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Review paper

Social Forestry in Uttar Pradesh, India- history, concept, scheme, objectives and role.

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ABSTRACT: This review paper discusses the history, concepts, scheme and role of social forestry from local and international perspectives. It summarizes the activities of social forestry in the Uttar Pradesh, focusing on the experience and lessons learned from many bilateral and multilateral development projects involved in social forestry in the State. The programmes of most of these projects involve complex institutional development activities, technological improvement, development of infrastructure and other services to attract and retain skilled workers. Joint forest resource management and forest management planning in the state has been reviewed, in spite of the protection measures and patrolling system within natural forest reserves, dependent communities continued to extract their ever-increasing needs from the available natural resources. The paper reviews the social, ecological and economic benefits from social forestry application. The role of different organizations involved in social forestry in the state is highlighted, their involvement ranges from raising local awareness to the encouragement of participation in forest establishment, protection and management.

Key words- social forestry, components, schemes, objectives, functions, need and importance.

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INTRODUCTION

Uttar Pradesh is bounded Uttarakhand on the north-west, Haryana and Delhi on the west, Rajasthan on the south-west, Madhya Pradesh on the south, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand on south-east and Bihar on the east. Situated between 23°52'N and 31°28'N latitudes and 77°3' and 84°39'E longitudes, this is the fourth largest state in the country in terms of area, and the first in terms of population. The climate of the state is tropical monsoon. The State has typical variety of soil, which is arrial deep brown, loamy in certain places, and mixed with sand. The soil is acidic, shallow and contains gravels and stones. The western plains have fertile soil. Down the Pilibhit, some parts of soil are acidic while rests contain alkaline properties. The average temperature varies in the plains from 3 to 4 °C in January to 43 to 45 °C in May and June. There are three distinct seasons - winter from October to February, summer from March to mid-June, and the rainy season from June to September. Recorded Forest Area constitute about 6.88% of the total geographical area of the state and Total Forest and Tree cover is 9.01% of total geographical area. The terai and bhabhar area in the Gangetic Plain have most of the forests. The Vindhyan forests consists mostly of scrub. The districts of Jaunpur, Ghazipur and Ballia have no forest land, while 31 other district have less forest area.

Widespread loss of tree vegetation in the developing world in the past few decades led to the emergence of social forestry. It was a response to meet the growing scarcity of biomass and to preserve the environment. Several countries in the developing world launched this type of programme to meet the demands of an expanding population for fuel, fodder and timber. Social forestry was new approach to solve the problem of fuel scarcity with the participation of rural people who would plant, tend and maintain trees by themselves. The species planted would be of their choice. People's Republic of China was one of the first countries to embark on a major community reforestation programme. A massive nationwide campaign was launched during 1950s as a means of replenishing the country's stock of trees depleted by the previous decades of war and overexploitation. Social forestry was first recognized as an important component of forestry development and meeting the rural need in the Interim Report of the National Commission on Agriculture on social forestry during 1972. The commission stressed on the socioeconomic importance of social forestry for rural community as well as in the management of forest resources. It was felt that by taking up the programme of raising trees, grasses and fodder in the farmers own lands, village commons, wastelands and degraded forests close to habitations. It would be possible to meet the requirements of fuel wood, fodder, small timber for rural housing and agricultural implements etc. In India the concept of social forestry is not new. It is found in the preaching of Buddha about 2500 years ago. Lord Buddha preached that every good Buddhist should plant one tree and look after it over five years so that it grows to a full tree and in this way he should plant about 5 trees in his life time. Afforestation in the post-independence period can be divided in to three phases. In the first phase 'Van Mahotsav' was started in fifties which failed to attract attention largely due to ignorance at all levels. In the second phase, farm forestry was started in some states in the 1970's. The third phase was the period when social forestry programme actually took off in eighties with massive programmes and ambitious targets.

CONCEPT AND HISTORY OF SOCIAL FORESTRY

The word Social forestry was coined by Westoby and used in the Ninth Commonwealth Forestry Congress in 1968. According to Prasad (1985) "Forestry outside the conventional forests which primarily aims at providing continuous flow of goods and services for the benefit of people". Social forestry projects take varying forms depending on the particular (political, economic, cultural, ecological) environment and remain flexible because of the "social creativity" of the participating interest groups shaping this forest management. The main objective of existing social forestry programs is to provide forest products in rural areas where they are most needed. This objective is achieved by establishing multi-purpose tree plantations to supply fuel and small timber and to provide food, fodder, shade and the environmental stability that is necessary for continued food production. These plantations also generate income and employment, both directly, by providing jobs in planting, harvesting, and marketing, and indirectly, by providing raw materials for cottage industries. The plantations are established on presently unproductive or unused land, for example, by strip planting along road, canal and rail sides and by block planting on village common land, wastelands and degraded forests. First attempt of tree plantation outside forest boundary was made in 1935 in United Province. In 1952 attempts were made to plant trees on private farm lands. In 1973 National Commission on Agriculture (NCA) stressed the need for manmade forests outside the existing forest. After 1975 with financial help from various international organizations, SF plantation started on large scale in many states of India.

NEED OF SOCIAL FORESTRY

This need for a social forestry scheme was felt as India has a dominant rural population that still depends largely on fuel wood and other biomass for their cooking and heating. This demand for fuel wood will not come down but the area under forest will reduce further due to the growing population and increasing human activities. Yet the government managed the projects for five years then gave them over to the village panchayats (village council) to manage for themselves and generate products or revenue as they saw fit.

OBJECTIVES OF SOCIAL FORESTRY

Social Forestry means development of forests on community land solely to be used by the community to meet their needs. There are two main objectives in social forestry:

1. Using the public and common land of the village to produce in a decentralized manner firewood, fodder and small timber to meet the local needs (particularly poor people) and also to conserve soil and water.
2. Reducing the pressure on natural forests. In the absence of alternate resources village people tend to exploit the natural forests. This is unavoidable as their needs and that of their livestock (grazing cattle) has to be met by the nearby forests. If an alternate forest is developed with their co-operation they would also be interested in protecting the natural forests.

SOCIAL FORESTRY SCHEME IN UTTAR PRADESH

Social forestry is a major scheme funded by State Government for tree plantation. Plantations is carried out on various type of community land, canals, rail, and on land available on road side to ensure the availability of timber, fuel wood, fodder, small forest produce etc., in rural areas of all the districts in the state. This ensures the availability of raw material for small timber industries for rural people. Social forestry scheme is being implemented in the following manner on the basis of financial sources in Uttar Pradesh.

1. Social forestry scheme (General)-This scheme is being implemented in all the districts of the state. Industrial pulp wood plantation scheme implemented till the year 2011-12 has come to an end during the year 2012-13. The committed works of the scheme has been included in the social forestry scheme.

- **Social forestry** – special component sub plan Social forestry scheme is being implemented through the fund received from social welfare department for the welfare of scheduled castes under special component plan. Under this tree plantations work is carried out in scheduled caste abundant regions.
- **Social forestry** - tribal sub plan Plantation is done on community land in rural areas in tribe abundant regions under social forestry scheme through the fund received from social welfare department for the welfare of scheduled tribes under tribal sub plan.

2. Social forestry in urban areas- In this scheme ornamental and shady trees are planted on the unused land alongside the roads and parks for environment protection and beautification in urban areas.

3. Green belt development scheme- Green belt development has got a priority by the honourable chief minister. In view of this tree plantations is being carried out from the year 2012-13 through the financing from forest corporation and green belt development scheme has been started in the year 2013-14. This is scheme implemented in the entire state.

4. Vir Abdul Hameed forest, wild life and environment protection award scheme- This scheme was started in the year 2012-13 with the aim to recognize the works of individuals/organizations who has done a commendable work to increase the tree cover, wild life and environment protection which awakens the spirit of forest and wild life conservation in the society.

5. Forest research and expansion The task of forest research is executed through the forests promoter, sal region (Bareilly), southern region (Kanpur) and Vindhyan region (Ram Nagar, Varanasi) under the chief forest conservator (Research) Uttar Pradesh, Kanpur. Departmental plantation is necessary to increase the productivity of tree plantations made by farmers on their private land or by other agencies by making them available high quality seedlings. In order to raise high quality seedlings supply of high quality selected seed source is of special importance.

6. Organizing Forest festivals-This scheme is being implemented by entire state. This increases the awareness towards forests and wild life among the public. Under this scheme tree plantation and up gradation of forest awareness centers is carried out in every district on the occasion of forest festivals. Under this scheme Rs. 20.00 lakhs has been spent during the year 2013-14.

7. Nursery Management Scheme-In this scheme nurseries of 8 to 12 feet height are being raised for plantations. This scheme is being implemented in the entire state.

8. Children Forest Programme- Social forestry programme creates strong awareness about environment and forests for the children in schools under 'Children Forest Programme' which will contribute to the conservation of forests and environment in the long run by encouraging the involvement of school children in plantation activities and by educating the students through environment related awareness programmes. This programme is to be implemented in **Noida and Greater Noida, Lucknow, Varanasi, Allahabad, Kanpur and Agra districts**. A total number of **six hundred and fifty** schools are estimated to be covered under this programme.

COMPONENTS OF SOCIAL FORESTRY

The scope or components of social forestry defined by the Commission includes farm forestry, extension forestry, reforestation in degraded forests and recreation forestry.

1. Farm forestry: Farm forestry is the name given to programmes which promote commercial tree growing by farmers on their own land Farm forestry was defined by NCA (1976) as the practice of forestry in all its aspects in and the around the farms or village lands integrated with other farm operations.

2. Extension forestry: Extension forestry is the practice of forestry in areas devoid of tree growth and other vegetation situated in places away from the conventional forest areas with the object of increasing the area under tree growth.

3. Rehabilitation of degraded forests: The degraded area under forests needs immediate attention for ecological restoration and for meeting the socio economic needs of the communities living in and around such areas.

4. Recreation forestry: Recreation forestry is the practice of forestry with the object of raising flowering trees and shrubs mainly to serve as recreation forests for the urban and rural population. This type of forestry is also known as Aesthetic forestry which is defined as the practice of forestry with the object of developing or maintaining a forest of high scenic value.

ROLE OF SOCIAL FORESTRY

Social forestry plays a pivotal role in national economy .Its potential as foods supplier, fuel wood, fodder, capacity to generate employment an improve national economy thought export earning was not realized earlier .After Independence, special emphasis was given to forest department. It is very difficult to achieve socio economic development of poor man community, provide rural employment and derive financial strength through earning foreign exchange to achieve this goal appropriate measures on the part of government may be taken update national policy. Social forestry play an important role in economic development and ecological stability. Growing trees provide numerous services such as environmental and ecological stability necessary for human sustenance. Forests are inevitable on earth for well being of mankind. They are not just the green cover we need to make the earth look beautiful; they have many functions integral for our survival and subsistence. They function as a resource for many aspects of human life. Afforestation outside the conventional forest area for the benefit of rural and urban communities.

1. Climate Change Mitigation- Forests clearly play an important and complex role in climate change. Deforestation and degradation are major contributors to GHG emissions. Yet forests can also help reduce the levels of carbon in the atmosphere as well as increase the resilience of vulnerable communities to climate change. Social forestry works for the empowerment of the millions of people who depend on forestland and resources for their daily needs. It aims to balance economic, environmental, and social uses of forests and to engage local people in SFM. When effectively employed, social forestry has great potential to protect and restore forests, conserve biodiversity, improve livelihoods, reduce vulnerability to climate change, and sequester carbon.

2. Participation of local people: Indifferent village people become very active when they are involved in this type of development projects, e.g., Arabari Project in West Bengal where local people have developed wonderful, sustainable afforestation project.

3. Multiple Production: Besides afforestation, fodder, vegetables and other agro- products become lucrative in the domestic market.

4. All-round Economic Development: A sustainable economic independence may be achieved by rural units that, in turn, may lead to integrated village development by the villagers themselves.

CONCLUSION

This paper reviews some of the general principles that can be learned from existing social forestry projects and schemes in the state. Some lessons for the organization and administration of future projects are intuitively reasonable, and apply to many economic development projects. Others are more specific to social forestry. Although social forestry has a fairly extensive history in some countries, and many new projects presently are being funded, documentation on their effectiveness is lamentably quite sparse. Social forestry play an important role in soil conservation, reduces the pressure on natural forest by provides them alternate source of firewood and fodder so that they need not go to the natural forests and protect the environment from various adverse climatic factors. Social forestry plantation also maintain or regulate the concept of energy crisis by producing above and below ground biomass on same land unit. It is seen from various studies and forest state report that forest cover has been increased by adopting various plantation techniques in India as well as in this state.



Figure 1. Map showing social forestry project in district wise in Uttar Pradesh, India.

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