

PEOPLE'S INVOLVEMENT IN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN MADHYA PRADESH

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Introduction

The State of Madhya Pradesh has an area of 44.3 million ha, or about 14% of the geographical area of India. It encompasses the major part of the highlands of Central India and constitutes parts of the upper catchments of five principal river systems, the Yamuna, Ganga, Mahanadi, Godavari and Narmada. Maintenance of the ecological balance in the State is of critical importance to the nation as a whole. Rainfall varies from less than 800 mm per year in Western parts of the State to about 1500 mm in the East and South-East. About 19.6 million ha, or 44% of the area of the State, are classed as agricultural land, of which 4.3 million ha are irrigated. In 1987, the livestock population was estimated at 45 million heads, and migratory herds are thought to number about 2 million heads during the year. The total human population of the State was estimated as 55.18 million in the 1991 census, growing at a rate of 2.6% per annum between 1981 and 1991. Of the total, 15.3 million are tribals and 9.6 million scheduled castes. Poverty in rural areas is a concern as almost 41% of the rural population is below the poverty line, compared to 20% in urban areas. Average population density is 149 persons per km². Legally designated forest lands, amounting to 15.4 million ha, are under the control of the Madhya Pradesh

Forestry Department (MPFD) and are classified as Reserved Forest (8.3 million ha), Protected Forests (6.6 million ha), and Unclassified (0.5 million ha). Forest vegetation types vary with agro-climatic zones and include dry thorn, dry and moist deciduous, sub-tropical semi-evergreen and tropical moist evergreen forests. Canopy closure varies greatly with human interference. Closed forests, that is, with canopy density greater than 40 per cent, cover 9.5 million ha, or about 60 per cent of the total. The remaining four million ha are referred to as open forest, with canopy density of between 10 and 40 per cent as per the World Bank Staff Appraisal Report (Anon., 1995).

Users and Uses of Forests

While Madhya Pradesh comprises only 13.49% of the geographical area of India, it possesses nearly 21% of its total forest cover as per the Forest Survey of India (FSI) (Anon., 1997). This forest cover occupies 29.6% of the geographical area of the State, which is much higher than the national average, i.e., 19.27% as per the same report (Anon., 1997). Whereas this disproportionately high forest cover bestows the State with certain advantages such as abundance in flora and fauna leading to greater biodiversity and gene pool, it also encumbers the government with the

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responsibility of preserving and developing this resource. These forests, in addition to meeting the needs of the urban and industrial establishment, are the life and livelihood of a huge rural population of over 55 million people, nearly 25 million of which are tribals comprising of Bhils, Bhilalas, Gonds, etc. and scheduled castes (reserved categories) who are dependent on the forests for fuelwood, fodder, timber and NTFP.

Forests, which are the source of life support system have been the victim of "Free for all psychology". In this process a few powerful groups of vested interests aided and abetted by the ruling system pocketed the benefits. Undeniably, however, a larger share also went to local people who could meet their and their cattle's energy needs from the adjoining forest areas through uncontrolled fuelwood collection and overgrazing. In this process, the forests became victim of both human greed and need. The regeneration suffered and forests became degraded. The poor people of rural areas had to bear the maximum brunt of forest loss.

As is evident, one of the major causes of environmental problems is poverty and to overcome poverty, two things are essential. First, development must continue which means judicious and equitable exploitation of natural resources. Secondly, there must be a check in human and cattle population in order to prevent the collapse of the life support system. Both require pragmatic approaches in thinking and call for sustainable consumption so that the exploitation by the present generation does not jeopardise the future of generations yet unborn. Wisdom demands that the resources should be handed over to the next generation in enhanced and improved

condition, by taking advantage of modern scientific technology and by resorting to sound resource management principles. As the threats to the forests primarily come from the dependencies of the rural communities, these threats can be managed only with the participation of these communities. The implementation of such a programme needs not only huge cash investments, but also a drastic change in the attitudes of the government machinery towards the forest dwelling people.

Past Development Strategies

Demand for timber during World War II meant that the prescriptions of Working Plans were suspended, so that at the time of independence many forests had been heavily exploited. During the early Five-Year Plan periods, priority was given to survey and demarcation, preparation of Working Plans, plantation establishment and forest utilisation. Subsequently, the policy was to maximise timber production and enforce forest protection. In 1972, the National Commission on Agriculture recommended that "there should be a change over from conservation oriented forestry to more dynamic program of production forestry" (Anon., 1998). By the Sixth Five-Year Plan period (1980-85) ecological balance, economic stability for the poor and greater forest protection were being given emphasis. The failure to control unauthorised exploitation and a growing realisation of forests as a biological necessity and major part of the nation's natural resources heritage, led to the formulation of the National Forest Policy in 1988.

The National Forestry Policy of 1988 defines the primary goals of forest management as first, to conserve the natural environment, second, to meet the

requirements of local people (particularly tribal population and the poor), for forest produce, and third, as a source of wood and other products for industries and other non-local users. The policy envisages participation of communities in the management of forest resources as a means of achieving these objectives.

The implementation of the New Forest Policy of 1988 was actuated by the Government of India's resolution in June 1990, which paved the way for active participation of the people in the management of forests.

People's involvement in Resource Management - JFM

Poverty of people, pace of degradation and loss of productivity form a vicious circle, which leads to decline in natural resources. This affects life-sustaining capacities of individuals, families and communities. To protect the environment and meet people's needs it is obvious that the Government policies and programmes are reoriented towards sustainable pattern of development - a philosophy now globally accepted. The author feels that the paradigm for development has changed commercial input-output to environment-development co-existence. Antagonistic relationships between people and the resource managers needs to be reset on a new sound footing of sustainable human development in which villagers are associated with the government functionaries as a partner to uplift the socio-economic and environmental milieu of a particular area.

The philosophy of Joint Forest Management (JFM) is a development alternative wedded with socio-economic realities in a multiple cultural and ethnic

setup to embark on a path of prosperity and productivity through the judicious use of limited natural resources on a sustainable basis. Its success depends on the endeavours of every collaborator more so on the part of already organised setup. It is now widely accepted that rural people living in and around protected forests must be brought into the management process in order for forest protection activities to succeed. The concept of JFM is a step in this direction. This strategy involves participatory planning, encompassing participatory objective setting to link conservation and development, strengthening of local institutional structures, management agreements, monitoring and review (Anon., 1999).

The implication of JFM is "the sharing of products, responsibilities, control, and decision making authority over forest lands between forest departments and local user groups." The implementation of the new Forest Policy of 1988 led to Government of India's resolution in June 1990 which paved the way for active participation of the people in the protection and management of forests. This strategic approach has led the Govt. of India to issue guidelines for the participation of communities residing nearby the forest areas as partners in management. Accepting the approach for the empowerment of the people, Govt. of M.P. issued a resolution in 1991. Subsequently in 1995, the earlier resolution was slightly modified to incorporate women and landless households as well as usufruct sharing by the committee. The 1995 Government Resolution on JFM has been further revised during 1999-2000.

In the revised resolution, three types of committees, viz. Forest Protection Committees (FPCs), Village Forest

Committees (VFCs) and Eco-Development Committees (EDCs) have been recognised. All voters in the village would be the members of the committees. The resolution has taken care of the anomaly that existed between FPCs and VFCs regarding usufruct sharing. While VFCs would get 30% of the net value of the final produce as earlier, the FPCs would now get 10% of the net value of the final produce from the coupes in earmarked area. The EDCs are to be treated at par with FPCs or VFCs, depending upon the health of the forest in which they are situated. In addition to this, 100% intermediate yields are to be given free to VFCs and FPCs along with royalty-free 'nistar' to all committees.

Under JFM three set of committees are established viz. :

Village Forest Committee (VFC) : VFCs have been formed in the forest areas upto 0.4 canopy density, i.e. the forest area which has been degraded through biotic interference like population pressure, grazing, fire, etc.

Forest Protection Committee (FPC) : FPCs have been formed in the areas having closed forest i.e. more than 40 per cent of the canopy density.

Eco-Development Committees (EDC) : EDCs have been formed in villages around protected areas for villagers who are largely dependent on forest resources for their livelihood.

Thus, the sustainable development of the State-owned forests involves management of the forests through participation of VFCs, FPCs and EDCs incorporating the resolution of Government of Madhya Pradesh. The degraded forests

are supposed to be managed jointly with VFC and a programme of resource development for the villages drawn up as part of village resource development programme through preparation of detailed micro-plan. Similarly for good forest areas deficient in regeneration a new concept of Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) through a series of activities prescribed under Working Plan are being followed. The Eco-Development Committees manage the forest area allotted to them in the protected areas of the State. In lieu of protection being made by these committees, protection money is being deposited in accounts of these committees.

Site-specific micro-plans for Village Resource Development Programme, Management Plans for Eco-Development and site specific project reports for Assisted Natural Regeneration Programme are prepared with the active participation of members of the respective committees.

As of today, a total of 12,103 committees have been formed in Madhya Pradesh which is a remarkable achievement considering the fact that there were only 350 Protection Committees in 1993. Out of 12,103 committees, 5,316 are Forest Protection Committees (FPCs), 6,556 are Village Forest Committees (VFCs) and 231 Eco-Development Committees. Overall, the 12,103 committees both inside and outside the project are protecting an area of around 55 lakh hectares, which is around 36% of the total forest area of M.P. (Anon., 2000).

Madhya Pradesh Forestry Project

The Madhya Pradesh Forestry Project was born to meet this felt need for investment in the forestry sector. The project was designed after a prolonged

dialogue within the Forest Department and with the various other stakeholder groups of the State. The project provides funds not only for investment in the upgradation of forestry technology and forest floor management, it also mandates the upgradation of the skills and knowledge of the staff, both in traditional forestry and modern concepts. Above all, it lays highest emphasis in the participation of the forest dwellers in the management of the nearby forests and sharing the benefits. The salient features of the project are briefly described below :

Project : The Madhya Pradesh Forestry Project (MPFP) is a US\$ 58 million, World Bank aided project with IDA credit for 35 years maturity, aimed at helping the Government of Madhya Pradesh (GoMP) in developing the forestry sector in accordance with the National Forest Policy, 1988.

GoI and GoMP Strategy for Forestry Sector : Traditionally, the forests in M.P. have been managed through a low-technology-input approach to development and a 'fences and fines' approach to protection. With the adoption of the new National Forest Policy in 1988, and subsequent resolutions, the country decided to dismantle the age-old control system by giving the first charge on forest products to the neighbouring communities. The policy also seeks to maintain the environmental and ecological balance and extend the forest cover and its productivity.

Project Approach towards JFM : As stated above the project was launched with the objective of assisting the GoMP in the implementation of the above policy objectives. This was proposed to be done through a three-pronged approach:

- (i) bringing about State level policy and legal changes in conformity with the national policy,
- (ii) providing financial inputs for implementing certain important components of the National Forest Policy, and
- (iii) by training and retraining the staff for the tasks, through a massive Human Resources Development operation.

Institutional Development

Institutional Development through Management Development aims to improve the management of the sector through changing the approach of the forestry personnel from a predominantly regulatory role to one in which communities are treated as partners in the management of forest resources; increasing policy analysis capabilities; and improving the management skills of senior staff, supported by the introduction of improved management systems, for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation procedures, together with improved management information and geographical information systems.

The functioning of bureaucracy is largely controlled by the government policies. The policies reflect the goals and priorities of the 'public' and they are continually adjusted to the changes in the environment. The implementation of National Forest Policy, 1988 involves a fundamental change in the traditional culture and approach of the Forest Department. Change rather than stability is the watchword today. These changes are challenging for the civil services in the country. Keeping in mind the changing

scenario in the Department, it is of utmost importance that the department successfully re-orient itself to the needs of the ever-changing environment and this would primarily depend on the capabilities and attitudes of the staff of the Department. In that sense, the HRD efforts would prove to be the cutting edge. Obviously, no organisation can implement major policy, attitudinal and technological changes without the wholesale orientation and training of its staff and clients. Switching over from control to support system of management, treating forests as part of the resources of the rural communities, modernisation of its nursery, plantation and seed technology; promoting biodiversity conservation through eco-development and introduction of information technology as a management tool are some of the major initiatives under the project. The training is done in the form of field workshops, and customised courses delivered by local, regional and national level institutions. Most staff members have been trained in more than one subject which range from courses in basic computer appreciation and advanced MIS and GIS applications, watershed management, soil and water conservation techniques and modern nursery and plantation techniques, to Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and so on. The personnel trained include the senior-most and the junior-most functionaries as well as members of the communities and NGOs.

It was realised that merely by organising training programmes it would not be possible to bring about changes at a desired speed on sustained basis. This requires a systematic introduction of Human Resource Management and Development processes in organisations to help in harnessing human energies and

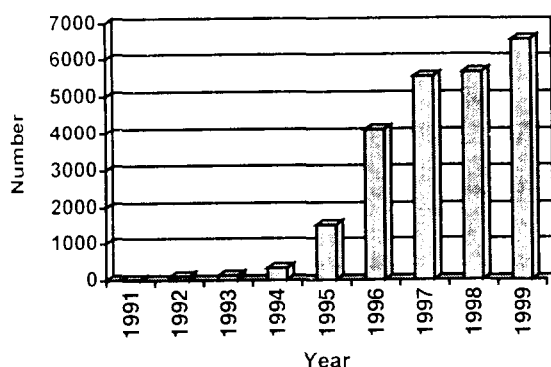
potential for personnel development and organisational effectiveness. A meaningful HRD effort requires looking at the issues of Human Resources in an integrated manner right from the stage of recruitment to retirement and even beyond. Human Resource Development can play a pivotal role in the continuous and sustained development of the Department because ultimately the ability of the Department to reorient itself to the needs of the ever changing environment would largely depend on the capabilities and attitudes of the staff of the Department.

People's participation through JFM

As of today, JFM has come a long way in Madhya Pradesh. Considering the fact that there were only around 350 Protection committees in the year 1993 which has expanded to more than 12,103 today speaks in itself for the tremendous enthusiasm that has been generated as a result of this movement. Villagers cutting across caste and class have welcomed JFM arrangement throughout the State. True, we cannot say that the enthusiasm towards JFM is the same everywhere, nevertheless, a positive beginning towards participatory approach has been initiated. Figures 1 and 2 depict the growth of the Forest Protection Committees and Village Forest Committees from 1991-92 till 1999-2000. It is obvious from the figures that the growth of the Committees has increased dramatically since the inception of the Madhya Pradesh Forestry Project - a point which reiterates the fact that the State Government is committed towards successful implementation of Joint Forest Management.

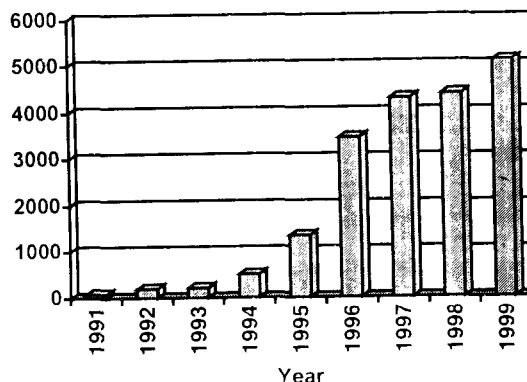
People's participation has increased due to a lot of income generating activities

Fig. 1



Growth of VFCs - 1991-1999

Fig. 2



Growth of FPCs - 1991-1999

and resource development works that have been taken up in the villages which has increased the socio-economic condition of the people (Anon., 1996-1999). Coupled with this the attitudinal change that has taken place among the staff of the Forest Department has created a very cordial *atmosphere between the staff and villagers*. Even though there has been a lot of external funding but over the years the villagers in certain areas have been able to generate their own resources from the fund available to them and also from income generating activities. This is expected to ensure sustainability in the long run as with increase in income and stress on alternative sources of energy it is expected that dependence on the forest will be reduced.

Income Generating Activities

Madhya Pradesh model of JFM, from the very beginning has imbibed the concept of rural development in forest fringes being complementary to the well being of the forests. Therefore, financial allocations for JFM activities in M.P. are allocated both for forestry works as well as rural

development activities. Financial allocation for all these works is currently being made from various possible sources. Allocations are being made under both departmental funding as well as internationally aided projects. Currently the World Bank aided M.P. Forestry Project and the funds obtained from the 10th Finance Commission for village resource development works in JFM areas are the major sources of funding for JFM in the State. In addition the FAO funded World Food Program is carrying out various income generating activities and village infrastructure development works in 21 districts which are in a way, complementary in nature. Apart from this, District Officers facilitate mobilisation of funds from the concerned District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs) to JFM villages.

A significant amount of money has been converged for rural development activities, a part of which has been invested in areas under JFM, in order to gain the confidence of the villagers and hence, consolidating the JFM approach. Year-wise estimated details are given in Table 1.

Table 1*Year-wise estimated details*

Year	Estimated total allotment (Rs. in lakhs)
1991-92	576.29
1992-93	843.16
1993-94	918.41
1994-95	1379.85
1995-96	2422.40
1996-97	4732.24
1997-98	5093.20
1998-99	6798.59
1999-2000	5173.31
	27937.45

[Source : (Anon., 1999). Joint Forest Management in Madhya Pradesh. Madhya Pradesh Forest Department.]

Improving villager's incomes and welfare by developing sustainable, productive forestry and agro-forestry practices as well as viable alternative income opportunities are the thrust of JFM. New sources of income give villagers more choices about how to pursue their livelihoods and reduce pressure on forests.

Interface with NGOs

The Non-Government Organisations work as a bridge in the Joint Forest Management. They facilitate dialogue between people and Forest Department. This helps in building of faith.

The consequences of using NGOs in programme interventions are problematic. If NGOs take on the programme role intended for the Govt. agency, the agency will have no incentive to change, which is unacceptable. On the other hand, if NGOs are used where the agency already is

committed to adopting some NGO-like functions, the agency will oppose them, which is also unacceptable.

Selection of the right type of NGOs is critical for the success of any project. Certain NGOs, activists in nature, have a tendency to oppose any Government policy or external donor agencies. The author feels that such type of blatant and biased opposition often leads to very uncomfortable conditions, which is not at all conducive to the overall development of the State and the people.

Critical Appraisal of Joint Forest Management in M.P.

The likelihood of sustainability is very high, provided that the incentives are maintained, and local participation assured. For JFM, continued contact, as also the benefit sharing arrangement need to stay in place, marketing needs to be strengthened.

An evaluation of Joint Forest Management in M.P. and its long-term sustainability was done through PRIA (Society for Participatory Research in Asia) and 'Samarthan' (Centre for Development Support). These NGOs with a countrywide presence were given the task of evaluating the performance of JFM on the ground both from the technical as well as from the socio-economic aspects.

The report has emphasised the need for developing effective social interface and tuning of Department to the project needs. The findings of evaluation indicate that the technical aspects under the programme have yielded good results and illicit felling, fire incidences and encroachments have effectively come under control. Regeneration has been found noteworthy

in a number of committees. In eco-development programme, the report has found increase in generation of employment in project areas, however, a need for proper identification and co-ordination of income generating activities has been felt.

Sustainability through empowerment

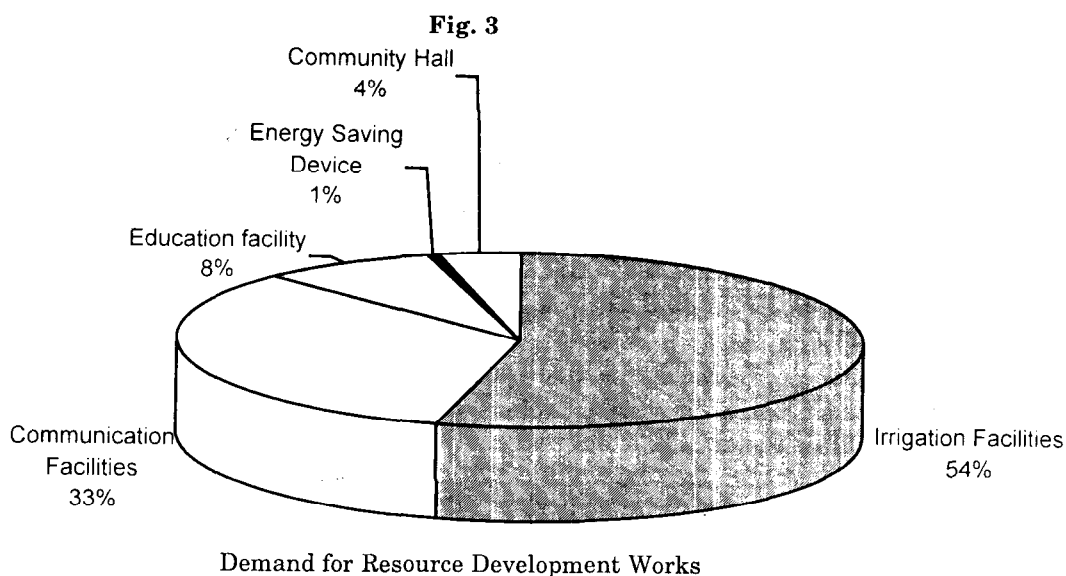
The concept of sustainability is closely linked to community participation whereby the sustenance of forest protection as also judicious use of forest resources can only be achieved when there is a genuine involvement of the community at each level of the process. In some cases the participation of the local communities in JFM has been largely confined to the village elites with dominance of male presence. Representation of the weaker sections and women have to be strengthened in many areas. However, there are many communities where women members have been found to be more active than their male counterparts. Surprisingly, JFM arrangements in such communities have

been found to be stronger and forests better protected.

Sustainability through Resource Development

Resource development in the villages along with income generating activities has led to an overall development of the villages and also increased the socio-economic conditions of the people. In many cases, such activities has led to a renewable source of income for the villagers which coupled with a good market linkage will ensure sustainability of JFM in the long run. Such villagers/committee members are now capable of maintaining their own resources and are not dependent on external aid/help from either the Forest Department or donor agencies. This is indeed a very positive sign and goes to show that the approach towards JFM is being consolidated.

Figure 3 focuses on the demand for resource development works in the villages.



It is obvious that the major demand is for creation of irrigation and communication facilities in the villages. Demand for adoption of energy saving devices is a mere 1%, which is thought provoking. We must ensure that more amount is spent on adoption of energy saving devices in the villages which would ultimately lead to reduction in dependence on the forests.

Field Reality

The emphasis in the working of the Department on creating institutional structures in the community to promote meaningful and sustained local autonomy reflects the concept of sustainability. It is appreciable that the programme has been able to visualise the importance of strengthening community-based institutions and perceives them as important indicators of sustainability. The Forest Department also, understands the need and value of community based structures in achieving the programme objectives.

However, a lot needs to be done as the role of the community in independent management of the activities, especially in the long run is still a far cry. The JFM programme defines community participation as involving community as partners in management, sharing of products, responsibility, control and decision making and authority over forest lands between Forest Department and local user group. In the field, however, it is practiced more in terms of protection activities as seen by the prescribed roles and responsibilities of the committee members. The fact that the community is aware in most cases about the structure formed, is an important indicator, for the success of the programme.

While the committees are performing their roles of protection of forests effectively, their role as empowering institutions of the community is lacking. Thus, management roles, roles in decision making, access to information as also autonomy needs to be further strengthened. Also, emphasis on linkages of the VFC/EDC with statutory bodies like Panchayat, regional bodies like NGOs and other government departments needs further strengthening.

The empowering role of community participation which involves providing greater opportunities to the community (esp. women and the marginalised segments) for greater awareness about their rights and greater control over the forest resources has not been adequately addressed in some cases and consequently needs to be strengthened. In a few VFCs and EDCs however, the empowering view of participation is taking shape. This is a very positive and encouraging development. The community based institutions are evolving as autonomous and effective bodies and having greater decision making role beyond the protection activities. The number of such VFCs/EDCs although less, has potential to increase. Such successful cases, although few, need to be closely studied and lessons need to be drawn, to be replicated in other areas.

Equity-based benefit sharing

The other problem, which may crop up in the long run is the question of benefit sharing of forest produce which has been protected by the committees. Benefit sharing mechanisms should be based on equitable distribution to all the members in the community which will not lead to any conflicts. There has always been a tendency by the elites to grab a major share of the

produce and it may not be surprising to observe the same in sharing mechanisms under JFM. If such a thing happens, then conflicts will arise and there may be a breakdown in the institutional structure. Since the stage of benefit sharing has not yet come in Madhya Pradesh, it would still be prudent to be prepared for such conflicts, if at all these arise.

The Way Ahead

The foundations for a participatory management of forests and biodiversity conservation have now been laid. It is time to consolidate, and build upon these initiatives so that the long-term security and development of the forests of the State can be ensured. Madhya Pradesh being the State with the largest forest area and tribal population in the country, the well being of the forests, environment and biodiversity of the State shall go a long way towards improving the environment and the lives of the people of the country.

On the whole, JFM has created a space for creation of institutions. However it has not adequately addressed ways of making these institutions representative, proactive

and autonomous so that they can have greater management of and control over the natural, financial and human resources. This aspect therefore needs to be reviewed, as this would have implications for long term sustainability of JFM.

Although the Forest Department has adopted JFM it is not going to make any discernible impact, unless we harness the resources available with the rural development programs, to whatever extent possible to achieve the desired results. To achieve this, the Forest Department has to co-ordinate with other departments involved in rural development and pool their resources for the overall development of the sector.

Unlike the proverbial candle burning at both ends, forests are suffering fatal blows on every part of their entity : we are cutting adult trees, fires and livestock eat away new recruitment and denuded soils are unable to support life any further. As Churchill once said, "War is too serious a business to be left to the Generals alone"; we too must say: 'Conservation of natural resources is too big a task, let us not leave it to the foresters alone'.

SUMMARY

People's involvement in Resource Management in Madhya Pradesh has been tremendous since the inception of the World Bank aided Madhya Pradesh Forestry Project. Joint Forest Management has come a long way in Madhya Pradesh. Considering the fact that there were only around 350 Committees in the year 1993, which has expanded to more than 12,100 today speaks in itself for the tremendous enthusiasm that has been generated as a result of this movement. People's participation has increased due to a lot of Income Generating Activities and Resource Development works that has been taken up in the villages which has subsequently increased the socio-economic condition of the people. Coupled with this the attitudinal change that has taken place among the staff of the Forest Department has created a very cordial atmosphere between the staff and villagers. The likelihood of sustainability is very high, provided that the incentives are maintained and local participation ensured. Sustainability can be assured only when there is a genuine involvement of the community at each level. At present, the Committees are performing their roles of protection of forests effectively. However, their role in management, decision-making, access to information, etc. needs to be further strengthened. The foundation

for participatory management of forests have been laid. It is time to consolidate and build upon these initiatives so that the long-term security and development of the forests of the State can be ensured.

मध्य प्रदेश, भारत में स्रोत प्रबंधन में जनता की भागीदारी

साइबल दासगुप्त

सारांश

प्रदेश में विश्व बैंक की आर्थिक सहायता से संचालित मध्य प्रदेश वानिकी परियोजना के क्रियान्वन से स्रोत प्रबंधन में प्रदेश के ग्रामीण अंचलों के रहवासियों की भागीदारी बहुत अधिक बढ़ी है। प्रदेश में संयुक्त वन प्रबंधन का आरंभ वर्ष 1992-93 में 350 समितियों के माध्यम से हुआ जो वर्तमान में एक वृहद् रूप धारण कर लगभग 12,100 समितियों के माध्यम से संचालित किया जा रहा है। निश्चिततः यह ग्रामीणों का संयुक्त वन प्रबंधन के प्रति विश्वास का द्योतक है। संयुक्त वन प्रबंधन में ग्रामीणों की भागीदारी में वृद्धि का मूल कारण संयुक्त वन प्रबंधन के क्रियान्वयन से आर्यवर्धक स्रोतों तथा ग्रामीण विकास संसाधनों में हुई वृद्धि तथा इससे संबद्ध ग्रामीणों का आर्थिक स्तर उच्चतर होना है। संयुक्त वन प्रबंधन से न केवल ग्रामीण स्रोतों में वृद्धि हुई है अपितु विभागीय अमले तथा ग्रामीणों के मध्य घनिष्ट संबंधों का सूत्रपात हुआ है जो वन विकास हेतु सुखद संकेत है। ग्रामीणों एवं विभाग के मध्य स्थापित संबंधों में प्रगाढ़ता एवं स्थापित आयवर्धक स्रोतों में वृद्धि तथा ग्रामीण विकास कार्यों में निरंतरता बनाए रखना ही संयुक्त वन प्रबंधन के लम्बे समय तक स्थायित्व हेतु अपरिहार्य होगा। वर्तमान में कार्यरत समितियों द्वारा यद्यपि प्रभावी ढंग से वन सुरक्षा का कार्य किया जा रहा है परन्तु इनमें वनों के प्रबंधन तथा अन्य संबद्ध प्रकरणों में नीतिगत निर्णय लेने की क्षमता का विकास किया जाना संयुक्त वन प्रबंधन के लम्बे समय तक स्थायित्व हेतु अति अनिवार्य होगा। अंत में यह कहा जा सकता है कि प्रदेश में संयुक्त वन प्रबंधन की बुनियाद तो रखी जा चुकी है किन्तु इसे हमें जन सहयोग से और अधिक सुदृढ़ व स्थाई बनाना होगा ताकि प्रदेश में वनों के विकास की निरंतरता द्रुत गति से चलती रहे।

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