMENT OF FORESTRY PROGRAMME

(The Opinion of the people)

The farmers of Dasankoppa village should not encroach the land at Bellankeri and therefore forest officials should take care to see that all encroached land is planted with saplings. This is strong demand of Bellankeir villagers. They don't want to leave about 50 acres of encroached land for cultivation, that too for farmers of Dasankoppa village. They want to plant species like Jack, mango and other evergreen plants. They demand that some portion of forest land nearby the village should be left for grazing. They also demand that dry woods and durable woods should be given to villagers under concession rates. These are all opinions/demands of villagers.

JOINT FOREST MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Committee was formed during February month. It includes 2 SC, 1 artisan, 1 landless labourer, 3 women, 1 school teacher, Mandal Pradhan and Village Accountant as the members. Including President Ganapati Gowder there are totally 11 members in the committee. General body members are 104 in total, one each from every family. Decision on plantation is yet to be taken in

the forth coming meeting. In the first meeting 70 members were participated, although village population is more than 700. Next meeting was attended by only 10-15 members and same trend is continuing till today. It is very disappointing to the farmers that, forest officials are not giving correct ideas about the QDA programme, and villagers are much suspicious in this regard.

IDEAS OF PEOPLE

People want to plant, plants that are useful to agricultural purposes, medicinal purposes and for fruit purposes. Since English medicines are costly they want to plant medicinal plants. They are trying to keep village always green by planting useful and evergreen plants. Farmers are firm with respect to these decisions. Plantation formed should also be useful to cattles in one or other way, according to elders of the village.

CHECKLIST ON ASSESSMENT OF FORESTRY PROJECT

I. VILLAGE BACKGROUND

Name : Oudal
Taluk : SIRSI (U.K.)

Oudal is a village situated about 22km from Sirsi, in Sirsi-Jaddigadde road. Oudal is nearest small village for Sonda we can go to Oudal by the bus from Sirsi. The village is built on the valley and the village is surrounded by the mountain full of trees and bushes. But village back side, trees are scattered on the mountain. Totally that area is underrecting land. The whole valley regions fully of arecanut plantation and paddy field and one pond is there. On the side of the arecanut plantation. A small river is flowing out side of the village. According to some people it is heavy rain fall area. Totally we can see the beautiful scene on the village.

DESCRIPTION OF VILLAGE FAMILIES

Total families: 40

Totally 40 families are living in the village. All of them are farmers. So all the families are having their own land. Out of 40 families 25 families that is nearly 60% belongs to Marathas, and 25% belongs to Naik caste and remaining 15% belongs to upper caste in Hindus that is Havyak Brahmins. Upper caste families are well forward. But Marathas and Naik families are very backward and poor. All most all the families are living in the straw roofed houses. It clearly shows that the village is very backward. In the village all the farmers are depends on the agriculture. All of the backward class people depend on the rain water for their occupation. But some uppoer caste families are having their own irrigation well for their field. So these peoples are not depends only rain water. The main crops of village are Arecanut plantation (cardamom, pepper, bananaetc) and paddy and only one families was cultivate the silk plantation. The people of the area adopting the old method for their

occupation. The peoples are not interested in the modern method for the production of crops. The farmers are transplanting different types of pepper varieties like, paniyoor, uddakare, mallisara and banana varieties like mysore mitte, puttabale, kari-bale etc., and farmers using different types of paddy varieties like hegge, Mullare, Madras sanna etc.

Village Population

Total population of the village: 300

literate: 10%

illiterate: 90%

Total population of the village is three hundred. This population shows that each family has an average of 7 to 8 members. But 60% of the people belongs to Maratha caste, 25% are of Naik caste and remaining 15% are Brahmin caste.

In the village only 10% of the people are able to read and write nearly 90% of the peoples are don't know how to read and write and no one should be government job holders. Out of 300 population only 3 members are work in forest department on daily wages basis. Due to the illiterary of the village. It clearly shows that the whole village is totally backward.

Womens in the Oudal village mainly backward class families, used the forest bring green leaves for their cattle bedding and fodder for their cattle feeds and fuelwood. 50 womens are depending on the forest for their daily needs.

Cattle population/Ownership

Cattle population of the village 265

Totally two hundred seventifive cattles are their in the village.

All most all the families are having the cattle. All the families are using the cattles mainly for fertilizers, to get milk and for the cultivation of land and religious purposes.

In the rainy season the families will leave their cattle freely. The cattles usually go to the forest for their fodder and will return back to the home at evening. But in summer season some

families are not allow to the cattle to go out for their fodder. In the home they will supply all needs to the cattle. But now the situation is quite changed. All the families are not allow to the cattle to go out far their fodder in the rainy season also because there is no fodder space in the village. But some families will leave their cattle only their own fodder field.

II. ODA PLANTATION

Area: 40 acres

Survery No.: 22

Model: Miscellaneous

Under the "Western Ghat Development Planning Scheme" 40 acres of land had been transplanted. To protect the plants they covered the whole plantation area by the fence. The entrance to the plantation for the cattle is strictly prohibited. Sapindus laurifolius, Bamboo, Dillania indiae, Xylia xylocaspa, Lagerstroemia lanceolata, Terminalia perminaria tomentosa, Terminalia peniculata Teak etc., are transplanted in the area. Dig the holes to put the plants was started on 15th of May 1993 by the government and they had completed on end of the month. But plantation was started on 10th of June and they had completed on 15th of July 1993.

When actual plantation were done, their real motivation is quite different. They are not motivated to stop the environment fuelwood, and bamboo.

III. NEEDS:

In the village all the people are using the forest products out of them, many are backward class people. They used forest products many for full. Because they have no gobar gas plants. The people of the village uses the plants in the forest for fertilizer (green leaves) fodder peoples are not using the plants which are available in the plantation area. The government had supplied the fuelwood at regionable rate.

In the village many families are not allow the cattle to go out for their fodder. In the home they will supply limited fodder to the cattle. Because there is no fodder field in the village.

In the rainy season some families will leave their cattle only their own fodder field.

IV. AFFECTS OF PLANTATION

On People: According to villagers the new plants which are growing in the area develops the environment of whole village. But firstly the village people wants daily needs of forest when the actual plantation were done the government had strictly prohibiting the entrance of people as well as cattle. This is mainly effected by village people and cattle.

On Cattle(fodder): Since entry of the cattle to the plantation area is strictly prohibited. The cattle should search for their fodder only in the home. This keeps the whole village in a difficult position.

On Ecology of the area: In the village the people says that, first preparation they want to give their daily needs for forest and then they give the environment. But any way growing trees on that area, clearly shows that the surrounding area is ecologically development.

V. ASSESSMENT OF NEW FORESTRY PROGRAMME AND BY PEOPLE FOREST COMMITTEE:

Except this plantation scheme no other forestry scheme was made by the forest department since peoples are not interested in making a people forest committee, no committee was made in the village.

VI. JOINT FOREST MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

No committee is made in the village to take the care about the plantation. In that respect the forest department didnot arrange any meeting the village. But the Hulekal ranger, DFO and Forest Officers had gone to the village without asking any thing with the villagers, they chosen the area to put the plants. When villagers came to know about the forest department scheme, they met the Ranger Officer. They requested with the Ranger leave the scheme in their village. They told that they have only small

area in the village for their cattles and for other works. But Ranger did not care the request. But he told that the forest department will supply the wood by pass system at regionable rates, without any way this condition is agreed by the peoples.

The view of the people about these committee. No committee is formed or no meeting was arranged in the village to look over the plantation. It forest department wants to make a committee now, the peoples of the village are not ready to give the support.

VII. The participation of village people on the planting trees and their ideas:

The involvement of the villagers to develop the plants is very less. Since there is a guard to watch the plantation in the day time. Even though they are not leaving their cattles in the plantation area they are not giving co-operation to the guard. Totally they are hating the "plantation area" and also the whole forest department.

Date of visit: 13-10-1993

ODA REPORT

(Discussion with Jaisheel Gauda and PH on 27 May 94)

Village : Bhashi (Banavasi)

Banavasi Range

Forest Division: SIRSI

BACKGROUND

Bhashi is situated about six kilometers from Banavasi. It is surrounded by Varada river on three sides. In the monsoon when the river is in full swing it becomes difficult to cross the river. However, one can travel to the village through Narur, which is a longer route. This is the last village of Sirsi tehshil, Uttara Kannada district. The surrounding forests is getting destroyed due to constant felling by people involved in smuggling activities and population pressure. As the forest belong to Shimoga district, the illegal felling has acquired a greater strength in the region.

POPULATION

Families: about 200

Population: 1,500

Caste groups:	Lingayats	56
	Namadhari Naik	50
	Harijan	25
	Badiger	15
	Madival	30
	Banagar	5
	Madar (Chamar)	1

The Namadhari Naik community is numerically strong and they are constantly in conflict with the Lingayat community. This caste division has affected the unity of the village.

PLANTATION (Survey No. 504, 545 acres)

The village has been selected for the ODA sponsored JFPM programme. However, the plantation work has not been started in the village. The proposed plantation area is 545 acres adjacent to the village.

About 200 acres of the area selected for the plantation is encroached by the p̄lx people from the village. Some for cultivation of pineapple and others for growing dry fodder or Karada grass. Some farmers have erected a hedge on this land to as certain their boundary.

The proposed plantation area is barren, except with certain small shrubs. The people from the village collected fuelwood and it was grazing land for the village cattle.

FORMATION OF VILLAGE FOREST COMMITTEE:

Before the formation of the VFC the guard came to the village and announced that a meeting to form the JFPM will be held in the village on 29/9/93.

On 29/9/93 ODA DFO Gurusiddaih, RFO Nagaraj, RFO Banavasi, Paramashivayya attended the meeting. B.T. Naik the local (Congress) political leader and Rama Naik were on the dias including Jaisheel Gauda (JG). The Vinue of the meeting was in front of Kalabhiraveshwar Temple. About 200 people attended the meeting. Only men attended the meeting.

The forest officials explained about the JFPM programme. After the speech of the forest officials the local leader B.T. Naik told the people that in the proposed plantation area of about 200 acres is encroached by people of the village. He requested the forest officials that this area encroached by people should not be included in ODA. The officials agreed to this condition. The officials wanted to form the VFC in the meeting unanimously. After explaining about the VFC the forest officials left the village. However they asked some people to come to the Forest Office in Sirsi to finalise the VFC.

Accordingly, the people went to the forest office. About six persons were selected as promoters and the officials said that a meeting will be held on 27/10/93 to form VFC in the village. When the forest officials came to the meeting they even had a

list of VFC members and also the name of Chairman. However, the people objected to it and asked for election. Accordingly, RFO Nagaraj told people that election date will be specified. The members of general body were enrolled by payment of ~~rs. 20/-~~ Rs. 2/- membership.

On 30/10/93 election was held in the village. There were five nomination for the post of Chairman of VFC. However 3 persons with drew their name and only JG and M.K. Naik remained as final candidates.

Election was held and JG became VFC Chairman with a margin of 67 votes.

All other VFC members (10) were elected unanimously. However no one from Namadhari community became the member. B.T. Naik who praised JFPM In the first meeting blamed the same scheme. This group wanted to dominate the VFC, but because of election they were exposed and their candidate was defeated.

On 20/11/93 the first meeting of VFC washeld in the village. The Chairman requested VFC secretary to call the meeting The agenda was

- to finalise inaguration of VFC and invitation of Chief Guest
- to take decision about encroached land
- about plantation/species.

The meeting was held and the decision was taken to invite Local MLA, B.T. Naik, Conservator, Banavasi RFO and Parashuramappa, a local leader from adjoining Sorab. The dates were also finalised.

The whole event took political turn as local MLA declined to attend the meeting and he also put pressures on forest officials not to attend the meeting. The forest officials asked the VFC Chairman to postpone the meeting. Inspite to this the meeting was held and VFC was inagurated by Parashuramappa.

VFC Chairman sent letters to Chief Conservator about the meeting and seeking justice. He alleaged that VFC is being used by KFD.

There after the VFC Chairman JG gave a press statement, saying that peoples view is not respected in JFPM.

Regarding the VFC the forest officials have started plantation work. They have dug 1,00,000 pits and trench.

The forest officials threatned that VFC will be dismissed as the Chairman is supporting encroachment. In order to prove the case they have even filed a false case against, VFC Chairman. He was protesting against digging pits in land where people were growing groundnut (in encroached land). While digging pits also the KFD has cleverly manuplated in such a way that it has not touched the land belonging to the group supported by politically influential people (B.T. Naik). Thus, the poorest people were harassed more.

On 15/11/93 the Chairman gave noticed to the Secretary, VFC to held the meeting. But the KFD called General Body Meeting on 27/11/93. Hundreds of people gathered. The KFD officials charged the VFC, how come they went to press? They said VFC is company of opposition.

Can the VFC show how the KFD officials are involved in looting money? Have they seen it? RFO, JFPM said that the Chairman JG has supported encroachment.

Then JG replied to all their questions. He had every document to prove that he was legally correct. The KFD had no answers. The people questioned them on many occasions. Minganna Harijan said "Why did you bring this scheme to our village? Have you come here to insult us?" RFO, Banavasi went to beat the Harijan. At the end the ACF said that we should forget about the conflict and should work for future. No resolutions were written and KFD officials went away.

The Chairman visited DFO to explain the matter. But they ignored him. Saying "We have the power. We will show you what we can do".

The Chairman took part in training programme organised by MYRADA. Again while sharing the experiences, the JFPM RFO Nagaraj became angry. Out of 10 Chairmans (VFC) only the Vasant Naik, Kilar) support him. All other Chairman are spineless and they are puppets of KFD.

They even approached local MIA who assured to support VFC. But he was also politically inclined against, VFC. He is getting his share from KFD.

COMMENT

This village has shown active interest and it is the first village where elections are held for VFC. Even when peoples participation was forth coming, the KFD has tried to destroy it. It is unfortunate that the KFD does not want peoples participation. It wants only puppet VFC which endorees their ideas.
