

With community forestry having become a major component of forestry over the past quarter-century, forms of local management which contain elements of common-property management have become widespread, particularly in developing countries. However, this has often evolved in ways that entail quite close involvement of government forest departments in their organization and operation. Local forest management institutions frequently have to operate within a framework of quite restrictive regulations laid down by forest departments. Forest departments often also have a presence in local management structures, and retain rights over some of the income-generating components of the forest, such as commercial timber. In practice, though there is no clearly defined border between them, many of these systems have more of the character of forms of control that are jointly managed by local people and the state, than of common-property regimes governed exclusively or primarily by the group of users.

See also: **Landscape and Planning:** Perceptions of Nature by Indigenous Communities. **Social and Collaborative Forestry:** Canadian Model Forest Experience; Forest and Tree Tenure and Ownership; Joint and Collaborative Forest Management; Public Participation in Forest Decision Making; Social and Community Forestry.

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Social and Community Forestry

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Introduction

Traditionally, in tropical countries forest management strategies have been based on the premise that sustainable forest management is best secured by state custody over forests, with management being the responsibility of a professional forest service, and by focusing forest production measures predominantly on commercial timber production. In the mid-1970s it became recognized that this strategy was too top-down-oriented and that it focused predominantly on national interests rather than on the needs of local communities. Therefore it did not contribute much towards improving the welfare and well-being of large segments of the population living in or near forests. Consequently, a new strategy for forest management was proposed, in which explicit attention was given to the forest-related needs of rural communities and to community participation in the sustainable management of forest resources. This new strategy was termed social forestry or community forestry. This strategy has become widely accepted, and in the last decades of the twentieth century much experience has been gained about how to involve local communities actively in forest management. Although many local interpretations of the meaning of the terms social forestry and community forestry exist, at present often a conceptual differentiation between the terms is made. Social forestry relates to the planning and implementation by professional foresters and other development organizations of programs to stimulate the active involvement of local people in small-scale, diversified forest management activities as a means to improve the livelihood conditions of these people. Community forestry refers to the forest conservation and management activities that are carried out by people living within rural communities, who are not trained as professional foresters, and who carry out management activities on the basis of local norms and interests. In contrast to the traditional professional approach to forest management, community forestry is not based on standard models, but on adaptation to site-specific conditions in respect to both type and conditions of forests, local livelihood strategies, and community institutions. Two main community-based forest management systems exist: community forestry in the form of the management

of forest resources on any lands within a local territory by the community inhabitants, and collaborative management in the form of the collaboration of community groups in the management of state forest lands as the result of (partial) delegation of the management responsibility by professional forestry organizations. By the beginning of the twenty-first century community-based forest management had reached a significant scale, and has been accepted as a genuine strategy for forest management in tropical countries. Gradually this approach to forest management is also gaining prominence in the more economically advanced countries in Europe, northern America and Australia.

History

Changes in Thinking on Forestry and Development

In the second half of the 1970s changes in thinking about the concept of rural development as well as increasing concerns about the ongoing process of deforestation contributed to a reappraisal of traditional forestry policies and a search for new forest management systems, which would contribute better towards rural development.

Changing concepts of rural development Since the start of international programs to assist the development of the newly independent tropical countries in the 1950s, concepts of development have changed. In the early development strategies, economic growth through the creation of a modern economic sector was a major objective. Subsequently, it was realized that an increase in production does not automatically result in a proper distribution of the products. In several cases the one-sided attention to the creation of a modern economic sector resulted in a growing gap between the modern and traditional economic sectors and marginalization of various groups of people. To counter the effects of this growing inequality, more attention was then given to the distribution of economic assets, focusing specifically on provision of basic human needs and poverty alleviation. The main objective of this basic needs strategy was to fulfill the needs of underdeveloped groups of the population for food, clothing, education, and health. This strategy was based not only on humanitarian objectives, but also on the theory that economic growth will be stimulated once basic needs are met. Later still, a third aspect received attention, i.e., the possibility for rural people to participate actively in their own development process rather than being a subject of development. The objective of such local participation is to stimulate the emancipation and self-reliance of the local people. Self-reliance

is not only a development objective in itself, but it also enables a more efficient use of development efforts and funds.

This evolution in thinking on the meaning of development has influenced ideas about the role of forestry in rural development in several ways:

- In line with the critical assessment of the results of the modernization approach, it was recognized that the traditional approach to forestry development, in which it was supposed that forestry would contribute to economic development through the creation of employment and income from timber plantations and wood-working industries, is often not effective. The supposed forward and backward linkages of such enterprises were mostly smaller than originally anticipated. Too often, local people hardly profited from such enterprises and, if realized, profits were siphoned off to urban elites and/or foreign investors.
- In conformity with the basic needs development strategy, it was recognized that wood products such as fuelwood for cooking and heating and timber for house construction are essential for human survival. The concerns in the early 1970s about an energy crisis contributed towards increased attention for the critical fuelwood situation in many tropical regions.
- The growing interest in providing basic needs for rural people increased awareness about the need to improve food production on marginal lands. On these lands forests and/or trees have important protective functions in moderating climatic and soil conditions. They also provide a wide range of forest products which are essential for the livelihoods of local people, not only fuelwood and timber for construction, but also wood for agricultural implements, fodder, and a multitude of non-wood forest products such as edible leaves and fruits, edible and oil-bearing seeds and nuts, honey, medicinal plants, gums and tannins, and bark products.
- As a result of the growing interest in stimulating participation, it was recognized that, rather than restricting local people's access to the forest resources, their involvement in forest management should be stimulated. Forest benefits for local people can best be assured when they can manage the forests themselves.

Impacts of deforestation, desertification, and forest degradation Simultaneously with the changes in thinking about the role of forests in rural development, concern also grew about the rate of

uncontrolled deforestation and forest degradation in tropical countries. The loss of forest resources results in many undesirable ecological and environmental effects and influences the livelihood of many rural people in a negative way. In the humid tropics deforestation has resulted in land degradation and the advent of waste lands, in mountainous areas in erosion and increasing flood damage, and in the arid tropics in desertification. Especially after the disastrous drought years of the 1960s in the Sahel, these degradation processes received increasing international attention. It was recognized that the prevailing forestry policies had not been able to control the process of deforestation, and that the state forest services had often been unable to deal with the various pressures on forest which induce over-exploitation or conversion to other types of (often marginal) land use. In many tropical regions the local population is dependent on forests for their livelihoods, and consequently they often bore the brunt of deforestation. It was suggested that, in view of their forest-related needs, local communities should have a stake in maintaining forest resources and could contribute towards forest conservation.

Reappraisal of forestry policies The new insights on alternative approaches to rural development and forest conservation reinforced each other as regards the development of forest policy. Increasingly it was recognized that important discrepancies exist between the claims for sustainable forest management for multiple human benefits and the actual situation with respect to the conservation and utilization of tropical forest resources. Consequently, during the 1970s a reevaluation of the relation of forestry to rural development took place. The assumption that forest protection and management should be based on central policy and planning within an authoritative and hierarchical forest service, having im-

portant territorial and policing functions, was reappraised. A need was identified to complement the strategy of forestry development based on national interest and industrial growth with new strategies focusing on basic needs, equity, and popular participation. It was proposed that a dualistic forestry development strategy should be pursued, in which the emphasis on developing modern forest industries with their related industrial wood production areas is matched by efforts to develop forestry for rural development by focusing on the needs of the local communities and their active involvement in forest management. The new approach for forestry serving rural development was labeled as social forestry.

Gaining Practical Experience

Since the identification of the need for a new social forestry strategy, much attention has been given to formulating and implementing social forestry programs. In 1978 both the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Bank indicated their intent to stimulate such programs. An important stimulus was also provided by the deliberations at the Eighth World Forestry Congress held in 1978 at Jakarta under the theme 'forests for people.' Many international donor agencies quickly accepted the new strategy and, since the early 1980s, an increasing number of social forestry projects have been implemented. Three phases in social forestry development can be distinguished: an experimental phase, a consolidation phase, and a diversification phase. During this evolution a gradual diversification in approach took place (Table 1).

The diversification in social forestry strategies concerned both technical and organizational aspects. Regarding the technical aspects, at first most attention was directed at reforestation of degraded lands,

Table 1 Phases in social forestry development

<i>Period</i>	<i>Social forestry development approach</i>
Experimental phase (late 1970s to mid-1980s)	Emphasis on establishing village woodlots and individual tree growing based on scaling-down of conventional forestry practices as a means to address fuelwood and desertification problems
Consolidation phase (second part of 1980s)	Increased understanding about the role of trees in livelihood strategies of villagers Less emphasis on firewood, more on multiproduct systems and integration of tree-growing with agriculture Increased recognition of significance of indigenous forestry practices Growing attention to village-level manufacturing of forest/tree products
Diversification phase (early 1990s)	Increased emphasis on conservation and management of existing forests, including controlled utilization of nonwood forest products New understanding about the role of common property Recognition of the need to conserve the cultural integrity of tribal forest dwellers Development of joint and collaborative forest management

but increasingly the focus became enlarged to involve natural forest conservation and management as well as agroforestry development. Several social forestry programs still focus on rehabilitating degraded lands, but increasingly also well-stocked forests are brought under community management. Concurrently, a change in product orientation took place. At first most attention was focused on the provision of products for subsistence needs. However, gradually it was recognized that appropriate forms of commercial production are also of importance for improving rural livelihoods, and that communities should have access to increased benefits from markets rather than focus on subsistence production only. Also regarding the local organization of forest management a gradual change in policy took place. Originally, social forestry projects were mainly based on the involvement of village organizations in managing village lands. In the first instance, this approach was not very effective, and consequently the emphasis changed to schemes on private lands. However, with increased understanding of the nature of common pool resources, a renewed interest in involving user-group organizations in forest management developed. Moreover, the scope of social forestry projects gradually became enlarged from either communal or private village lands to officially gazetted state forest lands. Whereas on village lands, management is under the authority of the local organizations, on the public lands the final authority still rests with the official forestry service. In this case, local organizations and professional forestry organizations enter into a collaborative program. This collaborative forestry strategy has gained prominence since the mid-1990s.

Thus, during the first phases of social forestry development it was considered that forestry development should be based on a dualistic model in which professional forest management on state lands and community forest management on village and private lands should coexist. As demonstrated by the advent of collaborative forest management schemes, at the start of the twenty-first century increased attention is given to the integration of professional and community-based forest management.

By the beginning of the twenty-first century community forest management had reached a significant scale. In tropical countries 23% of forests are either owned or managed by indigenous people and local communities. In several tropical countries an impressive number of local communities have become involved in community-based forest management. For instance, in India 63 000 village forest committees have been formed under the Joint Forest Management program, and in Nepal over 4 million

people are represented in the Federation of Forest User Groups. In Mexico in less than 15 years between 7000 and 9000 communities have moved from merely owning land to community-based timber production and have started local manufacturing of wood products.

Definitions of Social and Community Forestry

During the advent of the social forestry strategy, various terms were used to represent it: not only 'social forestry' but also 'community forestry.' Originally, these terms were often considered as synonyms. Both terms were used to refer to any forestry policies and activities that closely involved local people in forest management and tree-growing, for which rural people assumed (part of) the management responsibility, and from which they derived a direct benefit. Gradually, however, the terms were differentiated on the basis of either normative commitments or management systems. In respect to normative commitments it has been suggested that the term social forestry should primarily be understood as a reaction to the conventional approaches to forestry, which were dominated by the ideology of forest conservation and production forestry under state stewardship, which legitimized forest service control over forest lands and tree species. It was suggested that social forestry involves the development of new forestry professionals who can work within a rural development context rather than a bureaucratic context. The motives of local people for being involved in forest management are not related to such considerations regarding the nature of professional activities. Rather, the community interests are to maintain forest resources as part of the local livelihood strategies. Community forestry can best be used in relation to such local interests. Alternatively, it was also suggested that the term social forestry is often used in an implicitly narrower sense than community forestry. Social forestry would refer to activities that aim at the fulfillment of subsistence needs of the poor people, and thus refer predominantly to a basic welfare function of forests, whereas community forestry would refer to a more diversified set of activities, including more commercially oriented ones.

In respect to management arrangements, it was suggested that the term social forestry could be defined as an umbrella term for various schemes aiming at forest and tree management on private and village lands aimed to produce local needs. Community forestry could be used as a broad term which includes indigenous forest management systems and

government-initiated programs in which specific community forest users protect and manage state forests in some form of partnership with the government.

Thus, the term social forestry has a strong policy connotation, and is mainly related to activities of professional foresters. In contrast, the term community forestry has a more descriptive connotation, and is mainly related to activities of rural communities. The two terms can logically be differentiated on the basis of whether the terms relate to policy development activities or forest management practices and whether these activities are carried out by professional foresters or local communities.

Social forestry can be defined as a development strategy of professional foresters and other development organizations with the aim of stimulating active involvement of local people in small-scale, diversified forest management activities as a means to improve the livelihood conditions of these people.

Community forestry can be defined as any forest management activities undertaken by rural people as part of their livelihood strategies. Such activities may be self-initiated or proposed by external development programs.

The differentiation between social forestry and community forestry can further be clarified by the identification of social forestry as a development strategy aimed at the stimulation of more effective community forestry.

Social Forestry as Development Strategy

Social forestry policies encompass the process of formulation and implementation of measures to stimulate community involvement in the management of forest resources. It refers on the one hand to activities of professional foresters or development organizations aimed at stimulating the forest and tree management activities that are under the control of local people. On the other hand it refers to activities aimed at adapting the professional management practices in official (public) forest reserves, in order that this management becomes more explicitly directed towards an improvement of the welfare of rural communities. The development measures to stimulate local communities to intensify forest management may consist of the provision of external inputs, such as secure access to land, financial incentives, technical support, or extension. Also they may include arrangements for proper institutional and organizational frameworks, including legal codes, tenure policies, forestry extension organization, in order that community forestry can proceed.

Organizations which plan and implement social forestry programs do so for different reasons. The rationale for social forestry development is based either on assumptions regarding the contribution of social forestry measures to improved forest conservation and management, or on assumptions concerning its contribution to socioeconomic development (Table 2). Due to the different assumptions regarding how social forestry can contribute to solving either forest management or rural development problems, there is not just one objective for stimulating social forestry, but rather a group of objectives:

- To improve livelihoods of rural people by linking rural development and environmental conservation by ensuring that rural people can produce, or have better access to, certain basic needs in the form of essential forest and tree products and

Table 2 Assumptions on the rationale for social forestry development

Assumptions with respect to forest conservation and management

- Small-scale forest exploitation by local community groups better ensures sustainable forest management and forest conservation than large-scale commercial timber exploitation by concessionaries, because of the lower ecological impact of such small-scale activities and because, in contrast to large companies, local people cannot shift their activities to other areas in case of forest degradation resulting from overexploitation
- Allowing local forest utilization in certain concentrated areas can take the utilization pressure away from essential conservation areas, and therefore ensures better forest and nature conservation
- Ensures optimal use of human resources in forest management and therefore provides better prevention of forest degradation and improved rates of forest rehabilitation
- Changing open-access forest exploitation to community-controlled forest exploitation ensures more effective forest conservation
- Active participation of local communities in forest management lowers the costs of the state for forest conservation

Assumptions with respect to social development

- Local people should be legitimized to use and manage forest resources for their own needs and encouraged to apply their own indigenous knowledge in doing so
- Community forest management contributes towards the increased self-reliance of local people in producing valuable forest products, and allows equitable distribution of those products
- Community management of natural forests allows the preservation of the cultural integrity of tribal people and contributes to the empowerment of tribal communities to gain control over their own traditional resources
- Underprivileged rural groups should be empowered to gain control over the resources needed to improve their livelihood

services, and by promoting sustainable use of natural resource, employment generation and local institution building

- To honor the principles of democracy and social justice by devolving power and authority from state bureaucracies to local groups, increasing the participation of rural people in the management of forest and tree resources as a means of stimulating their self-reliance, and by addressing the needs and aspirations of specific underprivileged groups within the rural population, such as subsistence farmers, landless families, or other sectors of the rural poor
- To make forest conservation and management more efficient by involving local communities in the management of forest and the rehabilitation of degraded and marginal lands, thus reducing the state's costs for forest conservation

Some of these objectives may be congruent or may reinforce each other. Others are broadly divergent:

- Much attention has been given to the role of social forestry for meeting subsistence needs of poor people. However, activities to optimize subsistence production for poor people do not contribute towards the economic development of rural households which are incorporated in a commercial economy. For such households attention should be given towards improved options for production, local manufacturing, and marketing of commercially valuable forest products.
- In schemes to stimulate farmers to grow trees to meet specific market demands, it may be difficult to achieve democratic participation, especially of poor, landless people. In this case, equity objectives and distributive benefits may have inconsistent impacts among different sectors of the rural population.
- The provision of specific tree products (such as wood, fodder, or fruits) to local people may be assured by individual trees, even if standing alone or scattered in backyards or agricultural lands. These needs could be met by stimulating agroforestry practices on private lands. However, for securing other forest-related benefits (e.g., environmental services) it is often necessary to maintain forest reserves as complete and well-functioning ecosystems.

Thus, when formulating social forestry programs it is essential to specify what the precise objectives of the program are and to relate those objectives to the specific characteristics of different community forestry management schemes.

Community Forest Management

Variation in Community Forestry Arrangements

Community forestry refers to forest and tree management activities undertaken either individually or cooperatively by the local people, either on their own or on leased private lands, on communal lands or on state lands. It involves the process of making and implementing decisions with regard to the use and conservation of forest resources within a local community, with the organization of the activities being based on shared norms and the interests of the people living in that local community. Community forestry is a generic term as different forms of community forest management exist. This variation reflects the various meanings of the term 'community.' A community may be either a locality in the sense of a human settlement with a fixed and bounded local territory, a local social system involving interrelationships among people living in the same geographic area, or a type of relationship characterized by a sense of shared identity. Consequently, different community forestry arrangements are possible depending on the type of territory and the type of social relations being considered. In respect of such institutional arrangements, three main types of community forestry may be distinguished:

1. Management of any woody resources on lands which are located within a local territory, irrespective of whether these resources are privately, communally or *de facto* state-owned
2. Management of common pool resources, such as communal forest or grazing lands, which are shared or held in common and jointly used by people who are formally or informally organized in a forest user group
3. Collaborative management of state forest lands under cooperative arrangements with a public forest administration

The term community forestry is often used in reference to any local arrangements for managing forest resources within a village territory, irrespective of the land tenure conditions. In this case community forestry involves both forest or tree management on private lands (often labeled as farm forestry), on village lands, or on state lands which are used by local people. However, the term is also used in reference to specific forest management arrangements on either communal or public lands.

Community forest management arrangements may also be differentiated on the basis of the type of the community organization which bears responsibility

for forest management. Such organizations may range from specific user groups and family lineages, to village organizations or tribal organizations. Thus, community forestry is not restricted to village territories, but may also involve the ancestral territories of indigenous tribal groups.

Community Forestry Activities

In community forest management the main responsibility for making arrangements for forest management rests primarily with rural people. The local people do so on the basis of their own specific management objectives, rather than on the basis of the policy objectives of forestry development organizations. The local objectives for forest management involve not only fulfillment of basic household needs and the provision of marketable products, but also include the provision of forest products to be used as inputs for agricultural and livestock production. Moreover, forests may also be maintained because of cultural and religious values. Community forest management is not a specialized activity, as in the case of professional forest management, but rather forms an integrated component of the local land-use strategies. Local communities often not only attribute utilitarian values to forests, but also cultural and spiritual values. Their multiple values concerning forests may be reflected in location-specific indigenous forest management systems. Such indigenous forest-related practices include not only regeneration and maintenance of trees in either forests or agroforestry systems, but also conscious conservation of forests, controlled harvesting of forest products, and local manufacturing of these products. In many rural communities such indigenous management activities have existed for a long time. Due to the advent of modern state bureaucracy and the belief in the progressive value of professional forest management, these practices have often been overlooked in traditional forestry development programs, and have even been marginalized. However, the advent of interest in community forestry development has brought renewed interest in using such indigenous systems as a starting point for further community forest management. Thus, regarding the evolution of community forestry, a distinction can be made between indigenously evolved systems and externally sponsored systems.

Conclusion

In the late 1970s the concepts of social and community forestry emerged as a focus for addressing the linkages between forestry and rural devel-

opment. Different interest groups stimulated community forest management for different reasons:

- As a component of strategies to enhance rural livelihoods, in particular the livelihoods of the poor, and/or to maintain the cultural integrity of tribal people
- As a means to manage forest resources sustainably so as to conserve both forests and their biodiversity
- As a component of government strategies to devolve and decentralize responsibilities, and to reduce the budgetary costs of state governments for forest management

Since the advent of social and community forestry considerable experience has been gained with these strategies. Experience has shown that it is not always possible to fulfill all different expectations regarding the outcomes of social and community forestry at the same time. It was also found that the original approach to social and community forestry was rather limited; consequently the approaches became gradually more diversified. At the start of the twenty-first century it is clear that social forestry policies and project approaches should be carefully harmonized with the realities of local communities. In view of the various interpretations regarding the scope of community forest management, the objectives for social forestry development should be clearly specified and related to the specific characteristics of different community forestry schemes.

Another important lesson learned is the need not to limit social forestry to a strategy for meeting subsistence needs and alleviating poverty of the poor. Rather, social forestry should be focused on a large array of social development issues, notably aspects of provision of land rights, reclaiming of indigenous territories, and access to markets. Gradually also collaborative management schemes are developing between local communities and commercial forestry enterprises. To stimulate such trends, attention also needs to be given to networking of community forestry organizations and improvement of the skills of community organizations to negotiate with external organizations. As a result of such developments, community forestry will increasingly become a multifaceted component of a pluriform system of forest management rather than a complement to professional forest management.

See also: **Landscape and Planning:** Perceptions of Nature by Indigenous Communities. **Operations:** Small-scale Forestry. **Silviculture:** Managing for Tropical Non-timber Forest Products. **Social and Collaborative**

Forestry: Canadian Model Forest Experience; Common Property Forest Management; Forest and Tree Tenure and Ownership; Joint and Collaborative Forest Management; Public Participation in Forest Decision Making; Social Values of Forests.

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Consequently, CFM often takes the form of adaptive management with objectives and activities gradually being adjusted to both the experiences learned as well as the evolving needs of the resource and the stakeholders.

Since the 1990s many countries have introduced CFM programs and policies (Table 1), usually with strong donor support, and encouraged by international post-Rio forest dialog supporting National Forest Programs. There are high expectations for CFM. Different stakeholders hope that it will:

- benefit the rural poor who depend on forests for their livelihoods
- contribute to sustainable resource use and reduced forest degradation (through strengthened ownership)
- reduce the cost of forest management by the state.

The diversity of CFM models, stakeholders, objectives, forms of community organization, and partnerships with professional forestry organizations makes it hard to generalize about the impact of CFM, particularly in relation to forest conservation and social aspects factors. Similarly, the factors contributing to success are open to interpretation. Whilst tenure, institutional arrangements, and local organizational strengthening have often been highlighted, the effects as experienced by forest users are rarely considered.

In this article we first look more closely at the various terms used, and take an overview of the way CFM has developed around the world, before discussing the issues that are implicated in its success or failure.

Joint and Collaborative Forest Management

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Introduction

With the increasing recognition over the last 30 years that forestry is a pluralistic enterprise with a wide range of legitimate stakeholders, new arrangements for sharing management decisions among local forest users and professional forestry services are emerging under various titles including 'participatory forest management,' 'collaborative forest management' (CFM), and 'joint forest management' (JFM).

In many parts of the world CFM is a relatively new idea. Despite widespread use of the term, and 20 years since its inauguration in India and Nepal, CFM in many ways remains an experimental process.

Definitions and Main Characteristics

The involvement of nonforesters in forest management has taken off to such an extent that there is now a plethora of terms to describe it (Table 2).

'Collaborative forest management' refers to an explicit partnership between professional forestry organizations and communities or defined groups of local forest users. The objective of this strategy is to manage forests to provide sustainable benefits for a range of stakeholders. It has been emphasized that CFM is an intervention by outsiders (public forest services, donors, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)), and therefore contrasts with traditional forest management practices.

The term 'participatory' has become so widely used that there is a risk of its being misunderstood. Participatory is understood to refer to a range of relationships between professionals and local people,