

**Proceedings
of
The National Workshop on Protocol Development
for
Sustainable Governance of NTFP Resources**

Regional Centre for Development Cooperation (RCDC) organized a national workshop on 25th and 26th of May, 2010 at Hotel Hindustan International, Bhubanewar. The workshop was attended by ninety one participants from various parts of Odisha and other states. Mostly representatives of community forest protection groups dominated the scene as this workshop was primarily designed to give leading role to the communities. And to support the community initiatives, technical experts from ECOCERT and some other agencies were also invited. The participants included some cooperative functionaries who are dealing with NTFP trading.



Executive Director Mr. K. C. Dash welcomed all the participants and briefed about the overall activities of RCDC. He said that there were 29 women cooperatives with one apex cooperative which were dealing with various NTFP items to strengthen their socio-economic base. RCDC gives more emphasis on the capacity building of PRIs, and community institutions so that they would be in a position to manage their local resources effectively and at the same time articulate the development process for them. The present workshop is a special initiative to this effect.

He then requested some senior community representatives Smt. Renu, Sri Laxmidhar Balia, Sri Gorachand Mahanta, Sri Ganapati Pradhan, and Sri Thabir Meher to inaugurate the meeting by lighting the candle. The inauguration was followed by self-introduction by the participants following which Mr. Bikash Rath, Sr. Programme Manager of RCDC shared the aims and objectives of the workshop as below:



Objectives of this workshop

- To discuss governance protocols that are associated with ownership over forest resources and NTFP resources in particular.
- To provide a platform that would help create awareness about various dynamics of governance protocols.
- To help community-level forest governance institutions to make their protocols more logical, systematic, legally acceptable, and multi-beneficial.
- To present role models that can inspire others.

In his presentation Sri Rath defined the term 'protocol', categorized it into governance- and non-governance protocols, and highlighted the importance as well as steps towards preparing the protocols, as under:



- Protocol is a set of rules which works as a tool of governance.
- Protocol, when a component of governance, asserts ownership. This may be called governance protocol.
- When not associated with ownership, protocol may be just a suggestion or a methodology. This is the category of non-governance protocols.
- A logical, socio-economically justified, multi-beneficial, and effective protocol is one of the important indicators of good governance.

Factors influencing governance protocols

- Socio-religious: These are taboos more or less unconsciously followed without understanding their practical implications for resources and resource-dependent people. Like, restriction on entry in sacred groves.
- Socio-economic: Like, for conflict resolution
- Commercial: Differential commercial value may influence differential protocols
- Scientific: Like, tapping methodology

Basic norms for Protocol development

- Sustainability of dependency(livelihood) implying to sustainability of the resource
- Social justice
- Legal consistency
- Multi-beneficial and integrated approach
- Flexibility to change with the needs of time

Steps in protocol development for sustainable governance of NTFP resources

- Step-1: Resource mapping and identification of vulnerable species
- Step-1: Identifying resource dependency in respect of various socio-economic groups, women, etc.
- Step-3: Understanding the linkage between resource vulnerability and resource dependency
- Step-4: Stakeholder consultation on possible solutions(phase-wise)
- Step-5: Protocol formulation keeping in view the socio-economic factors, local-, national-, and international utilities of the vulnerable resources
- Step-6: Periodic review of the impact of protocols both on resources and the dependent groups and necessary modification in the protocols, when required.
- All these should be clearly documented.

Protocol diversity

Governance protocols may vary from place to place according to differences in species distribution, socio-economic profile and dependency, etc. Non-governance protocols usually remain same at all places.

The participants asked various questions on this presentation for more clarification. Some of these questions were as under:

1. The protocol will be product specific or area specific?
2. In the context of climate change, there is change in the harvesting amount and quality of the NTFP and even we experience drought of NTFP. How a protocol will be effective in this case?
3. There are some excisable NTFP items. Could we impose a sustainable harvesting protocol for these items?
4. The market conditions influence the NTFP harvesting. Could the protocol be respected in case of a good market price? Are the people not tempted to harvest their own violating the protocols?
5. People's protocol and government's perception may vary and in this context which one will be effective?
6. The institution building factor is needed for a governance protocol. Whether the governance protocol strengthens the institutions or the conflicts will be more?
7. Honey collection process is different from place to place. Could it be possible to introduce a unique governance protocol for the same?

Sri Rath made his clarifications on these queries and said that governance protocol might vary from place to place whereas non-governance protocols like scientific harvesting rules would be same for all places. The communities have to design their area-specific governance protocols which may also incorporate non-governance protocols like product-specific standard harvesting practices.

Then, convener of Odisha Forestry Forum(Odisha Jungala Mancha) Sri Laxmidhar Balia gave his key not address. He said that although the communities have been protecting forests as a whole, the governance protocols have been mostly timber-centric and hence NTFP protocols are hardly in practice.

He said that the village communities have several traditional good harvesting practices and these are unrecorded and unnoticed. We need to deliberate upon those and to promote governance protocols at the community level.

The second session was chaired by Ms. Varsha Mehta. In this session community representatives from Odisha shared their experiences in community level protocol development for NTFP harvesting.

Sri Dasarathi Behera and Sri Mukunda Pujari from Kalahandi DFF(District Forest Forum) spoke on the traditional and current bamboo harvesting protocols and management guidelines prepared by the communities. Bamboo shoot is a popular local food in Kalahandi, but when the local people of Churapahad area realized that unsustainable harvesting of bamboo shoots was leading to degeneration of bamboo resource, they restricted this harvesting.

Sri Vishnu Purti from Budhikhamari, Mayurbhanj narrated the experience on sal leaf harvesting. Sal leaf collection is the regular practice of the local people for preparing plates and *chaupadis*. Plate/cup making requires two layers of sal leaves, and to reduce the pressure on the resource the communities are now using mahul and other leaves as the second layer, without adversely affecting the quality and strength of the product.

Sri Biswanath Barad from Koska, Nayagarh shared his experience on NTFP management by the local communities of Nayagarh. He said that despite a good potential of NTFPs in the forest, people had not been able to harness this potential properly largely due to lack of awareness. For instance, people do not know that processing of char seeds for kernels would fetch them good returns. Hence, they collect only ripen fruits of char without further processing.

Sri Thabir Meher and Sri Kulamani Sahoo discussed some of the issues related to kendu leaf collection. Sri Laxman Pujari shared his experience on sustainable forest management(SFM) and the usefulness of governance protocol for SFM. Communities in Churapahad area are now following the principles prepared by them to undertake SFM. They are protecting, managing, regenerating and conserving forests with their SFM plans. People have identified forest issues, deterrent factors of forest health, wildlife issues, biodiversity issues and accordingly designed measures to save and promote them. Forest resources are enumerated and extinct and endangered plant and animal species are tried to re-establish. Five villages are covered under SFM on a trial basis. People have developed SFM plans and both male and female are playing their roles. Harvesting protocols of NTFP are strictly followed for various items.

Sri Bansidhar Sahoo and Sri Ganapati Pradhan presented on forest networking and NTFP. They focused on the network building process and how it helps in exchanging the NTFP harvesting rules and regulations made by communities to share the forest benefits. Sri Sahoo said that the production of wild mushrooms has been increased because of forest protection.

Sri Tikendra Jal narrated how the Gandhamardan Surakshya Parishad has been able to protect and conserve the medicinal plant-rich Gandhamardan hill forest which is a biodiversity sensitive area.



Two representatives from the primitive Khadia community of Shimilipal area Sri Surendra Dehuri and Sri Ananta Dehuri shared their experiences and traditional practices of sustainable harvesting of honey and arrowroot. They said that they were now also taking care for the conservation of tree species like Arjuna, Atundi, and Jamun, etc. which the honey bees favour for nectar collection.

On the second day the third session began by 9 am. A film was shown by the Kovel foundation on Gum Karaya collection.

Mr. Bikash Rath recapitulated the previous day's sharing. The third session was chaired by Mr. B. C. Pal, retired CCF. In this session role models in community level protocol development for NTFP harvesting was shared by participants from other states.

Sri Ramachandran and his team member from KEYSTONE FOUNDATION presented their harvesting protocols on honey and resin. Earlier, the local tribals used to practice unsustainable methods for honey collection, but KEYSTONE FOUNDATION (KSF) trained them in sustainable and hygienic collection practices. It encourages them to collect only *Dorsata* honey by cutting the mid-rib, leaving some combs without harvesting, and using hygienic cloths/nets for sieving. Midrib cutting is advantageous in the following ways:



- Easy to extract honey from comb
- More hygienic
- Less pollen

KSF has also facilitated sustainable harvesting of resin (*Canarium strictum*) and amla, etc.

The next to present was Miss Hemlata from Kovel Foundation. She explained how her organisation has been successful in ensuring sustainable collection as well as plantation of Gum Karaya in Andhra Pradesh. The organisation is working in six zones covering six districts of AP. The major work areas of Kovel foundation are:

- Institutional Building
- Capacity Building
- Livelihood promotion
- Regeneration
- Research & Development

Sri Madhab Tete from Maharashtra stressed on the fact that livelihood promotion activities based on NTFP should not mean decrease in conventional consumption pattern and self-reliance.

Mr. Manoj from Legal Environmental Action Forum (LEAF), Bastar described the activities of his organization in Santkarmari & Kakalagu Chatisgarh and in parts of Malkangiri. He said that LEAF convinced the local communities that their harvesting practice of premature mango was diminishing the scope of natural regeneration of the species, and hence they should harvest only after the fruit is ripe. This has been followed by the community. Further, LEAF is having a nursery for regeneration of indigenous species which are being planted.

The 4th and last session was chaired by Mr. N. C. Kanoongo, retired forest officer. The theme under discussion was to make community level protocols more logical, effective and legally acceptable and multi-beneficial. This session was classified into two heads i.e., interaction with cooperatives and interaction with experts.

Sri Ajit Bisoyee from Subhalaxmi cooperative stated about the origin and present functionality of the cooperatives. At present the cooperative is trading with Hillbroom, Amla, Harida, Bahada and Siali leaf.

Sri Dibakar Jani from Dayanidhiguda of Koraput Ma Laxmi Cooperative presented that the cooperative is taking up forest conservation measures along with harvesting and trading. Currently, the cooperative is dealing with Siali leaf, Satabari, Hill broom and Garuda. FRA issues are also dealt with by the group.

Next presenter was Sri Balakrushna Panda, Regional Manager, RCDC's Koraput office. According to him, defunct and functional SHGs are capacitated to form cooperatives and these are registered under Orissa Self Help Cooperatives Registration Act, 2001. Both ecology and economy are taken into consideration while planning for SFM and it is integrated to livelihood. The major activities are as follows:

- Institution building
- Entrepreneurship development
- Market access
- SFM advocacy
- Collective procurement
- Deposit in cooperatives
- Value addition to the commodities
- Marketing

Sri Dasharathi Sahoo of Chadheiapalli (Nayagarh) presented the experience of his village in NTFP management in general and bamboo in particular.

Dr. Abhisek Kumar from the certification agency ECOCERT presented the process for wild products certification and the preconditions required for that purpose. Some highlights of his presentations were as follows:

Definitions:

- EC-regulation 834/2007, art. 12.1(j): Wild collection means the collection of wild plants and parts thereof, growing naturally in natural areas, forests and agricultural areas.
- NOP §205.2: A wild crop is any plant or portion of a plant that is collected or harvested from a site that is not maintained under cultivation or other agricultural management.

Rules for Collection & Inspection of wild crops:

- Edible plants and edible parts must be grown naturally
- Semi-cultivation
- Abandoned Orchards
- Collection area must not have been treated with prohibited products as per Annex II EC & NOP national list of allowed substances

Plant Protection Products:

- Substance of crop or animal origin
Azadiarchtin
Plant oils
Quassia extract
Gelatin,
Lecitin
- Microorganism used for Pest & disease control
- Substances to be used in traps / dispensers
- Other substances
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Collection Management Plan

- Collection area : description of sub zones, Landscape, risk of erosion, pest management, risk of contamination, livestock, history of collection zone,
- Maps : scale, description of borders of zone, processing unit map
- Produce : list of crop
- Plant identification list: Names, CITES, Information
- Collection description & rules for each produce:
Name, Collected parts, Purpose, Potential collection, other collectors
- Collectors & other personnel: registration, agreement, training, collection permission, qualification
- Information on local / National rule
- ICS : determine inspector, inspection records, time of collection
- Harvest: Avoid fire, frequent harvesting, un-matured part, etc.
- Processing

Packaging Materials:

Allowed substances:

- HDPP
- HDPE

- PET with no BPA
- Tetra Pack
- Biodegradable Substances
- PVC – Not allowed

Application:

- ➔ Operator must fill in wild collection module of the unit description
- Description of the collection area
- Description of the collected products
- Preservation of the collected product
- ➔ Certification officer must check if project is eligible for certification by verifying if definition for wild collection/wild crop apply and if collection of the respective crop(s) is not forbidden by national law and/or because crop is a CITES protected species
- ➔ Operator signs contract(s) k02, each collector ak05 (or similar contract)

Inspection:

- ➔ Arrange inspection at a time when collection takes place
- ➔ Make a risk assessment in order to fix percentage of collectors to be visited (if possible for each collection site) considering at least the following criteria:
 - Implementation collection management plan
 - Endangerment of collected species
 - Precaution & separation measures collection
 - Introduction of measures to avoid commingling and contamination
 - Precaution & separation measures storage
 - Training and supervision of collectors
- ➔ Inspector must visit (to be specified in assignment):
 - Each collection site
 - At least 20 % of the collectors of each collection site (or more based on result of risk assessment)
 - All buyers of the collected products
 - All storage and processing facilities
 - ➔ Inspector must check:
 - Stability of the collection habitat
 - Collection methods (maintenance of species must be assured)
 - Availability of collection permission
 - Collected quantities (not more than permitted)
 - Collection management plan

Documents Check List:

- Company registration certificate
- Project Area Map
- Name of villages & hamlets
- Approved collector list
- List of collection centre in charge

- Internal inspection report
- Forest officials Declaration
- ICS Manual
- ICS annual report
- Records of competency of ICS staff
- Collectors training
- Project manager & internal inspector's bio-data
 - Internal standards for wild collection
 - Purchase Register
 - Processing details
 - - Processing area map, cleaning record, traceability
 - - Process flow chart
 - Storage Records
 - Sales Records
 - Stock Records
 - Transport Bills

Fair Trade Certification:

- Fair trade is a trade partnership which aims for an alternative to traditional international trade, and whose objective is to succeed in the sustainable and harmonious development of disadvantaged and marginalised producers and wage workers.

Certification procedure:

- 1. Submission of application
- 2. Cost Estimation
- 3. Invoicing and payment of fees
- 4. Signing of inspection contract
- 5. Inspection and submitting the inspection report to the certification department
- 6. Issuance of certification decision
- 7. Compliance of certification decision and issuance of certificate
- 8. Issue of Transaction Certificates / Inspection Certificates for traded lots
- One inspection per annum.

Bikash Rath asked Mr. Kumar to suggest how to make the certification procedure affordable for communities, and Mr. Kumar said that this could be done by collective certification.

Sri Kanoongo in his address said, man is not static if the society is progressive. Every generation is a new nation. Our constitution is also not static. It is amended in accordance with the need. Considering NTFP as a part and parcel of ecosystem as a whole, we can not limit ourselves only to livelihood and trading. So far as protocol development is concerned it should be logical from economic point of view, and should be modified according to changing times. Utilisation of human resources

should be viewed as the employment opportunity created by virtue of it. Effectivity should be considered from continuity point of view. It should be legally sound also.

Forest monitors the climate. It is the natural carbon sink. Orissa forest ecosystem is degrading very fast. Forest protection and conservation could be done by the communities and not by the forest department. So, we should conserve forest as it is the life support system for the millions of people. Our future generation needs forest. If we conserve forest then only we are able to collect NTFP sustainably.

In the valedictory session, Sri Bikash Rath thanked all the in-house and outside participants.

Annexure – 1
Programme Schedule

25th May 2010

9.30-10.00: Registration

SESSION-I

10.00-10.30: Welcome address by Executive Director, RCDC

10.30-10.40: Joint inauguration by senior-most community representative from Odisha and other states

10.40-11.00: Self-introduction by participants

11.00-11.30: Presentation by Bikash Rath, Sr. Programme Manager on the importance, status, issues, and challenges of NTFP harvesting protocol development

11.30-11.50: Tea break

11.50-12.10: Address by Mr. B.K. Pattanaik, Retired Forest Officer

12.10-12.30: Address by Mr. Laxmidhar Balia, Convenor Odisha Jungle Manch

12.30-1.15: Open House Discussion

1.15-2.15: Lunch break

SESSION-II

2.15-4.15: Role models in community-level protocol development for NTFP harvesting: Experiences from Odisha (continued)

SPEAKERS

Mr. Dasarathi Behera and Mukund Pujari on Bamboo Management

Mr. Bishnu Purty on Sal Leaves

Mr. Biswanath Baral on NTFP Management

Mr. Thabir Meher and Kulamani Sahu on Kendu Leaf

Mr. Laxman Pujari on SFM

Mr. Bansidhar Sahu and Ganapati Pradhan Forest Network and NTFP

Mr. Tekendra Jal on Medicinal Plants Conservation

Mr. Lalit Mohan Pradhan on Medicinal Plants Conservation

Khadia Community, Mayurbhanj

4.15-5.00: Open House Discussion

5.00: Tourist Visit within Bhubaneswar

26th May 2010

SESSION-III

9.00-10.00

FILM SHOW

10.00-10.30:

Recapitulating previous day's sharing: Bikash Rath

10.30-1.00:

Role models in community-level protocol development for NTFP
harvesting: Experiences from other states

Mr. Ramchandran and Co Keystone Foundation, TN

Miss. Hemalata and Co, Kovel Foundation, AP

Mr. Madhav Tete and Co, Econet, Pune, Maharashtra

Mr. Manoj and Co, LEAF, Bastar, CG

1.00-1.30:

Open House Discussion

1.30-2.30:

Lunch Break

Session-IV

2.30-4.00:

How to make community-level protocols more logical, effective,
legally acceptable, and multi-beneficial

Dr. Abhishek Kumar, ECOCERT

Mr. B.C. Pal, Retired CCF

4.00-5.00:

Open House Discussion

5.00:

Valedictory