Assessment of Social Forestry Natural Resources and Policy

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ABSTRACT

Pressure on the land and natural resources have increased as a result of population growth over the previous few decades. Securing food, fuel, and fodder; improving the environment and reducing pollution; and protecting agriculture from unfavourable climate change are all goals of social forestry. The term "community forests" is also used to describe social forestry. In the 1950s, social forestry was being used on a modest scale in India (BRD, 1985). Social forestry in the country is the largest and most innovative participatory forestry experiment and the largest intervention design to increase the productivity and usage of communal land.

Keywords: natural resources, policy, climate change, social forestry

I. INTRODUCTION

Social forestry has emerged in India as a response to the widespread loss of trees and vegetation in the country over the previous few decades. With over a fifth of the global population, India is the second most populous country. The world's population was estimated to be 1,352,642,280 as of 2019.. Forests cover 67% of the world's surface area, making India one of the world's most forest-rich countries (FAO, 2011). In terms of natural resources, forests are a priceless treasure that can be used for a variety of purposes and are the most self-sustaining of any ecosystem. The State of Forest Report (2017) estimates that our country's forests cover 21.54 percent of the land area. People in rural India rely heavily on forest-related jobs to make ends meet. Rural and urban areas alike use the most fuel wood in India. There is no greater source of income than the forests. Overexploitation and deforestation are inevitable as the world's population grows and industrialization expands, and the quantity of forest essential goods is insufficient to fulfil demand. Soil erosion, fuel scarcity, flora and fauna loss, climate change, wasteland, and the level of destruction have all skyrocketed as a direct result of these actions.

In order for economic development to occur, natural resources must be utilised and exploited. One such resource is social forestry (Lacuna-Richman, 2012). Ancient Indian texts like the Vedas, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Upanishads, and the Puranas, as well as the teachings of Lord Buddha, are the ancestors of the concept of social forestry. In order to help travellers, Ashoka is said to have had trees planted along the roadsides to shield them from the sun and provide them with fruit. The primary goal of social forestry is to encourage people to participate in the design and implementation of afforestation programmes based on their needs. Growing and managing trees and other vegetation on land available for this purpose in or outside traditional forest areas has been conceptualised as the science and art of social forestry, with the goal of providing a wide range of goods and services to both individuals and society through the close participation of the local population as well as more or less integrated land use with other operations (Tewari). Community-based management (CBM) refers to forest management approaches that are tailored to the needs and perspectives of local residents (Wiersum, 1984). During his inaugural address at the 9th Common Wealth Forestry Conference in New Delhi in 1968, Jack Westoby coined the term "social forestry."
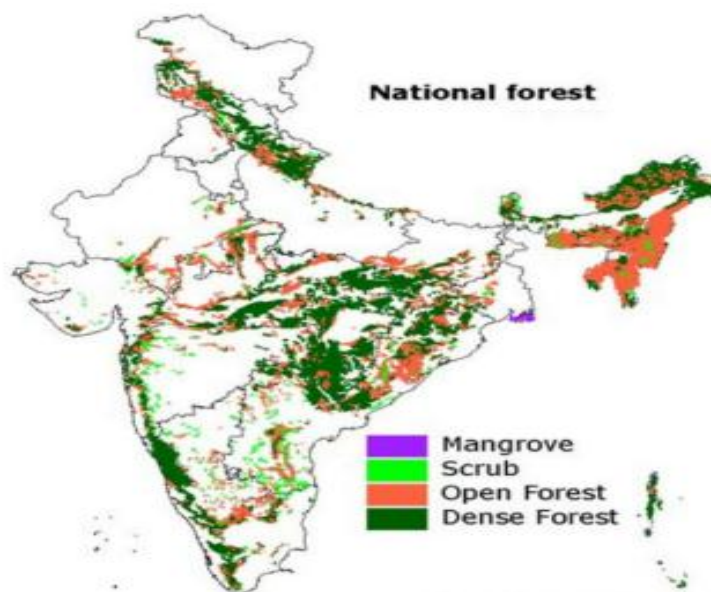
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II.   SOCIAL FORESTRY IDEAS

Social forestry plays an important role in the economic well-being of the country. Its potential as a source of food, fuel, and fodder, as well as a source of employment and increased national income, the term "social forestry" was coined by forest scientist William Westo by during the 9th Common Wealth Forestry Congress in New Delhi in 1968. According to him, "Social forestry" is forestry with the goal of providing a continuous flow of protection and recreational advantages to the community. For example, "social forestry" is defined as forestry that takes place outside of the conventional forest, with the primary goal being to provide a steady flow of commodities and services to benefit the local population. Social forestry, on the other hand, attempts to cultivate forests that reflect the wishes of the local population. According to Shah, social forestry is a concept that involves working with the poor to create things like fuel and fodder to suit the requirements of the local community, in particular the impoverished.

Two words, "Social Forestry" and "Forestry," form the name of the term. Forestry, on the other hand, refers to the theory and practise of cultivating crops as well as their conservation, scientific management, and usage of the resources they yield.

The terms "Social Forestry," "Farm and Community Forestry," and "Forestry for Local Community Development" are all used interchangeably when referring to this type of work. It encompasses a wide range of tree- or forest-related projects undertaken by rural landowners and community groups for their own benefit and to generate local income.Social forestry also includes the planting of trees on public lands by the government or any other entity in order to suit the needs of the local village. Community members play an important role in social forest management.

It is social in the sense that it aims to have local development impacts from resources out, that it is socially integrated, that it is socially structured, or that it contributes to social change. A programme of the people, by the people, and for the people is what we call social forestry. Forestry can be done by any company or individual, including farm forestry. It's a rural development initiative tailored to the region's specific challenges. "It is a bundle of activities that provide a flow of benefits, direct and indirect, to society by employing either unutilized or ill-utilized land." It's more of a process of social and economic development that involves the local community at every stage of programme execution. To begin social forestry, it is necessary to deal with all of the interrelated social, economic, and political issues that face rural life.

Many people think of social forestry as a concept, programme, and mission to help people in rural areas and those living below the poverty line by including them from the very beginning of the project all the way through harvesting and distribution, rather than just paying them as workers. The primary goals of social forestry are to engage communities and individual farmers with trees and to study how people cultivate and use trees while they grow. In effective social forestry initiatives, there are two essential ingredients: widespread local engagement backed by higher-level political support and sustainable, productivity-enhancing technologies that are adapted to local conditions and acceptable to the local inhabitants.

III.   METHODOLOGY

We used secondary data gathered from relevant books, journals, proceedings, and publications as well as official government documents and academic papers on the internet to develop our methodology.

IV.   CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL FORESTRY

Social forestry has a significant impact on the economy of a country. potential as a food and energy resource; ability to create jobs and boost the national economy; and potential as a source of food, fuel, and fodderIn the years following independence, particular attention was paid to the Forestry Division. Social forestry has a significant impact on both economic growth and environmental stability. There are various benefits to growing trees, including the preservation of the ecosystem and the stability of the ecological system. Humanity's survival depends on the existence of forests on this planet. In addition to their aesthetic value, trees and shrubs play a critical role in our survival and well-being. As a resource, they can be used in many areas of life. Communities in rural and urban regions benefit from afforestation outside the traditional forest area.

The impact of forests on climate change is significant and multifaceted. As a major source of greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation and degradation play a significant role. As a means of reducing carbon emissions and strengthening the climate change adaptability of low- and moderate-income communities, forests can do double duty. People who depend on forestland and its resources for their daily sustenance are the focus of the work done by social forestry organisations. It strives to achieve economic and environmental equilibrium as well as forest restoration, biodiversity conservation, improved livelihoods, reduced climate change susceptibility, and carbon sequestration.

Along with reforestation, local markets for fodder, vegetables, and other agroproducts see a boost. Villages can become economically self-sufficient, and this could lead to more integrated village development.

4.1 Considerations Relating to Social Forestry
- Rural residents' needs for fuel, forage, and modest amounts of wood are met.
- It is necessary to address the raw material requirements of rural households and small forest-based businesses.
- It is our goal to boost the income of village panchayats while also creating jobs for the rural population.
- As a safeguard against water and wind erosion on the fields.
- Individuals' and the community's financial situations should be improved.
- Encouraging damaged forests to be restored to their natural state is an important goal.
- As a means of enhancing the local ecosystem and environment,
- Reduce or avoid using cow dung as fuel or manure on farms; instead use it for fertiliser.
- Idea of enclosing the region in trees.
- Eliminating waste.
- Reduce carbon emissions from land use outside of forests.
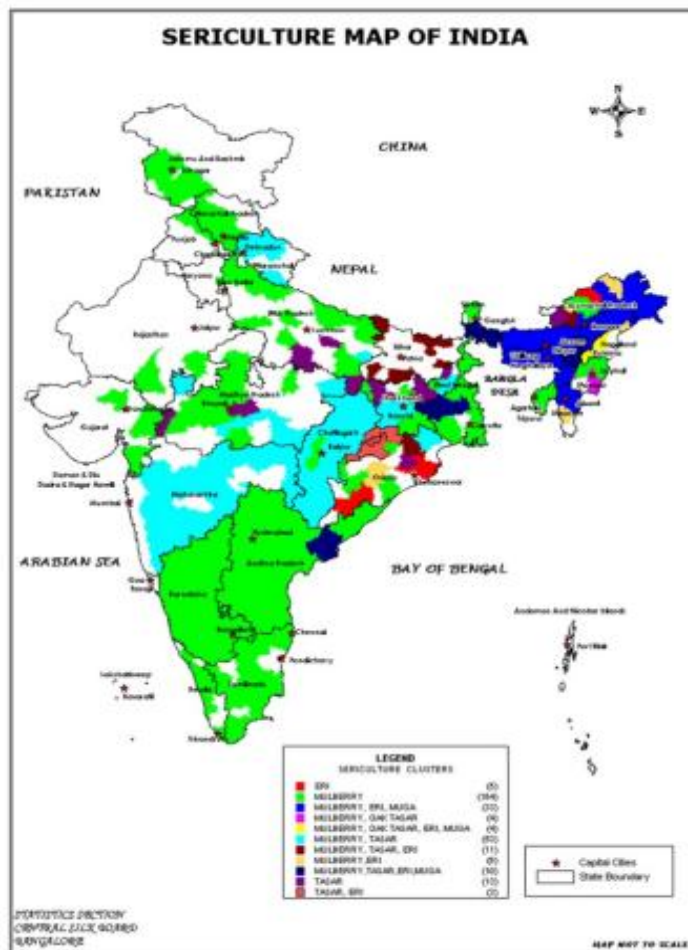- There are many different kinds of social forestry.

4.2 Forestry on a Farm
It is called "farm forestry" when programmes are put in place that encourage farmers to produce commercial trees on their own land. It is possible to divide commercial and noncommercial farm forestry. Non-commercial farm forestry is the practise of planting trees on the land instead of cultivating crops for profit. These trees will be planted on their own property, not for sale. In commercial farm forestry, trees are grown on a commercial scale by farmers and then sold.

4.3 Forestry in the Community
Rural forestry is another name for community forestry. Like in agricultural forestry, trees in this method are planted on public land rather than on private property. No one person is being singled out for special treatment in this endeavour. The government provides ideas, seedlings, fertiliser, and so forth, but the community is responsible for protecting the trees from the elements.

4.4 Forestry in Social Contexts

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4.7 Forestry that Expands

Extension forestry is the practise of forestry in areas where trees and other plants do not currently exist, with the goal of extending the area under tree growth outside of normal forest areas. Additionally, extension forestry involves planting on abandoned property and along the borders of roads and canals. Its goal is to increase the amount of vegetation in the nation. Using suitable wastelands, panchayat holdings, and village common lands, a method known as "mixed forestry" is used to raise fodder grass while also planting fruit trees, nuts, and trees for fuel wood. For protection from the elements, a shelterbelt includes trees and shrubs that are regularly pruned and trimmed. Some of the most common types of shelterbelt are those constructed on wasteland (canal banks, banks, railway lines), canals (banks), and railroads (tracks) (GOI, 1991). For fast-growing species to be planted, linear strip plantations must be used.

4.8 Recreational Forestry

Urban and rural residents alike can enjoy flowering trees and shrubs grown for their aesthetic value in recreational forests known as "Recreation Forestry." Additionally, this type of forestry is called "aesthetic forestry" and is defined as the practise of cultivating or maintaining a scenic forest.

4.9 Efforts to Rehabilitate Damaged Forests

The environmental and socioeconomic needs of the people who live in and around degraded areas under forests must be addressed immediately.

4.10 Social forestry's Many Advantages

- To increase the amount of wood and fodder available for burning.
- It is a source of employment in rural areas.
- As a result, ecological equilibrium is maintained.
- Appropriate utilisation of squatter areas.
- Support for rural and cottage industries.
- Make people aware of the environment and the importance of trees.
- Relieve natural forests of their burdens.
- maintain agricultural production stability.

4.11 Certain Policies and Acts Related to Forests

The year 1855 marks the beginning of India's forestry history. In 1865, a law known as the Indian Forest Act was adopted.

- In 1866, the Forestry Department was formed.
- A tree-themed annual celebration known as "Vanmahotsava" was first celebrated in 1950 by poet K.M. Munshi.
- In 1950, the Central Board of Forestry was created.
- Forestry policy in the United States began in 1952 with the National Forest Policy (NFP) (Agarwal, A.P. 1952).
- The 1980 Forest Conservation Act
- This is the 1982 version of the Revised Forest Policy (RFP).
- The 1982 Fuelwood Study Committee
- The National Wasteland Development Board of the National Wasteland (NWDB)
- National Forest Policy Amendments of 1988

Programs like the Western Ghat Development Program, the Drought Prone Area Program, the Employment Guarantee Scheme, and the Van Mahotsav have all been undertaken under various social forestry schemes to achieve the purpose of social forestry. As of 2001, the social forestry department was assigned the task of conducting "Hariyali" watershed projects in specific watersheds with the participation of villagers in planning, implementing, and monitoring the project. Forestry is a major focus of the country's five-year plans, which are designed to help the rural poor have a better understanding of these programmes as well as to expand forestry to better protect our environment.

V.   CONCLUSION

Our ancestors owe much to the forests. Forest products have been decimated as a result of human population growth, industrialisation, modernisation, and the careless use of forests for profit. Deforestation has caused soil erosion, flooding, a shortage of wood fuel, the extinction of numerous species of rare plants and animals, and a shift in the temperature. Stopping these negative consequences requires prioritising afforestation and social forestry initiatives. Soil conservation, environmental change, and the energy problem will all benefit from social forestry. A successful social forestry initiative or programme can have a significant impact on the quality of life for people living in rural and urban areas alike.

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