



## CHAPTER 1

# Historical overview

## Decline in historical systems of local forest management

Over time, increasing pressures for land to cultivate, together with the effects of economic and political changes, have often greatly reduced the availability of forest resources for use by local people. While the consequent increase in pressures on remaining forests has sometimes served to strengthen incentives to bring or keep them under local control, it has often meant that existing systems for controlling access and use have also come under pressure and have been severely weakened or have ceased to function altogether. Frequently, increasing use of the resources that remain has then led to their progressive degradation.

One of the main factors underlying these trends has been expropriation of forests by governments as forest reserves or as some other form

of State property. During the colonial period in India, for instance, governments started to lay legal claim to use of much of the forest estate and to exercise these new powers. In the post-independence period, with the abolition of the princely states and the expropriation of their forests, control by the central government was greatly extended. Many local people lost their rights of access to the forests during the process of forest reservation. Those 'rights' which were legally recognized at that time have tended to be progressively circumscribed, and downgraded from 'rights' to 'privileges', or have been extinguished by subsequent legislation and practices. By 1980, nearly 23 percent of India's total land area was under State management, while the rights of an estimated 300 million resource users had become increasingly unclear (Poffenberger and Singh, 1996; Lindsay, 1994).

Comparable intrusions by governments occurred elsewhere. In Africa south of the Sahara, failure by colonial powers to understand the resource tenure systems they encountered frequently led them to impose changes that were detrimental to the functioning and evolution of existing resource management systems, e.g. by classifying fallow and common pool land as unoccupied and as the property of the State (Shepherd, 1992; Lawry, 1989). In South America, traditional systems of forest management and use have been undermined since the colonial era by policies that encourage settlement by colonists, with

property rights linked to land clearance, and that cede resources to logging, mining and other outside interests (Perl *et al.*, 1991; Southgate and Runge, 1990). The expansion in the areas designated as State forests in some of the main countries of Southeast Asia in recent times reflects increasing pressures to exercise physical control over upland areas for strategic reasons, either because of their importance as a land bank for surplus lowland populations, or because of growing concerns to prevent downstream damage resulting from alleged overuse of upland areas (Peluso *et al.*, 1995; Lynch and Talbott, 1995).

In addition, in all regions economic and demographic pressures have led to the progressive conversion of forest areas for agricultural and grazing use. These shifts have often been encouraged by land re-allocation programmes and the practice of distributing land to the landless, and by widespread encroachment and spontaneous settlement in forest areas. In recent times, land titling to promote private tenure on farmland (on the grounds that this would stimulate agricultural productivity), has further reduced access to resources to which people previously had access under the systems of overlapping and interpenetrating rights that have been common, particularly in parts of Africa (Neumann, 1996).

The impact of such pressures and changes is evident in the results of a seminal study of village common pool resources in the dry areas of India (see Box 1). In the 30-year period up to 1980, there were huge reductions in these resources. The much-reduced areas of village land that remained were typically heavily degraded and under open access usage with little, if any, local control of use being exercised any longer (Jodha, 1990).

The usual rationale behind the claim of the State on forest lands has been that this ensures their sustainable use for environmental and economic outputs. The potential value of forests as a source of rent to governments helps to explain the reasons for breaking down existing use and management systems, and the bias towards forest management systems designed to meet industrial rather than

local requirements. As development theory came to accentuate industry-led development in the 1950s and 1960s, this priority in forest policy and practice became even stronger.

Governments have also tended to increase their control over local activities more generally, as they tried to exert control over often diverse, fragmented and dispersed populations. Inevitable conflicts with existing power structures and allegiances resulted in measures to undermine and remove previously functioning local governance and management systems, and to replace them with political and bureaucratic structures and regulations. This has not been confined to forestry, but it has had a particular impact in this sector because the State has usually been unable to provide effective control over large areas of forest. Existing systems have consequently been undermined or suppressed, but they have not been replaced by an effective alternative (Baland and Platteau, 1996; Thomson, 1992).

Particularly in Africa, indigenous local systems of governance of forest and woodland resources have also been eroded because of a lack of clarity about the rights involved under overlapping and poorly reconciled systems of national and community land law and custom (Bruce, 1999). In order to avoid the high social transaction costs of organizing the management of small areas of forest in such difficult and adverse circumstances, people increasingly leave management of local tree resources to the State (Shepherd, 1992; Lawry, 1989).

## Common property management and use in dry areas of India

### BOX 1

In the dry, rainfed plain areas of India, the main role of common property resources historically has been to complement the highly variable level of private agricultural production. Traditionally, the sustainability of these common property resources was protected by an array of controls, designed and enforced mainly at the local level. However, a major study by Jodha has shown that in recent times there have been huge changes in the availability, management and use of these common property resources.

In the 21 villages studied across seven states, it was found that the area of common land had been reduced by an average of 42 percent in the 30 years prior to 1980-1982, while population per hectare in most villages had increased at least threefold. This reduction was a result of land reforms (which led to abolition of a number of levies and taxes on common property resource users), replacement of traditional village leadership with elected village councils (which resulted in decreased regulation of common land use), expanded private landownership, expanded credit and subsidies for animals, and more marketing links for common property-related products related (mainly milk, meat, wool, fuelwood, and various other bush and tree products). Of the communities that in 1950 had exercised controls, such as rotational grazing, seasonal restrictions and watchmen, only 10 percent had such controls in 1980, while use of fines, taxes and fees had ceased altogether.

The remaining area is typically severely degraded and under open access usage, and the range, quality and quantity of products collected have often been sharply reduced. Nevertheless, the rural poor are still heavily dependent on the remaining common property resources.

In the study villages, Jodha found that from 84 to 100 percent of poor households depended on them for fuel, fodder and food items (compared with no more than 20 percent of richer households). Poor households also obtained from 14 to 23 percent of their income from products harvested from common property resources.

With increasing differentiation between the richer and the poorer people within villages has come increasing conflict about the use to which the common property resources should be put. However, some local management systems have survived, at least in part. From his analysis of 176 specific common property resources that showed at least one instance of local concern about their protection, Jodha suggests that small size, isolation and maintenance of traditional social sanctions are village-level factors associated with preservation of common property management. More specifically, greater distance from market centres, smaller and more visible common property resources, less occupational change, less factionalism, less socio-economic differentiation, and less dependence on state patronage were found to be important in this respect.

Source: Jodha, 1990

## Origins of the revival of community forestry

In developing countries, despite the widespread erosion of the size and quality of forest resources that rural people can draw upon, most people still rely on forest products to some extent. Even in the Indian villages described in Box 1, from 84 to 100 percent of poor households still depended on the remaining biomass resources on nearby village lands for much of their fuel and fodder, and for some of their food and income, at the end of the period covered (Jodha, 1990).

Though much of such use was achieved by 'mining' remaining resources, investigation has increasingly revealed the existence of at least vestiges of collective systems for managing use of woody resources, coexisting with State and private rights. It has also become clear that in some situations user groups have been trying to strengthen remaining existing control systems, or to create new arrangements to bring resources under more effective local control (Messerschmidt, 1993). In addition, people were found to be widely responding to a decline in access to supplies of forest products by increasing the stock of trees on their farmland (Arnold and Dewees, 1997).

Therefore, in the past 30 years or more, there have often been self-initiated local actions to stabilize use of forest resources or to increase supplies of forest products. This has been paralleled by changes in the



Local needs for fuelwood, grazing and other things need to be accommodated to halt deterioration of forests.

approach to forest management, first by a number of countries, and then by the donor community. The countries that pioneered the changes tended to be ones where governments had acknowledged that centralized management of forests had failed in its primary purpose of conserving the essential productive and protective values of forest resources. This led to recognition that deterioration in the forest condition could only be halted if action were taken to accommodate local needs for fuelwood, grazing and other things in some other manner. This analysis, and a perception of the large scale and immediacy of the problem, shaped the nature of responses that concentrated on acting quickly to create new

supplies of forest products to relieve the pressures on deteriorating and threatened forests (FAO, 1978).

Thus, the large-scale initiative taken by the South Korean Government in the 1970s to encourage villages to create collective woodlots on their lands was stimulated by the perception that this was necessary in order to stop destructive use, by those in need of fuelwood, of hill forests that protected downstream agricultural lands. Similarly, community forestry in the hills of Nepal stemmed from increasing concern about deforestation of watershed areas. The even larger Social Forestry programme in India had its origins in a 1976 report of the National Commission of Agriculture, which recommended that people be encouraged to grow trees on their village land and farmlands in order to reduce the pressures on production forests caused by mounting rural demands for fuel and other forest products, and by forest uses such as grazing. In the same period, comparable initiatives included the Village Forestry programme in Thailand, in forest areas heavily encroached by people seeking land to cultivate, and the Village Afforestation initiative in parts of the United Republic of Tanzania that were being stripped of natural tree cover.

Such thinking within the forest sector was given added impetus by a number of major, broader changes in development thinking and strategy. The 1970s saw a shift in development theory and practice towards a greater emphasis on agriculture, mobilizing the rural sector and meeting the basic

needs of the rural poor. Recognition, as a consequence of the increased attention given to the energy sector following the 1973 rise in fossil fuel prices, that woodfuels were the principal source of energy used by households to cook food, highlighted the role of forests in meeting such needs. This added a humanitarian and developmental dimension to the earlier conservation concerns that more attention needed to be paid to meeting rural demands for wood, and to doing so in a more sustainable fashion (Wiersum, 1999; Arnold, 1992).

### AN INITIAL FOCUS ON AFFORESTATION

Much of the early effort to respond to these concerns focused on creating farm and collectively managed woodlots. One reason advanced for this was that such tree planting could reverse or offset deforestation, and mitigate the environmental damage caused by the excessive removal of tree cover. Another was that tree planting could help meet people's needs for fuel, and other basic self-sufficiency needs, at minimal cost. A third was the view that trees could be a potential tool for resource-poor farmers to help them stabilize and improve their farm systems. Tree crops could help to increase output and generate income, and to secure a greater degree of self-sufficiency, with low inputs of capital and labour.

In practice, it was found that while tree growing by farmers may be an indirect or direct response to

deforestation, and can create additional supplies of wood and other forest products, it does not recreate many of the broader protective functions of forests. It is rare for farmers to decide to plant trees for environmental reasons if they are not facing serious soil loss or site deterioration. Trees in farming systems are more accurately seen not as part of the forest resource, but in the context of farm household livelihood needs and strategies.

The relationship of the perceived fuelwood shortage to farmers' priorities also proved to be quite different in practice from what had been assumed initially. Fuelwood 'gap' analyses extrapolated present consumption and supply patterns without recognizing the various ways in which people actually adjust to decreases in fuelwood supplies, or the fact that fuel shortages are often due to constraints other than shortages of wood (e.g. shortages of labour that can limit a household's ability to collect fuelwood). Also, tree growing always involves some cost in terms of land, labour and capital, and makes sense only if it produces outputs of commensurate value to the farm household. Where farmers were planting trees, these were species that would produce fruit, fodder, protection, construction timbers or products for sale. Fuel, everywhere a low-value commodity, was being supplied from lower-cost sources, such as existing woody material or agricultural waste products, or as a by-product or co-product of trees grown for other purposes. It became clear that there were few situations where farmers had been growing trees to use solely for fuel (Deweese, 1989).

Consequently, the very large-scale programmes that were often set in place to encourage and support tree growing by farmers, in order to increase local fuelwood supplies, often had disappointing results. Interventions narrowly focused on just one tree-related issue, such as fuelwood supplies, were likely to encourage tree growing where trees were not an appropriate component of the farm household economy, or to induce growing of inappropriate trees, or to require changes in the institutional or social framework that could not realistically be achieved in connection only with tree growing (Deweese, 1997).



Many early community forestry initiatives focused only on increasing local fuelwood supplies.

## Social Forestry woodlot projects in India

### BOX 2

A major element of India's Social Forestry programme in the late 1970s and 1980s was to create woodlots on non-arable communal land, to be managed collectively by the user community (*panchayat*) in accordance with rules prescribed by the forest department and a management plan drawn up jointly with the latter. Benefits and costs were to be split between the forest department and the community.

However, the woodlots were usually established by the state forest departments, and the village lands to be planted were frequently transferred into the temporary control of the department for this purpose. Under forest department management, the projects have primarily created tree stocks and wood products of commercial value, with few intermediate products, such as fuelwood and grass, which previously were harvested from the areas and used by villagers. The woodlots, therefore, have had the effect of changing land use and shifting benefit flows away from local subsistence users. The main benefit to the poor has usually been from the wage employment created.

Though tens of thousands of woodlots have been established in this way, there has been reluctance on the part of *panchayats* to assume control of them. This was because control carried financial responsibilities that villages and *panchayats* have difficulty meeting; because woodlot management plans, village forest rules, etc. were often complex and unclear, and required skills and experience that *panchayats* do not possess; because continued involvement of the forest department discouraged local

bodies from taking over and encouraged them to opt for extending forest department management; and because the small size of the woodlots, relative to local needs, together with difficulties in ensuring satisfactory distribution of benefits, and uncertainties about their status and access to the benefits, weakened local interest in them. Villagers and *panchayat* bodies came to perceive the woodlots primarily as sources of communal income, rather than as sources of produce to meet household subsistence needs.

Consequently, though successful in increasing production of forest products from many of the sites used, and also in generating a resource of considerable value to the communities, the interventions did not have the intended outcome of involving local users, strengthening local management capabilities, or creating alternative sources to meet their subsistence needs for forest products. In practice, government involvement in resource management increased rather than decreased, and costs per unit of output have been high.

Source: Arnold and Stewart, 1991

Consequently, the early efforts to increase locally available supplies of tree products to meet subsistence needs of the rural poor by creating village or communal woodlots often had results other than those originally intended. As is evident in the Social Forestry experience in India (see Box 2), this was because the growing of trees in this way was not effective in providing subsistence products; because the change in land use deprived users of existing subsistence supplies of fodder, fuel, etc.; and because the resource created was often one from which the poor could obtain little, if any, benefit. Many woodlots failed, or were captured by interests other than those they were intended to benefit, or ended up being managed by default by forest departments, rather than by the user communities.

### SHIFTING THE FOCUS TO THE NATURAL FOREST

As the limitations and shortcomings of the early focus on afforestation became apparent, recognition grew that the approach of targeting particular needs, such as fuelwood, needed to be replaced by an approach centred on understanding the strategies that households pursue in order to sustain their livelihoods. The term 'livelihood' comprises the capabilities, assets and activities required to achieve the means for living; and a livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with, and recover from, stresses and shocks, and maintain or enhance its capabilities both now and in the future (Carney, 1998). By focusing on the five different types of wealth that are needed

for sustainable livelihoods (i.e. natural, physical, financial, human and social capital), and on an analysis of what is possible with a household's existing assets, the concept permits a more holistic and situation-specific approach to identifying the possible role of trees and forest products and how tree-based solutions compare with alternative courses of action.

As understanding grew of the nature of the relationships between people and the ways in which they draw upon forest outputs in their livelihood systems, the importance of products from forests, as distinct from planted tree stocks, became apparent. As approaches to rural development broadened out from the earlier concentration on meeting 'basic needs' to a recognition of the importance of income in securing household 'food and livelihood security', the importance of forest product activities in rural incomes became more apparent. By the mid-1980s, surveys of non-farm sources of rural household income had shown that forest products production, processing and trading consistently ranked among the three largest sources of employment from rural manufacturing (Fisseha, 1987). The large amount and variety of wood and wood products traded showed this to be a very important part of the overall value of forests in developing countries, and one that needed to figure more prominently in forest management and policy (FAO, 1987).

The increased attention given to meeting rural needs through changes in the management of existing forests and woodland was reinforced by



**Tapping trees for gum-milk in Brazil. Several studies have argued that harvesting of non-timber forest products by local people is less ecologically destructive than timber harvesting.**

growing environmental concerns about the conservation of forest biodiversity, and developments related to the management of protected areas. At the 1982 World Congress on National Parks, it was recognized that these could only be protected if the conflicts that arose when people who relied on use of the resources in these areas were excluded from them were addressed. This led to the development of programmes to introduce new livelihood activities in, and adjacent to, protected areas that would compensate those living in them for the loss of use, and encourage them to participate in the protection of the resource (Fisher, 1995; Wells and Brandon, 1992).

In the late 1980s, a much broader concept of management of forests jointly for conservation and development gained prominence. This stemmed from the argument that harvesting of the non-timber forest products that rural people exploit and use is less ecologically destructive than timber harvesting, and therefore provides a sounder basis for sustainable forest management. It was further argued that increased commercial harvesting of non-timber forest products should add to the perceived value of the tropical forest, at both local and national levels, thereby increasing the incentive to retain the forest resource rather than clear it to use the land for agriculture or livestock. This argument seemed to be

reinforced by the results of valuation studies, which appeared to show that the potential income from sustainable harvesting of non-timber forest products could be considerably higher than timber income or than the income from agricultural or plantation uses of those forest sites (e.g. Peters *et al.*, 1989).

This thesis was interpreted as pointing the way to a form of forest management that could serve both conservation and development interests (Plotkin and Famolare, 1992). One result was a considerable number of initiatives to expand and provide markets for more locally produced non-timber forest products, in order to tap more of this apparently sustainably harvestable wealth in tropical forests, by pursuing a 'Conservation by Commercialization' strategy (Evans, 1993). Many of these initiatives proved to be based on insufficient understanding of the commercial viability of the production systems in question, and have not yet emerged in sustainable form. In addition, as is addressed below in this publication, it became increasingly clear that conservation and development objectives and practices usually do conflict, and that management for non-timber forest products requires an understanding of the appropriate balance between the two. Nevertheless, these initiatives served to focus much more attention on the importance of forest products other than timber, and on their role in rural livelihoods.

A number of other factors reinforced this increasing focus on local management and use. One was recognition of the advantages to be gained by drawing on indigenous knowledge of the forests and forest prod-

ucts, and by building on the sustainable systems of use that local people often seemed to have created (e.g. Posey, 1982; Redford and Mansour, 1996). Another was the growing strength of arguments relating to people's rights to be involved in decisions and actions concerning them (Fisher, 1995). Recognition that forest management needs to be 'participatory' moved steadily from passive interpretations of participation, requiring little more than that those affected be informed of decisions made about them, to more substantive measures involving local people in decision-making and, increasingly, in control and management of the forests they drew upon. However, though this has resulted in a move away from the previous top-down approach, in practice it has tended to take the form more of devolution of responsibility for local forest management than of devolution of meaningful authority.

In 1985, the Conference on Common Property Resource Management organized by the US National Academy of Sciences (NAS) provided another major stimulus to the move towards a greater degree of local involvement in forest management. Collective management of forests (and other natural resources) by user groups was shown to be viable and appropriate in certain circumstances (NAS, 1986). Subsequent work provided growing evidence, in a range of different situations, of continuing, spontaneous indigenous efforts to strengthen remaining existing control systems or to create new arrangements, in order to bring resources under more effective local control (Messerschmidt, 1993). Many of these were found



A forester working with a farming association in Ecuador. There have been steadily growing pressures to increase the participation of local people in forest management.

to reflect responses to growing shortages of forest products and other forest outputs of value to the user community, or to reflect increased pressures from outside interests to use forest resources that are still important to the community, and they were found to be where user communities are still relatively stable and cohesive. Increased recognition of the continuing role of forests as common pool resources, and of such local initiatives in management, contributed to the revival in interest in local collective management that is reflected in recent government and donor initiatives of the kind discussed below in this publication.

It would appear that in some countries these shifts also reflected a declining importance of the forest

sector as a source of revenue to national governments, thus diminishing their interest in retaining such strong control over it. A more widespread reason for the increase in governments' interest in shifting more responsibility for forest management to the local level has been its relevance to the devolution and decentralization policies that many States were pursuing in the 1990s, as part of strategies to bring about structural adjustment and a reduction in the size and the role of government. Transferring management and protection responsibilities to the community level can help offset the reduction in budgetary resources available to forest departments and, in principle, it shifts control to a level at which it may be carried out more efficiently. Such arguments were influential, for instance, in the moves to pursue resource conservation in Africa through community management (Adams and Hulme, 1999). However, much of what has been emerging in practice has taken the form of joint management between government and local user communities, rather than devolution of responsibility solely to the latter.

## Community forestry by the mid-1990s

**B**y the mid-1990s, in the 20 or so years since it had first become prominent, community forestry had thus moved through a number of phases. An initial, exploratory phase, which attempted to scale conventional forestry

down to the community level, was followed by a period concentrated on mobilizing users to create new forests in order to address particular, perceived developmental and environmental needs. As assessment shifted from a needs to a livelihood basis, this gave way, on the one hand, to a focus on integration of trees and agriculture in agroforestry systems and, on the other, to approaches based on collective or collaborative management of existing forests. Over the period, top-down approaches have been modified by steadily growing pressures to increase the participation of those involved. At the same time, community forestry has moved from being a largely experimental process, pursued on a project and pilot scale, to becoming a mainstream component of many national forestry strategies.

The rationale for devolving more responsibility for, and participation in, forest management from the State to local users of outputs of that forest has by now been firmly established (see Box 3). This should strengthen the rights of those for whom the forest plays an important role in their livelihood strategies. Their involvement and proximity should result in more effective protection of the resource. It is also consistent with the principle of 'subsidiarity', according to which a central authority should only undertake tasks that cannot be undertaken at a more local level.

However, the commitment to community forestry in a particular situation tends to reflect the extent to which it is seen as being important and relevant to a

number of contemporary issues. Thus, it has been variously argued, by the different interest groups supporting it, that community forestry is:

- an important contribution to sustainable rural livelihoods for large numbers of rural households;
- a philosophical commitment to people's participation in their own affairs, and to the principles of self-determination and democracy;
- an efficient way of managing forests by harnessing the skills, motivation and labour of interested local populations; and
- a means of reducing the role of, and cost to, the State of protecting forests and the conservation values of forests.

The pursuit of such a diverse, and not necessarily congruent, set of ideological and pragmatic considerations inevitably generates much debate (Brown, 1999; Wiersum, 1999; Wollenberg, 1998), which is further discussed in this publication. However, there is general recognition that the effectiveness of community forestry, for whatever purpose, rests on its relevance to rural livelihoods, and on being able to put in place functioning arrangements for governance that reflect this. The first of these key elements is examined in more depth in Chapter 2. Examination of progress with different approaches to creating governance systems appropriate to the main forms taken by community forestry is the subject of Part 2 of this publication.



## The rationale behind community involvement in forest management

### BOX 3

- **PROXIMITY:** The local populations are the immediate custodians of the forest. They are the stakeholders in closest touch with the forest, and are dependent on it in a wide range of ways. Hence they are best placed to ensure its effective husbandry.
- **IMPACT:** Their livelihood activities likewise have a very direct effect on the condition of the forest; thus, their involvement in its management makes sound practical sense.
- **EQUITY:** There may be important considerations of equity and social justice in the exploitation of forests. Community-based forest management may be expected to increase the resource flows to rural populations, leading to important effects on poverty alleviation and income distribution.
- **LIVELIHOODS:** Local needs and interests should likewise not be ignored, particularly where forest products provide key elements of livelihoods or (as is often

the case with non-timber forest products) important safety nets. There is evidence that the development of the forest sector for single-purpose industrial usage damages livelihood interests, shifts benefits away from the poor, and disadvantages important categories of forest users (such as women). Community involvement in forest management, in which forests play important roles in rural livelihoods, is likely to lead to substantial changes in the ways forests are managed, ensuring the safeguarding and/or diversification of their multiple benefits. The social security component of community forest management may thus be significant.

- **CAPACITY:** In recent years, the management capacity of forest dwellers has been strongly promoted in social science literature, while that of governments has increasingly been questioned. Community roles in forest management have been well documented in the past; equally, there is evidence from recent experience of community involvement that this can substantially improve the quality and condition of the forest, over and above the levels that governments are able to establish independently.
- **BIODIVERSITY:** Because of their interests in multiple-purpose management, local users are likely to be much better conservers of biodiversity than either

single-interest industrial concerns or the interests that serve them. Despite frequent assumptions to the contrary, biodiversity may well be enriched, instead of diminished, by the activities of forest dwellers.

- **COST-EFFECTIVENESS:** In relation to efficiency considerations, there may often be few alternatives to involving communities in forest management. In many instances in the developing world, there is very limited capacity for effective management of the forest resource by the public sector. Even where public sector management is feasible, the costs of exclusive direct management by the State may be prohibitively high, and local management may be an important way of cutting costs.
- **ADAPTATION:** Growing recognition of cultural and livelihoods diversity encourages an approach centred on local participation and contextual adaptation. Almost by definition, flexible and adaptive management cannot be delivered centrally, and local pressures and interests must be brought to bear.
- **GOVERNANCE:** Involving communities and community institutions in forest management (a sector often noticeably lacking in 'good governance') may help to introduce discipline into the management of the sector and offer significant checks and balances on oth-

erwise unregulated public services. Several writers have emphasized the important roles that civil society organizations can play in augmenting public 'voice' and acting as 'voice surrogates'; because of the way the forest sector impinges on many aspects of local life, it may be an important arena for the exercise of such public voice.

- **DEVELOPMENT PHILOSOPHY:** Community forest management is likely to fit in well with the wider development assistance strategies of the international community. These give high priority to principles of local participation, decentralization and 'subsidiarity' (the view that decisions should be taken as close as possible to the affected citizens), as well as to the promotion of civil society, all of which are potential benefits of community forest management.

Source: Brown, 1999