

Joint Forest Management Programme: A Beneficial Relationship between State and Community

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This empirical study suggests that the economic outcome of Joint Forest Management (JFM) programme has been beneficial for both forest fringe community and government who jointly manage the forest resources. Cooperation yields an outcome preferred by both as they are able to negotiate before execution of all activities. The theoretical model of common property resources suggests that cooperative behaviour of JFM guided by norms of restraint and customs may be stable against invasion by narrowly self-interested behaviour. The study also indicates that without costly sanctions against poor JFM-households for extracting illegal forest products, JFM appears to be beneficial for all.

I Introduction

Has Joint Forest Management programme, which emerges as one of the latest measures in a long history of policy changes on community involvement in Indian forest conservation movement, been economically beneficial for the state as well as forest fringe community? Pragmatic evidences across the world now confirm that community driven regimes are a viable option for the management of local common property resources like forest (Baland and Platteau 1996, Berkes 1989, Bromley 1992, Correa 1999, Das 2010, Lama and Buchy 2002, Martin 1992, Naik 1995, Saxena and Sarin 1999, Singh 2001). In the context of Indian forestry, several strands have gone to the present emphasis on community involvement in forest protection where JFM programme has created an economically beneficial relationship between 'state' and 'community' (Sarker and Das 2006: 269). Essentially, the JFM programme is local people-centred forest conservation and development agenda under the framework of cooperative

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