

Social Forestry Planning

From page 8
forest pilferage and squatting. The inherent lenient attitude towards forests damage seems ingrained in and stem from the general considerations that, since the state cannot adequately address the food and fuel crisis of its citizens, let the people, on their own, produce something from the forest land to sustain themselves. Forest damage in the developing countries thus take place fully within the knowledge of the government and their bureaucratic functionaries. It is therefore almost certain that without satisfactorily ameliorating the causes of poverty and advancing the level of literacy, substantial improvement in the forestry and environmental situation seem unachievable.

4. In the erstwhile colonies and monarchies, forests were owned mostly by the crown. Forests were created either as colonial master's real estate for revenue earnings or as the native landlord's private estates. General public had no right over the forest land nor on the forest produce, although they and their livestock and crops were the frequent victims of forest animals. Even right of way or water courses through the forests were denied. To the contrary, they suffered persecution for petty forest liftings for personnel domestic requirements. Such bourgeois dominations had been counterproductive and resulted in hatching out and fanning hostile between the forest owners and forest neighbours.

5. After independence from colonial rules or abolition of Monarchies and Landlord System, though ownership of the forests came to the national governments, but the legacy of custodial management attitude and alien treatments to forest neighbours continued as before. On the negative side of the story, in place of the stiff colonial rule a much lenient application of the penal provisions of the forest acts was done by the native government's administration. As a result substantive control over forest estate got slack. In fact, major forest denudation and loss of timber stock in the public forests took place after change of ownership from the colonial rulers/Monarchy to the national

government. Co-operation in the field of forest conservation and environmental amelioration did not make much headway in most countries after independence which is a drawback that must be overcome through attitudinal reorientation of the government and the people.

6. From the foregoing situations and realities, a pragmatic approach evolved in the recent years that 'glass-house protection' of public forests, stretching over vast tract and interspersed with dense habitation is an absurdity without the active participation and willing



collaboration of forest neighbors. This led to the evolution of the concept of "Social Forestry" as 'forestry of the people, by the people and for the people'. Social forestry is a unique forest management and development concept evolved perforce by the developing nations themselves as their indigenous package to warrant further forest destruction by enlisting public participation and cooperation. This objective is sought to be achieved through a system of sharing benefits accruing out of forest management and conservation, and at the same time shouldering responsibility for forest protection by the beneficiaries.

SOCIAL FORESTRY PLANNING
7. The broad spectrum of goods and services that are desired by the society from forestry sector may be briefly enumerated as follows:

Trangible products like timber, poles, fuelwood, fruits, leaves, pulses and gums.

Multiple use of forest soil through agro-forestry, silvopasture and silvo-fishery production system.

Employment opportunities through implementation of the forest production and management programmes and processing industries including cottage industries.

The service functions of forests like soil and water conservation, protecting hinterlands from cyclonic storms and tidal surges, environmental amelioration through smothering effect on temperature, humidity, and micro-climatic influences foresting agriculture and comfortable human living.

8. The forest coverage in most countries of our region being lesser than the bare minimum requirement for a country and the demand of forest products being much higher than corresponding supply, and with demand increasing disproportionately compared to contemporary attempt at resource build up, there exist an over-riding necessity for appropriateness in planning and programming, and fixation of priority in the implementation of social forestry development programme in order to address the resources constraint issues. The forestry sector in the past has not fostered the full participation of people in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating sectoral programme. Thus social equity and demand satisfaction has not been correctly addressed. Therefore pragmatism in planning with reasonable prouise for demand satisfaction for goods and services may be expected only when the people, for whom and with whose participation the forestry development programme is sought to be implemented, are involved and consulted in the planning process.

9. The major global environmental concerns of the contemporary world may be broadly summarized as under:

- (i) Water and air pollution from domestic and industrial disposals and emissions;
- (ii) Improper land use provoking soil erosion and land slide, and decreasing soil fertility;
- (iii) Habitat loss through deforestation and conversion of wetlands threatening stability of local and regional environment;
- (iv) Degradation of arid and semi-arid zones and advancing desertification;
- (v) Destruction of coastal



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ecosystem for fishculture and agriculture, eventually causing disaster through cyclonic storm sweep and tidal surge;

- (vi) Loss of biodiversity and extinction of species threatening irreversible ecological changes;
- (vii) Coastal and marine plution from hazardous waste disposal and toxic chemicals;
- (viii) Inefficient aquifer recharging, water scarcity and unhygienic water quality;
- (ix) Green house effect and global warming;
- (x) Ozone layer destruction and health hazard;
10. Environmental concerns concomitant with forest cover loss but recuperable by forest recreation have got to be addressed by restoration of tree covers. Social forestry planning should therefore recognize the basic principle that forest

resources and forest land should be sustainably managed to meet the social, economic, cultural and spiritual human needs of present and future generations ensuring at the same time ecological balance through environmental conservation and improvement.

11. The forestry For sustainability of the social forestry programme, the principal issues that need to be addressed in the planning stages are:

- (i) immediate necessities of forest products of the local communities must be satisfied through quick returns, and (ii), poverty alleviation through employment generation in forestry works and cottage industries and multiple use of forest soil (agroforestry).

Through a shift to genuine participatory forestry from the traditional custodial approach, sustainability both in terms of protection and production could be ensured. Non-government organizations could function as useful facilitator by organizing the participants into motivated groups of committed workers whose interests should also be guaranteed through bilateral or multilateral legal instruments.

Concluding remarks

- It should be remembered in all national development planning that:
- (i) The sustainability of all development efforts is squarely dependent on the overall environmental equilibrium.
 - (ii) The same course of forest destruction and environmental disequilibrium must be retracked to retrieve environmental equilibrium.
 - (iii) More attention is needed towards human aspects and social factors rather than treating forestry merely as a resource

Forestry and Environment

From page 8
people through afforestation activity it also helps generating employment through revitalizing the cottage industry. A mass movement can be created through this programme by bringing awareness about the tree resources and their conservation. With government initiative the Forest Department had successfully implemented the "community forestry" project in some northern districts of Bangladesh with active participation of the people. Seeing the success story, the Forest Department is inspired to take another project of similar nature namely "Thana Afforestation and Nursery Development" for the entire country except the hill districts. It is expected that this project will also be a successful one with active participation and cooperation of the people. The important activities of this project are:

- a) Raising seedlings for distribution;
- b) Establishment of nursery at each thana;
- c) Afforestation along the road, railroad, embankment, feeder road etc;
- d) Introduction of agro-forestry in the denuded plain land sal forest area;
- e) Afforestation in the premises of the educational institutions;
- f) Training of the people for nursery development and afforestation.

It is possible to bring an improvement in the economy of

base; that means, integrating conservation with development.

- (iv) The 'Carrying capacity' of a resource need be appropriately assessed in the forestry planning process before prescriptions are made.
- (v) In densely populated situations, multiple use of forests soil in general and agroforestry in particular should be the basis for sustainable social forestry development. Agroforestry should be viewed both as a source of diversified products for the general well-being of the neighboring community and also as a means of improving soils for sustainable production.

the rural people through social forestry programme. Social forestry will create an opportunity for extra income for the rural farmers. Demand for fuel wood is severe. Homestead afforestation will provide fuel for household consumption thereby saving some expenditure on one hand and on the other can earn some money by selling the product in the market.

Agro-forestry can also be introduced under social forestry programme where it is possible to cultivate tree and agricultural crop together on the same piece of land. Agro-forestry can bring a substantial change in the agricultural production system. This programme will help producing food grains, tree resources and bring an improvement in the socio-economic condition of the rural farmers.

Social forestry can bring about an accredited change in conserving the environment. Considering the socio-economic condition and status of the forest in this country, the traditional forest management can do little about the conservation of resources and the development of the society. Social forestry by its direct influence like preventing pollution of air, erosion of soil, augmenting resources, generating income etc. and by indirect influence on society and nature can create a greater impact in conserving the meagre forest resources thereby maintaining the balance of the environment.



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গাছ লাগান

পরিবেশ বাঁচান

— খালেদা জিয়া

গাছপালা কাঠ ও ফলমূল প্রদান ছাড়াও :

- বায়ুমণ্ডলের তাপ দমিয়ে রাখে ও অর্দ্রতা বাড়ায়
- ভূমির উর্বরতা বৃদ্ধি করে ক্ষেত-খামারের উৎপাদন বাড়ায়



- বন্যার প্রকোপ হ্রাস করে
- ঘূর্ণিঝড় ও সামুদ্রিক জলোচ্ছ্বাস প্রতিহত করে জীবন ও সম্পদ নিরাপদ রাখে

অধিক সংখ্যায় বৃক্ষরোপন ও তা সংরক্ষণ করে আপনার পরিবেশকে নির্মল রাখুন,
আপনার ও দেশের সমৃদ্ধির পথ সুগম করুন

বন অধিদপ্তর