

JOINT FOREST PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT IN UTTAR KANNADA DISTRICT, KARNATAKA

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Introduction

The National Forest Policy of 1988 sets broad objectives for forest management. In order of priority, these are : Management for conservation and biodiversity; management to meet local people's needs for forest products; maintaining the relationship between forest and tribal and other poor people living in and around forests by protecting their customary rights and concessions on the forests; and management to supply the requirements of industry and other non-local users.

It envisages people's involvement in the development and protection of forests. It has also been felt that forest management programmes need to be reoriented in such manner that they respond to the needs of the rural communities and that the forest produce like fuelwood, fodder, green manure, dry leaves, minor forest produce, timber etc., are made available to the villagers preferentially, apart from a share in the proceeds, so that the village communities are motivated to identify themselves with the development and protection of forests.

In 1990 instructions were given by the

Govt. of India that all State Forest Departments should define the institutional framework for implementing Joint Forest Management. In accordance with the guidelines issued by the Govt. of India, the Government of Karnataka brought out a comprehensive scheme of Joint Forest Planning and Management for people's participation in planning, development, protection and regeneration of degraded forests and other Government wastelands during 1993.

For the above purpose, it is proposed that local people in the Village constitute themselves into a Village Forest Committee with the mechanism of sharing duties, responsibilities and Forest Produce. The Village Forest Committee shall be formed for any village or group of villages with two members from each family i.e. husband and wife. The concept of JFPM makes a significant departure from earlier thinking about forest management. It reflects the desire of the Govt. to seek people's involvement in protection, development and management of forests. It recognizes that subsistence needs of fuelwood, fodder, NTFP and construction timber required by people living in the vicinity of forests should be the first change on forests. It also seeks to ensure environmental stability and

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maintenance of ecological balance which are vital for the sustenance of all life form.

The idea is to make the people realise that they have a vested interest in the healthy of the forests. This attitudinal change, it is felt, is possible by inducing them to take responsibility for the protection and maintenance of forests tract near their habitations and share the benefits flowing in therefrom in a fair and equitable manner. This arrangement makes it clear to the people concerned that have a right to enjoy the vast enhanced benefits flowing from the forests, but this right is accompanied by their responsibility to nurture and protect the forests. "Interactive participation" is prerequisite for successful JFPM practices.

Area to be brought under JFPM

- (a) Degraded forest land, where the canopy cover is 0.25 and less;
- (b) The State forests which are predominantly inhabited by tribal population or where the forest dependent tribals living in and around the State Forests are traditionally dependent upon the forests for their livelihood and cultural identity such forests, irrespective of the density of the canopy over of the forests, may also be subjected to the JFPM involving the tribals.
- (c) Non-forest Government wastelands under the control of the Revenue Department, like "C" and "D" lands and transferred to Forest Department for the purpose of JFPM.
- (d) Road sides and Canal sides and Foreshores of tanks.

Uttar Kannada District

It is situated in the North-Western Sector of Karnataka State and is bounded by the Arabian Sea on its West, covering an area of about 10,291 km² topographically the district could be divided into three distinct zones, the Coastal belt, the Central belts consisting of the hills and valleys of the Sahyadri Range and the Transition Zone consisting of Eastern table lands.

There are about 1,280 villages in the District with 12.20 lakhs people as per the 1991 census. The district receives an average rainfall of 2,742 mm/annum. It varies from 3,854 mm in the coast to 1,155 mm on the eastern table land.

Legal status-wise, more than 80% of the total geographical area is covered under forests of different types. Reserve Forests (Proper) 620,218 ha; Minor Forest 152,086 ha; Betta Lands 51,121 ha; Hakkals 3,173 ha; Village Forests 2,617 ha.

Dependence on Forests

Most cropped land in Uttar Kannada is under un-irrigated condition and only 3% area is under double cropping. The district being a forest region, its farming systems have been adapted to the local conditions - topographical, vegetation, rainfall and soil type, etc. Broadly we can categorise the farming systems of the district as 'Areca system', 'Paddy system' and 'Livestock system'.

The Areca system depends heavily on the forests for inputs like green and dry leaves, 'Karada' grass and soil which along with dung and farm yard manure need to be applied regularly to the Areca gardens to maintain sustainable yield. Different

trees are lopped for green mulch and applied to each Areca plant along with the dry leaves collected from the forests.

Approximately 60-70% of household keep livestock in the district including perhaps 20-30% of the landless (Ashley *et al.*, 1993). For farmers and gardeners they are kept for provision of dung and draught power, with milk being an important output for 'Gaulis' and landless. A high level of dependence on dung exists because chemical fertilizers would affect soil fertility. Livestock subsists on free grazing in the forest, although crop residues are also an important feed in the dry season.

Paddy farmers use forests for green and dry leaves for manure and for grazing their cattle whose dung is an essential input in paddy cultivation. They also depend on firewood, fence posts, poles etc., from the forests.

The landless too depend on forests for fuelwood, grazing and NTFPs. Many poor families living close to towns use forests for 'head loading' fuelwood for sale. They often cut standing trees or their thick branches for fuelwood. Artisans use forests for bamboo and cane.

Social Forestry and the Panchayats

The population growth and their heavy dependence on forest products led to increased pressure from the people on the forests. By the 1980s the realization became clear that if people's demands were not met it would be impossible to save forests. This was then sought to be achieved through a Social Forestry Programme on village and private lands in the State. It was assumed in the Social Forestry phase that panchayats will take over responsibility for

management in due course, which did not happen in most of the cases. Evaluation reports of SF schemes in some parts of Karnataka (which were 'For the community' but not 'By the community'), have in general found little evidence of community interest or management capabilities of the panchayats. It remained a departmental activity on land transferred to the FD, with little local management and participation.

In actual practice, village committees often tended to be indifferent to the poor. They perceived the woodlots primarily as significant sources of community income, rather than as sources of produce to meet village needs. For this reason there was usually a preference for auctioning the output, or selling it at preferential rates rather than distributing it in kind. In addition there are practical problems with Panchayat management, which have nothing to do with their political economy any class bias. First, Panchayats are political organizations and find it difficult to enforce the discipline required for managing plantations.

Due to small area of village woodlots not likely to satisfy the fuelwood needs of the village, people continued to depend on nearby forest areas, which were being used for timber and cash crops like Teak and Cashew, thereby depleting the availability of fuelwood which could be gathered by the people. People's pressure however endangered the success of commercial plantations.

Social conditions are such that neither cattle nor human beings can be totally stopped from utilizing forest products. What is therefore needed is adopting policies which improve productivity of degraded lands, taking into account constraints of

the human and livestock pressure. Given the case of forests it has been impossible, in practical terms, for the Forest Department to enforce its property rights. Therefore, any effort towards rehabilitation can yield results only if it involves local people, specially women, in protection, sharing of management and usufruct with the people. If properly implemented, it could have wide ranging implications on forest regeneration and welfare of the poor.

Forest Management Problems

(a) *Fuelwood Demand and Supply*: Forests of Uttar Kannada had always been the source of fuelwood for local population; fuelwood from coastal belt was exported to outside areas in the past. Special arrangements had to be made to meet fuelwood demand of urban population through fuelwood depots.

(b) *Grazing*: For the district as a whole, about 20-30% of landless households probably have livestock, with a mean herd size of 2.8. About two-third livestock keepers own less than 5 animals each and those owning 6-10 animals account for a little more than one-fifth. Herd size of more than 10 animals is rare. About two-third of livestock is owned by those owning less than 2 acre (about 0.80 ha) land. Pressure on forests for grazing is, consequently, high. While grazing pressure on forests is increasing, grazing land decreased by 9%, and 61% in hilly and transition zone and increased by 7% in coastal zone giving a decrease of 12% for the district. Main reasons for decrease in grazing area are *Eupatorium* weed, area closed for plantations, encroachment etc. Most of the livestock is taken to forest for grazing and stall feeding is practiced on a limited scale by Arecanut farmers.

Lack of adequate pasture lands thus leads to overgrazing which degrades the forests through compaction of soil, reduced infiltration and consequent increased run-off, removal of vegetative cover and baring the soil for increased soil erosion, browsing and trampling of young regeneration etc. Adequate steps should therefore be taken to address this issue and increase area under pastures.

(c) *Fire*: Fire is common in dry season. Fairly large areas of dry deciduous and moist deciduous forests reportedly suffer from fire damage every year. Fire being one of the important factors for degradation of these forests, protection of forests from fire is an important item in public awareness programme covering the entire district.

(d) *Leaf Manure Collection*: For soils of this district, leaf manure addition is essential to maintain soil fertility. Arecanut farmers were assigned 'Betta' lands for collection of leaf manure. 'Betta' lands have been degraded because of over use and do not produce sufficient leaf manure. Degradation of 'Betta' lands has resulted in the pressure for collection of leaf manure getting passed on to forests. Coconut farmers and paddy farmers who have in recent years established Arecanut gardens do not own any 'Betta' land and depend on forests for leaf manure. In the process of leaf manure collection, not only the forest floor is swept, but bushes and even saplings of tree species are cut. Removal of leaf manure from forests results in appreciable nutrient drain. Appreciable quantities of plant nutrients are transferred from forests to gardens and agricultural fields.

(e) *Encroachment*: Encroachment of forests is also a serious problem in the district, specially in the transition zone.

(f) *Illicit cutting and smuggling* : Very high price of timber of some valuable species found in these forests prompts illicit cutting and smuggling. Theft of young trees cut for fuel, small size timber, fence posts and poles have proved difficult to control.

(g) *Damage to NTFP species* : Damage to NTFP's is wide spread, including lopping, felling, immature fruit collection and over harvesting.

Western Ghats Forestry and Environment Project

The Government of Karnataka accorded sanction for implementation of the Western Ghats Forestry and Environment Project at a total cost of Rs. 8,420 lakhs with the assistance of DFID of the United Kingdom over a period of six years commencing from April 1992.

The major concerns of the project were ecological, environmental and economic. The project aimed to achieve these objectives by the strategy based on four processes namely :

- Assisting institutional development in KFD
- Ensuring poor people, women, tribal and other disadvantaged groups who are substantially dependent on the forest are not worse, and preferably better off.
- Minimizing further loss of forest cover and resources, and the service they provide.
- Increasing understanding of Western Ghat Ecosystem.

The forests in the project area were divided into zones according to management objectives viz., ecological, economic, and

local needs. Five zones identified were, Ecologically important areas (Zone I); Main forest with good potential without (Zone II); Main forest with good potential with pockets of settlements (Zone III); Edge of forest reserve near settlements (Zone IV); Outside forests near settlements and Common revenue lands (Zone V).

First stage - Zonation : To prepare range and block profiles on the basis of which priority areas for JFPM were to be decided.

Second stage - Group formation : To identify existing village groups, community institutions, and NGOs who may have a role in the formation of VFCs.

Third stage - Microplan exercise and preparation of management plan.

Fourth stage - Signing of MoU between KFD and VFC.

Fifth stage - Monitoring and review of both the outcome and maintenance of MoUs.

The JFPM programme was to underpin all planning and management decisions concerning forests. Each forest zone was to be identified through a participatory and consultative process involving all identified stakeholders. The degree to which stakeholders were to be actively involved in management of non-degraded forests would have varied, but in all cases the stakeholders were to be involved in planning of how forests were to be managed.

The core of JFPM is the Village Forest Committee (VFC), which signs a legal Memorandum of Understanding with KFD about how the Joint Management of the forest is to take place. This is spelled out in a microplan for the area covered by the

VFC, which contains both an analysis of the community, as well as details of how these are to be met. In addition to dealing with jointly managed area (of less than 25% crown density), from which the VFC can obtain a monetary benefit, it also specifies how the community will interact with other areas of forest on a sustainable basis.

The JFPM order issued in 1993 provided for the formation of Village Forest Committees as the main community based institution to enter into the JFPM agreement with KFD. Because people's institutions would take time to develop, it was recognized that JFPM would be established only slowly. This was considered appropriate as too fast a process might result in the interests of poor and weaker sections being excluded.

One of the more significant results of forming VFC and entering upon JFPM is the social organisation skills and experience of community action developed. Though the forest department in general may go into the JFPM programme with the idea improving the protection of the forest, front line staff do recognize the importance of community organisation. Often, the more innovative and enterprising among the front line staff develop an active interest in helping the village community activities outside the narrow scope of forestry. This has been institutionalized through periodic meetings of a Co-ordination Committee, where representatives of different departments and organisations relevant to the development activities of the villages, are brought together to exchange information and develop action plans.

So far 324 Village Forest Committees have been constituted in the Uttar Kannada

District. Out of this, Micro Plan exercises have been completed in 306 village forest committees and 295 MoU have been signed.

Human Resources Development

Successful JFPM depends on a good relationship between the Forest Department and local communities so that they can work together to meet common objectives. This in turn requires new skills of analysis and understanding, with more of an emphasis on listening and learning than traditional roles.

(a) *Orientation and attitudinal changes for foresters* : Since JFPM is a new process calling for the attitudinal and behavioural changes in the staff, training is being imparted to all categories of staff in PRA and extension skills. Such an approach has given a new and demanding role to field staff, especially the Forest Guard and Forester, who will become facilitators and advisers rather than regulators.

(b) *Motivation and sensitization of members of community* : Village Forest Committee members were given training in institutional building, book keeping skills, common property management, self help group concept, conflict resolution etc. Exposure trips were also arranged to study the JFPM process. This is very much required to have shared vision amongst the members of the organisation and members of the community.

(c) *Training through local NGOs* : The local NGOs are involved in motivating the rural people towards the development of JFPM, protection and management of forests. They are organising training at VFC level so as to create awareness among particularly women and poor marginalised groups about

the JFPM concept and participatory management. They have given training to 1,700 members from 1996-1997 to 1999-2000. The training through NGOs is very cost effective and focuses more on gender and equity issues in the VFCs.

(d) *Skill training to artisans* : Skill training for traditional and non-traditional articles in bamboo and canes from VFC and non-VFC villages was given. Trainees have been issued certificates and identity cards who have undergone such training. 1,007 persons have been given skill training, mainly in Bamboo and Cane crafts making. Intensive skill training has been imparted in Malagi centre for 43 candidates in Cane and Bamboo crafts making organised by Ministry of Textiles (GoI). A marketing centre has been opened at Baleguli of Karwar Division.

(e) *Other training* : The other training conducted relates to Vermiculture, Bee-keeping and Honey processing, NTFP processing, Income generating activities, Smokeless chulhas and grafting techniques.

Alternative Fuel Saving Devices

With a view to reduce the pressure on the forests by the villagers for firewood, Astra ole (Smokeless chulhas and bath chulhas) are being installed in VFC villages. They are being used by the beneficiaries and found useful. In all 8,288 smokeless chulhas including portable chulhas and bath chulhas have been installed so far. In addition to this 667 biogas plants have been installed, which have also been found useful.

Supply of Iron ploughs

During 1998-99, 35 iron ploughs have

been supplied on pilot basis and it has been observed that there is substantial reduction in destruction of pole trees for 2-3 ploughs in a season by the farmers.

Raising of plantations

Rehabilitation of degraded patches is high priority in the project. The main plantations raised in the Western Ghats of Karnataka have been of hardwoods (mainly Teak) and fuelwood plantations (mainly of *Casuarina equisetifolia* and *Acacia auriculiformis*). Bamboos and canes are also raised in blocks in suitable sites. Multipurpose plantations have also been raised, wherein fruit and NTFP species are planted (usually in blocks) depending on the site conditions and preferences of the people.

In the non-JFPM patches inside the forest, open areas of grassy blanks are taken up for replanting. The total plantations raised till 1999 monsoon are around 56,485 ha, consisting of 'enrichment' planting 27,958 ha, artisanal (bamboo, cane) 5,968 ha and local needs plantations (fuelwood, timber, NTFP, etc.) 22,559 ha. Most of the enrichment and artisanal plantation has been raised in non-JFPM forest (Zone 2 or Zone 3), while most of the local needs plantations were raised almost entirely in JFPM areas.

Further, 3,618 ha of forest areas are being supported with regeneration models (*Acacia auriculiformis* and local root stocks). The expenditure on planting is estimated to be Rs. 69.32 crores, or around 62% of estimated total expenditure of Rs. 111.59 crores, at the respective years. The average cost works out to Rs. 12,272 per ha. Various activities undertaken under the project are given in Table 1.

(a) *Impact of plantations* : One of the encouraging results of VFC formation has been the heightened interest of the people, including youth groups and women's groups, in protecting the forest from fire, theft etc.

There has been a general build up of awareness in the communities on the effects of deforestation on soil, water and agriculture production. In some cases, the community has even released forest land from encroachment voluntarily. There have been considerable improvements in plantation management since 1994-95; planting at the right time (early in the monsoon), better protection (chain link mesh fencing for bamboo), and better

matching of species to site with site specific planning.

(b) *Acacia auriculiformis plantations - Social and economic benefits* : These plantations are especially valuable in meeting the needs of the local people in the coastal belt, where the forest proper is quite distant. A survey in the Gore Gopal Krishna VFC of Honavar Division revealed that 76.50% of the families depended on *Acacia*, and that *Acacia* wood supplies 37% of biomass fuel requirements, with another 49% coming from shrubs and twigs. The remaining 23.50% of the families depended on Coconut and Arecanut byproducts, which accounted for only 1.90% and 2.80% of total biomass fuel respectively.

Table 1

JFPM activities in Uttar Kannada District, Karnataka

Division	Year	No. of VFC formed	No. of MoU signed	No. of Microplan written	Astra-ole Installed	Biogas Installed	JFPM plant. raised	Artisanal plantation raised	Total SHGs
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Haliyal	1993-94	13	0	0	0	35	180	100	0
	1994-95	5	11	13	485	149	240	227	0
	1995-96	20	21	23	725	11	290	400	0
	1996-97	5	2	1	125	0	522	307	0
	1997-98	3	6	3	100	0	350	75	0
	1998-99	2	2	2	0	0	925	120	17
	1999-00	0	1	1	0	0	1212	0	0
Total of Haliyal Division		48	43	43	1435	195	3719	1229	17
Yellapur	1993-94	9	0	0	0	0	250	100	0
	1994-95	3	2	0	430	2	275	175	0
	1995-96	17	12	25	50	2	250	190	0
	1996-97	2	13	2	450	35	225	155	0
	1997-98	8	2	3	90	84	215	0	0
	1998-99	2	9	9	0	0	530	135	12
	1999-00	0	0	0	0	0	606	60	0
Total of Yellapur Division		41	38	39	1020	123	2351	815	12

Contd...

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Karwar	1993-94	7	0	0	0	0	200	100	0
	1994-95	12	4	4	634	0	370	250	0
	1995-96	17	11	17	1169	1	246	340	0
	1996-97	4	11	5	839	0	594	250	0
	1997-98	20	24	24	170	0	443	205	0
	1998-99	2	8	10	160	0	560	460	1
	1999-00	0	2	0	0	0	592	108	0
Total of Karwar Division		62	60	60	2972	1	3005	1713	1
Honavar	1993-94	14	0	0	0	0	300	95	0
	1994-95	10	4	4	327	16	285	230	0
	1995-96	16	4	25	662	21	180	328	0
	1996-97	15	45	25	658	17	474	206	0
	1997-98	11	7	9	286	41	327	102	0
	1998-99	6	12	9	105	22	934	297	17
	1999-00	10	5	10	0	0	1172	0	10
Total of Honavar Division		82	77	82	2038	117	3672	1258	27
Sirsi	1993-94	8	0	0	0	0	690	136	0
	1994-95	9	3	7	596	0	389	50	0
	1995-96	15	26	23	97	5	418	125	0
	1996-97	24	21	20	218	7	446	100	0
	1997-98	12	14	14	452	110	208	25	0
	1998-99	15	6	6	0	109	734	104	1
	1999-00	8	7	12	0	0	579	0	0
Total of Sirsi Division		91	77	82	1363	231	3464	540	1
Wildlife	1999-00	0	0	0	0	0	125	85	0
Total of Wildlife Division		0	0	0	0	0	125	85	0
Grand Total of Circle		324	295	306	8828	667	16336	5640	58

Acacia leaves are important in local agricultural practices as well. They are applied directly to paddy fields with leaves of other species; used as bedding in cattle sheds and the mixture of dung and leaves used subsequently. They are composted in mixture with other leaves and applied. This has saved them some of the burden of going all the way to the better forested areas to collect leaf manure.

Naturally, the plantations are a source of poles, posts and firewood, from the finally harvested trees. In Harneer village, the older 1987 *Acacia* plantation was harvested in 1996; out of 14 ha (16,785 trees), the villages limited their harvest to 2.5 ha (5,585 trees harvested), getting 532 poles (revenue to VFC at Rs. 30.00 per pole being Rs. 15,960), 5,000 fence posts, 314 m³ of fuelwood (Rs. 125.00 per m³ revenue of

Rs. 39,210) and approximately 2,800 headloads of lops and tops. A study by Indian Institute of Science (Kumta centre) is quoted as predicting a yield of over 20 tonnes per ha at 4 years age (at 2,500 plants per ha) contributing to fuelwood and manure through dry twigs, leaf etc. contributing increase in agriculture production, reducing the pressure of Chandavar RD etc.

Sharing of forest produce

Sharing of forest produce under JFPM is as follows: The total proceeds derived from the sale of forest produce at the notified prices and by way of public auction shall be shared between the Government, beneficiaries and village forest committee as given below :

- 50% to the Government
- 25% to the beneficiaries through VFC as per rules/Village development fund
- 25% to a special fund to be called as Village Forest Development Fund; this fund shall be operated by the VFCs as per rules.

So a part of the income will go into the Village Development Fund, which represents a real opportunity to provide capital for income generating activities at the local level. The project is providing training to VFCs on how to conduct their affairs and will develop other forms of support to meet the emerging needs of these bodies as they grow in experiences. Details of 50% share given to various VFCs in Uttar Kannada District from the plantations harvested are given in Table 2.

Notification for Village Forest Development Fund has also been issued under Govt. Order dated 01.03.1997.

Table 2
Share to the VFCs

Details of 50% share given to the various VFCs in Uttar Kannada District from the plantations harvested.

Division	VFC	50% share paid (in Rs.)
Karwar	Honnebail	105362.00
Karwar	Bogribail	33532.00
Karwar	Belur	33577.00
Karwar	Shirve	11919.00
Karwar	Satagari	4566.00
Karwar	Pate	16018.00
Karwar	Maingini	9855.00
Karwar	Dongri	14540.00
Karwar	Shiragunji	2842.00
Karwar	Bidralli	25710.00
Karwar	Sakalbena	91313.00
Karwar	Pate	49476.00
Karwar	Sathageri	9623.00
Karwar	Maingini	39622.00
Honavar	Urakeri	15480.00
Honavar	Aghanashini	10000.00
Honavar	Aghanashini	108405.00
Honavar	Alavalli-Hegle	25707.00
Honavar	Urkeri	30756.00
Honavar	Katagarikoppa	2368.00
Honavar	Halyani	30668.00
Honavar	Marukeri	76504.00
Honavar	Aghanashini	91890.00
Honavar	Alavalli-Hegle	21070.00
Sirsi	Kangod	28485.00
Sirsi	Balikoppa	168270.00
Sirsi	Tyarsi	116878.00
Total		1174436.00

Forest areas having more than 0.25 density

The current policy on JFPM is to allow communities to implement it in degraded

forests with less than 0.25 canopy density. NTFP collection has to be restricted to areas having >0.25 density only. A few pilot VFCs registered in better forested area have been very effective in protection of forests against the fire, encroachment and smuggling, fire. Similarly, NTFP management groups have been proposed as a way of ensuring sustainable management of NTFP's and to maximise local benefits.

The access forest area around degraded forest in VFCs has also been identified in case of 295 VFCs and listed in MoUs (about 25,100 ha).

There have been some amendments to the original Govt. Order vide G.O. dated 16.12/1996, which provides for JFPM practices, without restriction on crown density in the forests which predominantly inhabited by tribal population. To have self regulation of exercise of rights and privileges the following processes have been developed.

(a) *Participatory Forest Management Planning (PFMP)* : In Sri Shiragunjeswar VFC, Shiragui of Katgal Range of Honavar Division the concept of Participatory Forest Management Planning has been developed and is being tested in other VFCs in Uttar Kannada District.

This new process has been a result of some shortcomings in the existing JFPM process. The VFC works in partnership with KFD to conserve and manage the forest jointly whilst maintaining their existing rights and privileges. The Participatory Forest Management Planning is a process that involves local users of forest resources in partnership with KFD staff in the joint planning of forest management objectives of all forest areas

that fall within an agreed area. Emphasis is placed on the need for the quality of the process to ensure in particular that there is full representation of women and poorer groups dependent on forest products for their livelihoods.

(b) *Participatory NTFP Management* : A participatory management regime for NTFPs is being developed in Uttar Kannada District through case studies and participatory approach which is being developed in Gersoppa Range of Honavar Division in a pilot way. There are three main concerns underpinning the approach to NTFP management under development in U.K. District :

1. Sustainability of the resource;
2. Meeting the needs of poor NTFP collectors;
3. Market and regulation of the trade.

New institutions for NTFP management should be collectors institutions, either VFCs, user groups etc., which aim to place responsibility for forest protection and sustainable management with the resource users themselves, and assign specified rights for collection and marketing of NTFPs. These arrangements would be in partnership with KFD, similar to VFCs under the JFPM G.O., but with different sharing arrangements and royalty payments.

The proposal for new NTFP policy for the State based on the experiences in U.K. Distt. are submitted for approval. The proposal recommends for NTFP collection rights to NTFP collectors groups or to VFCs after recovering nominal royalties to Govt.

(c) *Eco-Tourism* : Potential Eco-Tourism spots have been identified in the Distt.

under Zone I management. Eco-tourism aims at creating awareness and to improve educational and recreational values, about conservation of Biodiversity rich areas, natural monuments and unique geological formations in the project area. It involves local communities and VFCs to promote Tourism and get local economic benefits without disturbing local ecological and social culture.

Site-specific planning process

For any works to be carried out in the forest area site specific plans are prepared in consultation with all the stakeholders in Uttar Kannada District.

This is a basic tool for planning, approving, sanctioning and implementing activities or works taking place in the forest and is a process of producing a site specific plan that meets the particular needs of clients from a site. These are bottom-up and respond to local needs and local site conditions and are prepared by range level staff with the local clients wherever applicable with the help of the Cormis database and SSP hand book.

Sustainability of JFPM system

This is possible through identifying need based resources, entrusting protection works, fire protection, credit needs, income generating activities for the institutions and individuals, regeneration efforts through coppicing and tending root stocks, fodder management, linking entire forest protection with NTFP management and addressing non-forestry issues through coordination with other departments.

(a) *User Groups* : Among the strategies available to interact with the community is

one working with special interest groups of forest dependent people. This is often a particular occupational group like Bamboo artisans (Medars) or firewood "headloaders". It may be group of households in a part of the village like a hamlet on the forest edge.

Often village level PRA may tend to over ride their special problems, needs and interests or fail to enroll their special abilities or strategic position. The concept of a "User Group" is useful in these contexts. Since the legal and policy context is somewhat ambiguous, experience with users groups has been left to individual; innovators in the field the following example have been encountered.

- Tie up between cane artisans with pilgrimage center for marketing (a type of eco-tourism, in a sense) as in Ulvi VFC of Karwar Division.
- Users' groups of Bamboo artisans (Medars) and non-JFPM Bamboo forest as in Malagi centre of Yellapur Division, Nilampur VFC in Karwar Division.
- All women VFCs (Banasgeri VFC of Haliyal Division, Satgeri VFC of Karwar Division and Arolli VFC of Honavar Division)
- Eco-tourism VFCs in ecologically sensitive areas (eg., Yana VFC and Apsarkonda VFC of Honavar, etc.)
- NTFP collectors' groups (eg., Gersoppa and Kumta Range of Honavar Division)

(b) *Self Help Groups (SHGs) - Addressing Gender and equity issues* : The project has realised the importance of SHG formation to address non-forestry issues as well as improve the social and economic strength of marginalised section like the poor, the land less people dependent on head loading,

loped produce gatherers, NTFP collectors, artisans etc., and especially their womenfolk.

Self Help Groups (SHGs) are one type of small group institution. Typically less than 15 to 20 in number, they are voluntary groups with a specific focus. The poor people come together to form small savings-cum-loan groups.

These SHGs are well known for their good management and discipline. The main activity is to meet once in a week very punctually and collect members savings and advance small loans at interest rates ranging from 2% to 5% per month. Both savings and loan repayments are regular. The loans are used for various purpose, but for tiding over consumption needs and for supporting market or investment transactions. The strength of these groups enables the poor women and other marginalised sections to come out of their shell and participate more effectively in meetings of the VFC and make their views heard. Empowerment of women through women interest group, self help group concept etc., can contribute for active participation of women members.

Fire protection

Fire is one of the most serious causes of forest degradation. The protection of forest from fire is very crucial for regeneration and conservation of biodiversity. These are usually ground fire that are exacerbated by the dry undergrowth, especially weeds like Eupatorium. Those fires destroy young trees, make older trees susceptible to disease, and degrade the soil status. Prevention is the better part of fire protection and this has been given great

importance in the project and has also supported equipment, more regulation and fire watching, commissioning of fire protection services from communities, funds for fire lines, watch towers, communication network etc.

With the coming of the project, special efforts have also been made to give incentives to local communities and groups to take up fire fighting. Infrastructure and equipment provided by the project include watch towers wireless communication sets. In all, 30 Watch Towers have already been erected. Participatory fire protection efforts have been got done in Karwar, Yellapur and Honavar Division on cost sharing basis involving 50 VFCs and other institutions from 1996-97 onwards and the results are very encouraging.

Linkages to Working Plans

Working Plan Wing has completed the zone maps and supplied to all the Divisions and also in collaboration with National Remote Sensing Agency, Hyderabad (NRSA), has carried out growing stock assessment for all the Divisions. It is also proposed to incorporate the broad principles of management plans of VFCs into the working plans to achieve the project objectives. Using GIS tools the writing up of working plans of Sirsi, Karwar and Honavar Divisions is in progress.

Evolving mechanisms to address non-forestry issues and the role of the KFD

In Uttar Kannada District different approaches have been taken by the KFD to build relationships with PRIs in order to address some of the non-forestry issues that arise during development of JFPM. What has become very apparent from

experience is that the Forest Department is not in a position to offer any services other than those related to forestry i.e., its role with respect to other departments should be one of facilitation and not co-ordination. Bearing this in mind we have undertaken to facilitate access by VFCs to Taluka level forums where information can be shared about the activities of other Departments and feedback obtained. These taluka level forums have been started across the District. The outcomes of the meeting were several :

- VFC representatives gained knowledge about all the government programmes and their intended beneficiaries.
- Officers had the opportunity to share information about their different programmes and the limitations of these programme (in terms of beneficiary criteria etc.).
- Greater understanding developed amongst all participants about the concepts of JFPM and self-help groups.
- Provided opportunity to discuss with other VFC members about activities in other VFCs.
- Provided VFC representatives with an opportunity to share with others what activities they are doing and to raise any problems they may have.

Monitoring and linkages

The project has established a series of committees at different levels for monitoring progress and to provide policy advice.

- Steering committee at State-level chaired by Dev. Commissioner which monitors the policy matters and project implementation.

- Advisory Committee at Circle-level chaired by the CF, consisting of local representatives, other Govt. Deptts., NGOs, forest-user groups.
- Divisional working committee at Divisional-level chaired by the DCF and consisting of local community and forest user-groups.
- Sub-Divisional level Committees chaired by the ACF consisting of Taluka level officers, VFC presidents, local NGOs, VFC secretaries to develop linkages with external stakeholders and other departments to reap the benefits of the project.

(a) *Quarterly progress monitoring review* : Quarterly self-monitoring of the VFCs by the member secretary has been developed to monitor the progress made on his own assessment without referring to any records or field visits and plan for next quarter.

(b) *Group progress indicators* : A system of evaluation of the VFCs has been developed by taking up house hold survey by applying group progress indicators by selecting 10% of the existing VFCs at an interval of one or two years to review the progress and to rectify the deficiencies if any.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, people's participation is a process-oriented activity. A great deal of experimentation, research and above all patience is needed for process to evolve. If the programme is undertaken as any other Govt. programme, with pre-set targets to be achieved in given time frame, it will hinder the process of involving the people meaningfully and not likely to work eventually. People-based management system calls for area specific planning approach. The plans will vary according to

each site and the requirements of local community, with the scale of operation being within manageable limits.

Ultimately, people's participation has to be viewed as a movement towards greater

humanisation and democratisation in the post-colonial developing world for attaining equity and sustainability. This is particularly relevant in the management and sustainable development of forests and also concern for conservation of forests.

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SUMMARY

In pursuance of National Forest Policy, 1988 and subsequent Govt. of India instructions, 1990, Joint Forest Management has been taken up in Karnataka. The present paper outlines the work done in Uttar Kannda District thereof. It is a large area, divided into three distinct zones, consisting of a number of well populated villages. These are moderate to heavily dependent on forests degraded to a great extent and have been divided into Areca, paddy and livestock systems each having its peculiarities. Previous working of Social Forestry has been reviewed and found deficient. Forest Management problems of each zone have been analysed and projects taken up briefly outlined. The working of Joint Forest Management, the Village Forest Committees formed, their working defined, sharing of forest produce from managed areas indicated, other amenities, services and facilities provided to village communities have been briefly touched upon as also participation of local population in the Management and microplanning of areas to attain success have been defined along with related subjects. The authors conclude that peoples' participation has to be viewed as a movement towards humanization and democratisation for attaining equity and sustainability, particularly so for development and conservation of forests.

उत्तर कन्नडा जिला, कर्णाटक में संयुक्त वन आयोजना व प्रबन्ध

डी.एस. गांवकर व बी. शिवन्ना गौड़

सारांश

राष्ट्रीय वन नीति, 1988 के समानुचरण एवं तत्पश्चात् भारत सरकार के अनुदेशों, 1990 के अनुसार संयुक्त वन प्रबन्ध कर्णाटक में भी शुरू करा दिया गया है। प्रस्तुत अभिपत्र में उसके उत्तर कन्नडा जिले में किए गए कार्यों की रूप-रेखा बताई गई है। यह काफी बड़ा क्षेत्र है जो तीन स्पष्ट पृथक भागों में बंटा हुआ है जिसके अन्तर्गत भलीभांति बसे हुए कितने ही गांव आते हैं जो मध्यम से भारी मात्रा तक यहाँ के व्यावसिक वनों पर बहुत निर्भर हैं जिन्हें सुपारी, धान और पशुओं वाले क्षेत्र कहा गया है जिनकी अपनी-अपनी अलग विशिष्टताएँ हैं। पहले किए गए सामाजिक वानिकी कार्यों की समीक्षा की गई है और उन्हें कुछ विशेष सफल नहीं रहे बताया गया है। प्रत्येक क्षेत्र की वन प्रबन्ध समस्याओं का विश्लेषण किया गया है तथा जो परियोजनाएँ वहाँ आरम्भ हुई हैं उन्हें संक्षेप में बताया गया है। संयुक्त वन प्रबन्ध को लागू करना, ग्राम वन समितियों की स्थापना, उनका काम करने का ढंग, प्रबंधित क्षेत्रों से प्राप्त होने वाली वनोपजों में हिस्सेदारी बताए गए हैं तथा जो अन्य सुविधाएँ सेवाएँ विभाग समितियों को देता है, बताई गई हैं। प्रसंगतः अन्य संबंधित विषय भी चर्चित हुए हैं। निष्कर्षतः कहा गया है कि जनता की भागीदारी को एक आन्दोलन की तरह देखा जाना चाहिए जो मानवीकरण और जनतंत्रीकरण की ओर बढ़ते हुए समानता और लम्बे समय तक चलने की शक्यता, खासतौर से वनों के विकास और संरक्षण के लिए प्राप्त करना चाहता है। इन उद्देश्यों के लिए स्थल विशिष्ट आयोजना चाहिए जिसमें संपरीक्षण, अनुसंधान और धैर्य जरूरी हैं जिससे ऐसे कार्यक्रम बनाए जा सकें जो उस स्थल और वहाँ बसने वाले लोगों की आवश्यकताएँ पूरा करने वाले हों।