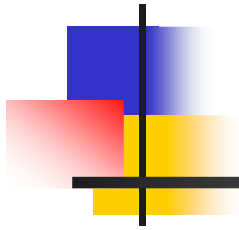


Positive incentives offered by policies of the Government of India



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Forest & Biodiversity

- In India about 100 million people including 50 million tribal people depend largely on forests for their livelihood. The Indian Forest Policy 1988 made a shift in forest management from near exclusion of people from use of forest resources to protect forest through the people. It recognizes the customary rights and privileges of the forest dwelling communities. The Ministry of Environment and Forests issued policy guidelines for the involvement of village communities and voluntary agencies in the regeneration of degraded forest lands on 1.6.1990, 21.2.2000 at 24.12.2002.



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- As on January 31, 2007 there were 1,06,479 Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) managing 22.02 mha of forest area involving 21.99 million people. There are state specific variations with respect to constitution of committees, participation of women and other weaker sections of society, and sharing of benefits. In almost all the states JFMCs have full rights over all the non-timber forest products (NTFPs) except the nationalized Minor Forest Produce i.e. tendu leaves, sal seeds, cashew etc.



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- In Andhra Pradesh, 50 per cent of the net proceeds from sale of tendu leaves are shared with JFMCs. In Madhya Pradesh and Chhatisgargh, 100 percent of net profit goes to the collectors of NTFPs. Majority of the states allow about 50 per cent of net benefits obtained from final felling of tress to JFMCs.



Protected Areas

- Protected areas (Pas) are established under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. India has 96 national parks and 510 wildlife sanctuaries covering an area of 15.59 mha, making up about 4.8 percent of the country's geographic area. There are also numerous sacred groves and some biosphere reserves. Eco-Development Committees (EDC) function in and around PA's.



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- In the India Eco Development Project, a World Bank funded participatory biodiversity conservation programme at Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary in Thekkady, Kerala, the local communities living off the forest were organized into eco-development committees. The objectives were to reduce the negative impact of local people on the Sanctuary and involve encroachers in conservation instead of exploitation.



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- Now they provide services like day treks through the forest, arranging nature camps, horse riding, and special programmes for the tourists.
- At Kumbhakarnan Falls in Theni District of Tamil Nadu, over 100 tribal residents, all members of Village Forest Council have been trained as eco-tourism guides. They regulate tourists and keep the surroundings clean. They take up eco-conservation measures. Fees are collected from visitors to provide amenities and to cover part of the expenses of the tribals as eco-guards.



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- In Sundarbans, West Bengal, (a Project Tiger area, Biosphere Reserve and a World Heritage site) local, educated youth have been trained to acts as tourist guide by the Forest Department and it has been made mandatory that all tourist boats going into the area must be accompanied by an accredited Tourist Guide from the Forest Department.



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- In some areas of the Sundarbans, villagers promote eco-tourism and get direct economic benefit by providing services for family accommodation, food and acting as guide.
- An amendment to the Wild Life Protection Act in 2004 provides for the creation of Community Reserves in which the management and ownership will vest with the local people.



Access to Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge and Benefit Sharing

- The Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and the Biological Diversity Rules 2004 provide a legal framework for ABS. The implementation is being done by the National Biodiversity Authority, the State Biodiversity Boards, and the Biodiversity Management Committees. The Act stipulates norms for access to biological resources and traditional knowledge



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- Recently, NBA's expert committee on benefit sharing recommended in more than 30 cases that 10% of the revenue from the commercial product development should be deposited with the State Biodiversity Board for Nature Conservation and another 10% will be given to the local community as an incentive for conservation



Incentives to the Forest Dwellers, Farmers and Local Community

- In the recent times ownership over NTFP has been assigned to the people living in and around forest area through a national legislation 'Schedule Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006.
- Under National Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS), 100 days of wages is being offered for plantation and protection of trees to the people living Below Poverty Line (BPL).



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- An award 'Plant Genome Savior Community Recognition' has been instituted by the 'Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Right Authority' (PPV & FRA) of Government of India as incentive towards conservation of agro-biodiversity, in 2008 – 09.



Models of Incentives developed by the Civil Society Organisations (CSO)

- A West Bengal based NGO; ENDEV-Society for Environment & Development was awarded a grass root innovation project by The World Bank in 2007. Entitled 'Surviving Human & Nature in Sundarbans' the project's objectives included conservation of folk rice varieties in the farmers' field by re-introduction of such varieties suitable for the water & land condition of the area.



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- Additionally, the NGO offered the amount of monetary compensation equivalent to the income loss, which the farmer ma incurred due to the change in use of seed and farming without chemicals.



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- Elsewhere other Civil Society Organizations (CSO) are also providing incentives to protect the traditional agriculture - like promotion of millets in Andhra Pradesh by Deccan Development Society (DDS) or for conservation of minor fish species in the wetlands, as is being done by another CSO in West Bengal.

