

Center for Community-Based Resource Management (CBRM)

Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba

CBRM Database

Date:	05/05/2013	Entry Number:	1317
Case Study Name:	Learning from self-initiated community forest management in Orissa, India		
Authors:	Czech Conroy, Abha Mishra, Ajay Rai		
Document Type:	Journal paper		
Year:	2002		
Language:	English		
Document Location:	<i>Forest Policy and Economics</i>		
Full Citation:	Conroy, C, A. Mishra, A. Rai (2002) Learning from self-initiated community forest management in Orissa, India. <i>Forest Policy and Economics</i> 4 (2002) 227:237		
Region:	South Asia		
Country:	India		
Ecosystem Type:	forests		
Social Characteristics:	Community bordering / inside protected area		
Scale of Study:	Community, regional		
Resource Type:	Forests, protected area		
Type of Initiative:	Community driven initiative		

Community-Based Work:	Resource management, development planning
Keywords:	Forest management, protected area, community, indigenous, institutional, sustainability, livelihoods, conflict, programmes
Summary:	<p>There is growing recognition in tropical countries that safeguarding forests requires the active involvement of local communities, but knowledge of how best to do this is limited. Orissa's extensive experience of community forest management (CFM) provides some valuable lessons and insights regarding: (a) how and why communities manage their forests; and (b) the sustainability of CFM initiatives. The paper discusses the following aspects of CFM in Orissa: (a) the conditions that give rise to the initiation of CFM; (b) the size and nature of the benefits and how they are distributed among the various sub-groups of a community; (c) the factors affecting its sustainability, including conflicts and their management; and (d) communities' support needs. The principal research activity was a survey, primarily socio-economic, of 43 forest-dependent communities. CFM was examined in the context of people's livelihood systems as a whole, since these can affect the size and nature of any benefits they derive from forest protection and also their main reasons for deciding to protect. The authors conclude that CFM has made an important contribution to the regeneration and sustainable management of Orissa's forests and argue that the formal balance of control of forests be shifted further towards communities. They highlight the plurality of institutional and management arrangements that communities have developed and caution against forest departments imposing a standardised, blueprint approach, as has tended to happen in government Joint Forest Management (JFM) programmes. Several weaknesses are identified in India's JFM programmes and reforms are recommended.</p>