CHAPTER IV

The Forestry Debate:
Evolution and Functioning of the Joint Forest Management

An analysis of the Joint Forest Management programme — a participatory programme in forestry sector, which evolved in the 1990s’ — and the policies concerning its evolution will be incomplete without looking back to the history of forest management in India since the pre-colonial period, and how the forestry debate has been shaped in the country over the years. Though the discipline of ‘Environmental History’ is in its nascent phase, yet, the scholars working on it have much focused upon the social impacts of forest policies since the British period, and have contributed towards an evolution of ‘forestry debate’ in India. This chapter aims to analyse the history of forest management in Orissa to see how people’s participation has emerged in the forestry sector, which finally took the shape of Joint Forest Management (henceforth JFM) programme in the state. However, before moving forward to the specific situation in the state of Orissa, I make an effort to narrate the historiography of the forest management in the country.

The chapter has been divided into two parts. The first part deals with the historical development of ‘scientific forestry’ in the country starting from the colonial period and the second deals with the specific data pertaining to the state of Orissa, where the empirical work for the dissertation has been carried out. However, the analysis in this chapter concerning Orissa is limited to the secondary data, in which several government policies, forest department notifications and several other published works on Orissa’s experiment with JFM have been reviewed.

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18 The discipline of ‘Social Ecology and Environmental History’ mainly focused on the policies of conservation adopted during the British period and the subsequent social and ecological changes that occurred in the colonial India. Madhav Gadgil and Ramchandra Guha, as general editors, have produced a series of books on ‘studies in social ecology and environmental history’, published by Oxford University Press. For an understanding of the discipline see the pioneering works of Arnold and Guha, 1995; Baviskar, 1995; Gadgil, 1985; Gadgil and Guha, 1992; Guha, 1983, 1985, 1989, 1990, 1994; Grove, 1995, 1998; Grove et al., 1998; Rangarajan, 1994, 1996; Saberwal, 1999; Singh, 1998; and Sivramkrishna, 1999.
4.1. Approaching the ‘Forestry Debate’ in India

The characteristic features of ‘scientific forestry’, the consequent deforestation, adoption of conservationist measures by the colonial rulers, and the socio-ecological changes that were brought in as a result of new method of forest management have figured much prominently in the ‘forestry debate’ in India. The forestry debate in India, through an analysis of colonial and post colonial forest policies, have much highlighted the impacts that the change and continuity of state forest policies since colonial period had upon the life of the communities dependent upon the forest as well as the physical condition of the forest itself. The analysis of forest policies, particularly of the colonial period, reveals the fact as to how the community, which has taken the centre stage in current decade’s forestry policies, has been neglected and marginalised throughout history. It unpacks the historical process, wherein by introduction of a new method of forest management, development of forest policies and legislations, the traditionally held rights of forest dependent communities have been curtailed progressively. An analysis of broad features of the history of forest management at an all India level will make the understanding of specific situations pertaining to the state of Orissa much clear.

4.1.1. Forestry in Colonial India

Formal management of forests in India is one of the oldest in the tropical world, dating back to 1860s, with the creation of Forest Service and appointment of Brandis as the first Inspector General of Forests. During the period prior to the British Conquest, forests were owned and managed by self-sufficient village communities with traditional practices and indigenous knowledge, though the de jure ownership of the forests were in the hands of the king.19 The village communities residing near the forest areas used to depend upon forest for their basic livelihood requirements, and this dependence was institutionalised through a variety of cultural and religious mechanisms. Madhav Gadgil in his seminal article on ecological history of India has

19 Guha (1983, 1989) from his research in Tehri-Garhwal area of sub-Himalayas confirms such a claim. To quote Guha (1983: 1883), “in Garhwal, for example, the waste and forest lands never attracted the attention of pre-British government. While the native kings did subject the produce of the forests ....” Guha also mentions about such community control of forests in the pre-colonial period in the Madras province in south India.
mentioned about the existence of 'ecological prudence' in pre-colonial rural communities of India. By 'ecological prudence' of pre-colonial rural communities, Gadgil points out towards the 'exercise of restraint in the exploitation of natural resources such that the yields realised from any resource are substantially increased in the long run, even though that restraint implies foregoing some benefits at the present' (Gadgil, 1985: 1909). Guha's (1983) and Gadgil's (1985) analysis of forestry practices in pre-British India emphasises the sustainable way in which forest resources were appropriated and protected by rural communities in pre-British India. However, such a claim has been contested by several other scholars who point out the ongoing process of deforestation in the pre-colonial India. Scholars like Richard Grove (1995, 1998) insists that deforestation had assumed a significant proportion even before the advent of colonialism, and the pre-British India was not a period of harmony between needs of the forest dwellers and the physical conditions of the forest. Rangarajan (1996) also highlights the process of deforestation that took place during the Maratha and the Moughal period.

The contradictions of the scholars regarding the pattern of forest use during the pre-colonial era notwithstanding, the beginning of colonial rule experienced a sea change in the attitude of the state towards the forest resource and the pattern of forest use and management in India. To understand the British attitude towards the forests, their policies for forest use and management in India and the subsequent changes that were brought about in colonial India, it is essential to examine the historical background and the social changes that Britain was undergoing at the time of colonisation. At the time when Europeans came to India, England was experiencing far-reaching changes at home due to Industrial Revolution, which had serious bearing on Indian forest use and management. First, there were changes in the pattern of resource use from subsistence mode to industrial mode featured by domination and transformation of resources for use as commodities. Secondly, the proportion of population relying upon subsistence gathering, food production and agriculture declined sharply, resulting in breakdown of cohesive local communities; and finally, with the automisation of rural communities and manufacture and commerce becoming the dominant activities, the resource exploitation using new technology became unrestrained (Gadgil and Guha, 1992: 115-16). With such a historical background the
British rulers perceived of forests as a raw material to be used for industrialisation and in the process of production.

Similarly, Rangarajan (1996) mentions that the history of military and agricultural revolution of Britain conditioned the negative attitude of the British towards forest resources in India. In the seventeenth century, much prior to the establishment of the colonialism in India, the military troops in Ireland had to clear the forest to deny cover to the Irish rebels who used to hide in the woods. Thus, the British perception of the forest was that of a 'abode of robbers, lawless squatters, poverty-stricken, stubborn and uncivil' (Rangarajan: 1996: 17). Secondly, in the context of agrarian revolution in England, the cutting of trees and the clearing of wastelands for cultivation were considered as a sign of progress.

With such a history of negative and differential attitude towards forests, the colonial treatment of India’s forest had significant impacts upon the physical condition of the forest as well as the socio-cultural life of forest dependent communities. Colonialism has been, thus, described as an ‘ecological watershed’ for India and the colonial treatment of India’s forests as an ‘onslaught on forests’ for the destruction of forests, which has been made to fulfill the strategic requirements of the colonial state (Gadgil and Guha, 1992: 116-23; Guha, 1989: 37-43).

Primarily, there were three factors or ‘strategic requirements’ of colonial state, which had shaped the forest policies of the British India (Gadgil and Guha, 1992; Guha, 1983, 1989). First, the building up of railway network, which began in the 1850s, resulted in large-scale deforestation to fulfill the requirement of huge quantities of good quality timber. The early years of railway expansion resulted in an unprecedented assault on India’s forests. The second requirement came from British Royal Navy, which needed huge quantities of teak for ship building activities. The dense forest resources of India acquired a fresh dimension in the context of Anglo-French war. By the end of eighteenth century, as a result of heavy demand from the British Royal Navy, there were hardly any oak trees in English royal forests, which

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20 For details regarding the amount of deforestation because of railway expansion, see, Guha, 1983: 1883 – 84.
were much required for ship building activities (Rangarajan, 1996: 19). The Indian Teak and Sal became the prime attraction of British Navy and ships building work gained momentum in both east and west coasts of India. The Indian forests suffered the most during the period of two world wars due to such timber extraction for ship building activities. Thirdly, the British desire to consolidate their power by extending cultivation had also its impact on Indian forest. The need for greater revenue from agricultural land resulted in clearing off of forests and converting them into cultivable land for taxation.

The above three processes resulted in large scale deforestation and the immediate problem before the British was then as to how best to manage and control the tree wealth, which no longer then had remained as an inexhaustible resource. Such a situation finally resulted in the introduction of scientific management of forests in India and the first ever Indian Forest Act, 1865. The 1865 Act adopted conservationist measures to protect the forest resources from large-scale deforestation, by establishing state control over the forestlands. The Act is rightly considered as 'the first step towards rule of property for the forests of British India' (Rangarajan, 1996: 30). The plans to complete state control of forestland and thereby reducing the customary rights of forest dependent communities generated a conflicting response among the then British officials. The responses varied from total state control of all forest and wastelands to self-regulation of forest by village communities. In the then British administration, on the one hand there were officials like B. H. Baden-Powel, who intended to extend state control over all uncultivated lands, while, on the other, another section of officials like Sir Henry Maine and Dalyell had criticised the very idea of state control, and were of the opinion that expropriation of forest would damage the tribal interests and rights to land and forest produces (Rangarajan, 1996: 30 – 1).

However, the then Inspector General of Forests Dietrich Brandis, adopted a middle path of 'selective annexation of those areas, which were vital for commercial, strategic or climatic reasons' (Guha, 1990: 83 – 4), and accordingly, the Indian Forest Act, 1865 was revised in 1878. The 1878 Forest Act ensured that the state could demarcate and establish its monopoly control over valuable tracts of forest, needed especially for strategic purposes. The long-standing claims of local communities over
forests were curtailed and the state control over forest resources was marked by the new forest Act. The revised Forest Act of 1878 successfully established complete state monopoly over country’s forest resources and classified it into three categories, namely, reserved forests, protected forests and village forests.

Keeping in mind various provisions of the earlier two Forest Acts, the colonial government, as a part of its forest management initiatives, formulated a Forest Policy in 1894 indicating various plans and priorities of the state in the forestry sector. The forest policy of 1894 gave primacy to agriculture and provided for liberal diversion of forestland and whenever required for the purpose of agriculture. The 1894 Forest Policy broadly classified the forest into four categories, first, forests, the preservation of which was essential on climatic grounds; second, forest, which afforded a supply of valuable timber for commercial purposes; third, minor forest, which provided fuel and fodder for local consumption; and fourth, pastures and grazing grounds (Rai and Sharmah, 1998).

The main objective of the forest management during the colonial period, as evident from the forest policy and the forest acts, was sustained production of preferred timber species. Forests in India contained a large number of timbers species, only a few of which were marketable having some commercial value. The rest trees, shrubs and herbs, which did not have a commercial value at that point of time were regarded as weeds and thus were removed mercilessly giving enough space to preferred species to grow. The scientific management aimed at converting the mixed forest crops into almost pure even-aged artificial entities consisting largely of preferred species. This design was conceived mainly to simplify management and ensure supply of equal quantity of timber to the industry year after year.

Besides the alarming deforestation as a result of railway expansion, ship building activities for Royal Navy and clearance of forest areas for agricultural extension, the introduction of conservationist measures by the scientific management of India's forests has had significant consequences upon the life of the people as a whole and particularly those dependent upon forests for daily livelihood requirements.
To begin with, the commercial forestry introduced by the British transformed the inexhaustible forest resource of India into one of limited resource. The age-old relationship of mutuality between forest dwellers and forests was broken down, labelling the forest dwellers as intruders and destroyers of forests. The traditional patterns of forest use and practices, and protection system also broke down as indigenous rights declined. The social authority and religious sanction to control access and protection of forest were lost (Poffenberger et al., 1996: 20). Further, the Indian Forest Act 1878 ignored all communal ownerships and communal use of the forest areas, and in certain case granted individual concessions to some forest produces. Such a transition from collective to individual use of forest resulted in a ‘functional damage to agrarian life and breaking down of a well established and socially codified link between man and forest’ (Guha, 1985: 1946).

The colonial forest policy, which recognised only individual rights of forest use, initiated the process of fragmentation of the community and erosion of social bonds. This erosion of social bonds, which had regulated the customary use of the forests led to what Guha (1983, 1985, 1989) describes as an ‘alienation of man from nature’. This alienation, when became extreme, resulted in people degrading their own surroundings in which they once lived in symbiosis (Guha, 1989: 58).

Secondly, the scientific forestry, which draws much of its influence from earlier colonial forest policies, declared the production of a handful of timber species as the goal of the forest management. Only those species with a commercial value, were selected and taken care of, and the trees, shrubs and herbs, which did not have a commercial value at that point of time, were regarded as weeds and were removed creating space for marketable species (Guha, 1985, 1989). Thus began the dilution of biodiversity, disturbing the balance among various ecological subsystems.\textsuperscript{21}

Broadly speaking, the forestry debate of the colonial period revolved around two schools of thought. On the one hand, there are scholars like Ramchandra Guha and Madhav Gadgil, who describe the colonial period as an ‘onslaught on India’s

\textsuperscript{21} However, Rangarajan, 1996: 6 challenges such a claim of Guha of distinguishing commercially valuable trees vital to foresters and multi-species forest crucial for subsistence.
forests' and highlight the ever-increasing process of deforestation, which they opined occurred to satisfy the strategic needs of the colonial state/government. According to this school of thought, the negative attitude of the British towards the forest resource — which they inherited from their historical experience — and the process of railway and agricultural expansion and ship building activities led to large-scale deforestation of India's forests, which forced the British government to adopt conservationist measures, which had significant bearing upon the social life of agrarian and forest dependent communities of colonial India.

The second school of thought of environmental history of India, represented mainly by the works of Richard Grove, however, challenges the basic assumption made by Guha regarding the character and chronology of colonial conservation. Grove (1995, 1998), pointing towards the conservationist measures of colonial government, states that colonial conservation has had much more wider reasons than the narrow justification for fulfilling the strategic and commercial interests of the empire in obtaining timber, a claim much popularly held by Guha and others.

Contrary to the first school of thought's claim of 'ecological prudence' (see, Gadgil, 1985), Grove claims that deforestation had assumed significant proportion even before the beginning of colonial rule. Justifying the conservationist policies of colonial state, Grove states that 'the fear of famine, climate change, and gross agrarian failure, which were resultant features of ongoing deforestation, was a vital factor in bringing about policies for forest, soil and water conservation' (Grove, 1998: 2). He points out to the then prevailing ecological conditions, which emerged due to the large-scale deforestation during the pre-colonial period, particularly in the Mughal period, for which the colonial state has had to come out with conservation policies. Two prominent ecological conditions, namely, soil erosion, which had become prominent in India by 1920s, and the fear of widespread climate change, forced the colonial state to comply with conservationist prescriptions. Colonial conservation, may thus be understood, as Grove insists, 'as a state response to ecological crisis emerged at the economic periphery rather than at the metropolitan centre' (Grove, 1998: 85).
4.1.2. Forestry in Independent India

The policy of commercialisation, which was at the centre of the forest management during the Raj, was reinforced, intensified and extended even after independence. The legal successor to the colonial state - the political and economic elites of modern independent India - continued to rely on earlier colonial legal usurpation and reinforced the rights of the state to exclusive control over forest protection and management. Forest laws and policies were promulgated on the assumption that national interest was best served by capitalising natural resources for consumer goods and international market. That was the time when India was modernising its economy through infrastructural and industrial developments. Forest based industries expanded with the country’s march towards modernisation; and handsome state subsidies were given as incentives in the supply of forest raw materials to the pulp and rayon industries (Gadgil and Guha, 1992: 186; Guha, 1989).

Besides its social impacts that Ramachandra Guha and Madhav Gadgil point out, colonial treatment of India’s forest had significant impact upon the physical conditions of the total forest cover of the country. India, after independence, inherited forests over-exploited due to two World Wars. By the time of independence, 9 million hectares of private forests had been devastated owing to merciless cutting by the British for personal profit and greed (Shah, 1998: 432). The main thrust, therefore, of the then Government of India was to rehabilitate the vast degraded forest areas and also, at the same time, to increase the production of industrial wood to generate greater revenue. It was in this context that the National Forest Policy of 1952, the first of its kind in independent India, was enunciated and sustained production of industrial timber was made the primary national goal.

4.1.2. a) The National Forest Policy, 1952

A new national forest policy was lunched in 1952 for proper management of India’s forest so as to derive maximum benefit from them. The policy stressed on maintaining 60 per cent of the geographical land in hilly regions and 20 per cent land in plain land under forest cover. Unlike the previous Forest Policy of 1894, which gave primacy to agriculture, the new policy discouraged indiscriminate extension of agricultural land by clearing forest cover (Rai and Sharmah, 1998). The policy gave primacy to
national interest and sustained yield of timber, even though there were provisions for local communities to derive benefits from the local forest resource. To speak in a nutshell, the basic tenets of the forest policy of 1952 were the following:

- To evolve a system of balanced and complementary land use, in which the land is to be allotted to that type of use, which will produce the most and deteriorate the least.
- To check the denudation of hilly areas to prevent soil erosion.
- To establish tree-lands by afforestation measures for the amelioration of physical and climatic conditions promoting the general well-being of people.
- To ensure increased supply of fuel wood, fodder and small wood for agricultural implements.
- To ensure sustained supply of timber and other forest produces required for defence, communication and industry.
- To generate maximum annual revenue for the nation from the forest resources.

The 1952 Forest Policy has been criticised from two important angles. First, the new policy document was based upon the principles of the earlier Forest Policy of 1894. In a similar fashion to the 1894 policy, the National Forest Policy of 1952 was an ‘explicit assertion of state monopoly right at the expense of the forest dependent communities’ (Guha, 1983: 1888). Such marginalisation of rights of forest dependent communities was justified in the name of ‘national interest’, which was placed much higher in comparison to secondary interest of any particular community. The policy document stated that ‘the country as a whole should not be deprived of a “national asset” by the mere accident of a village being situated closer to a forest area’ (GOI, 1952). Thus acceptance of colonial norms with regard to establishment of state monopoly in forest management practices, without questioning, characterised the first ever forest policy of independent India.

Secondly, the basic objectives of the policy, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, were hardly compatible with one another. The sixth objective of realising maximum revenue from the forestland could hardly be stated in compatible with the other five objectives. Again the objective of sustained supply of timber for defence, communication industry came in the way of increased supply of fuel, fodder and small timber for agriculture to the forest dependent communities. Finally, there was no clear-cut priority being assigned to the objectives in the policy document.
4.1.2 b) From Conservation-Oriented Forestry to Production Forestry

The attempt towards monopoly control of India’s forest took a wider dimension in 1956, after the annexation of princely states into the Republic of India. The private forests, which were earlier in the hands of big Zamindars and the princely states, came under the jurisdiction of Government of India. Since then, organised efforts began in real sense to manage India's forests with a strong administrative set up (Rawat, 1998: 367).

In a significant move, at around 1960, the Government of India appointed Dr. Von Mon Roy, an expert of forest industries, to give an assessment of the country's raw material situation. He strongly recommended creation of large-scale plantation of quick growing species like 'Eucalyptus' (Shah, 1995: 9). The then forest officials opined that 'the extreme low productivity of India’s forests was due to the uneconomic and conservation-oriented approach that had characterised Indian forestry, which has now to be shifted to policies based on the production of economically attractive resources through plantation of quick growing and high-yielding tree species' (Guha, 1983: 1889). Thus was born the large-scale monoculture plantation of Eucalyptus, creating a landmark in the history of forest management in India. The strategy of the forest management in the early independence period was production of more and more commercially valuable species and clear-cut the existing forests and replace them with industrial wood, in as short a time as possible. Hence, large-scale plantation of quick growing species like Eucalyptus and tropical-pine was made.

The report of National Commission on Agriculture (1976) was another landmark of change in forest management of post-independent India. Preoccupied with the notion of development and industrial production it focused on conversion of mixed miscellaneous types of forests, which contained highest biodiversity but little commercial value, into man made forests of commercial species. NCA recommended the 'Social Forestry' programme in its first mid-term report in 1972 on all wastelands. The idea was to meet the needs of the people by creating resources at their doorstep, on community land and with their involvement. It was also assumed that social forestry would rescue traditional forest by reducing the pressure on them.
plantation activity spread rapidly from 52,000 ha. planted in 1951-56 to 2,148,000 ha. in 1979-84 (Shah, 1996: 24).

The evolution of the India’s experience with ‘social forestry’ programme was based on the rhetoric, which analysed the problem of deforestation being caused by the actions of the rural poor (Agarwal, 1986; Blair, 1986; Saxena, 1991; Tewari, 1991). The alarming rate of deforestation in the early years of independent India was thought to be generated by the increasing number of human and livestock population in the rural areas. It was believed that the rural poor in search of their livelihood engaged in deforestation and degradation of forest areas of the vicinity. This resulted in environmental deterioration, drought and soil erosion (Tewari, 1991: 294). In such a situation, social forestry was envisioned as a solution to fuelwood crisis and environmental degradation. Social forestry was expected to reduce pressure from natural forests by generating the resources at the door-steps of communities, for which they depend and destroy the forest (NCA, 1976).

Broadly speaking, there were three factors, which had significant bearing upon the forest management policies of independent India up to the period of 1980s. First and foremost factor has been the soft attitude towards the process of industrialisation and large-scale growth of wood based industries. Soon after independence a large number of wood based industries grew up in consonance with India’s march towards industrial development. For example, the paper industry, which derived substantial part of its raw material from the forest, has increased its production from 92,800 tonnes in 1948 to over one million tonnes in 1978 (Guha, 1983: 1888). Such growth of paper and other wood based industries resulted in greater demand for raw material, ultimately resulting in large-scale deforestation.

The second factor to characterise the early decades of forestry in independent India was the changing strategy towards ‘production forestry’. The expanding process of industrialisation soon after independence required huge production of raw material in the shortest period and with a lowest possible cost. Being faced with the challenge of greater fuel wood and raw material production to support the industries, the forest management practice took a dynamic turn towards ‘production forestry’ in contrast to the ‘conservationist approach’ of the colonial age. The National Commission of
Agriculture legitimised such an attempt of the then forests by outlining a new strategy to forest management, whose first element ‘should have to be production forestry for industrial wood production’ (NCA, 1976: 39).

Thirdly, the launching of 'Social Forestry' programme of late 70s, had been an important feature in the forest management in the early decade of independent India. The programme was designed to rescue traditional forest by reducing the increasing pressure on them. However, the great aims of social forestry programme had been criticised by several scholars, who viewed social forestry as merely ‘production forestry in another name’. Out of its three components, i.e., Farm Forestry (plantation in private plots), Village Woodlots (plantation in village common lands and wastelands), and Street Plantation (plantation in roadsides and railway tracks); only the first one was highly successful, which resulted in large scale eucalyptus plantation in agricultural lands and supply of raw materials to wood based industries, though the stated aim of Social Forestry were quite different, such as supplying fuel, fodder and small timber to agriculturalists. The rich farmers took maximum advantages form the social forestry scheme and converted their agricultural land into plantation of fast growing species that could serve the wood based industry, thus generating maximum profit and avoiding labour problem (Mukherji, 1995: 33). Social Forestry was, thus, visualised by scholars as yet another step towards the ‘industrial orientation of Indian forestry’, which aimed at increasing supply of raw materials to the pulp and rayon industries (Gadgil and Guha, 1992: 189). Besides, the large-scale eucalyptus plantation, through Social Forestry programme and more particularly through Farm Forestry programme, had also been criticised for its role in rapid depletion of soil nutrients, declining of food production, exhausting the ground water, etc.

4.1.3. Forestry in Pre-Independent and Independent India: A Comparison

There seems to be a continuity between the basic tenets of forest management practices of the pre-independent India and that of independent India up to the period of 1980s. This continuity may be located within the broader discourse of ‘development’, which had a continued feature in both colonial and independent India. Even after independence, the state continued to be the sole mentor of delivering the process of development and thereby capitalising the maximum benefit out of the developmental process. The only difference cited between these two periods in the
context of development was that while the policies in the earlier period favoured the British, later, it was the economic and political elites of modern India who were successful in manipulating the policies in their favour (Baviskar, 1995).

The establishment of state monopoly over the forest areas — a factor common to both colonial and early decades of independent India — has always resulted in the marginalisation of the interests of the forest dependent communities. The forest policies, even after independence, were formulated in such a way as to best serve the interests of the state and its allies. Reiterating the primacy of state interests over the interests of the forest dependent communities, Guha states:

"The dominant interests behind the formation and execution of state policy have differed. While, before 1947 forests were a strategic raw material crucial for imperial interests such railway expansion and world wars, in the post-independent period it has been the commercial and industrial interests who dictated forest policy. In both cases, however, the successful implementation of the policy has been achieved only at the expense of the forest communities and their life-support systems" (1983: 1892 – 3).

The forest management practices in independent India did not represent a sharp departure from that of the colonial period. Whatever changes were made since independence till the beginning of 1980s, were largely limited to modification and additions, while the basic objective had remained the same. Guha (1983) identifies another characteristic feature of continuity between the forest policies of the two periods, i.e., the 'disjuncture between the theory and practice in the policies'. There was a sharp distinction between policy formulation and its implementation in the forest policies of India in both the periods. The populist measures of recognising the needs and interest of forest dependent communities had always found a place in the forest policies of our country. Even the Forest Policy of 1894 had included features like 'promotion of general well-being of the country', 'fulfillment of the needs of the people', etc., and in the 1952 policy in independent India, there were provisions for ensuring increasing the supply of fuel wood, fodder and small wood for agricultural implements of rural population (Rai and Sharmah, 1998). However, in their actual implementation such objectives were strategically ignored.

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22 For a critique of national development policies since independence and its continuity with the colonial period, see, Baviskar, 1995: chapter – 2.
4.1.4. Emergence of a Fresh Approach

The beginning of 1980s saw a paradigm shift in the forest policies of independent India. Even the social forestry programme of 1970s could not achieve much success with regard to solving the problems of degradation and deforestation of India’s forestlands. The increasing rates of deforestation, loss of biodiversity, recurrent droughts and publication of research reports showing the degradation of forests by several civil society and research organisations created a platform to reconsider the forest policies and forest management practices of our country during the early 1980s. Further, the marginalisation of rights of the forest dependent communities and the large-scale deforestation, which further curtailed their share of forestland, had resulted in varying kinds of responses from the deprived communities – sometimes limited to particular geographical locations and other times at a larger national level. Organised protests and struggles in relation to exploitative policy of the Government became manifest in many parts of the country. The most celebrated was the 'Chipko Movement' in northern India, where local people embraced the trees targeted for cutting by commercial loggers. Besides reveling the socio-environmental devastations being wrought by Government policies, these movements brought into focus the potential benefits of community management. Taking all these matters into consideration, a need was felt by the development planners and foresters for a revised approach in forest management and policy. It was affirmed that Forest Department had failed to improve the forests on its own, despite total control over the forestland.

The experience of scientific management of forests in India has made one thing clear that neither people themselves nor the Forest Department alone can stop degradation of the forests. As a consequence, it was felt necessary to combine the efforts of the two to manage the forests effectively for mutual benefit. The Government of India realised this need and the revised National Forest Policy was

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23 Perhaps the publication of ‘The State of India’s Environment: A citizens Report’ in 1984 and ‘The State of India’s Environment: A Second Citizens Report’ in 1985, by a Delhi based NGO Center for Science and Environment (CSE, 1984, 1985), was the first organised attempt by any civil society organisation to publicise the degrading conditions of India’s forest resources.

24 More than a protest against commercial forestry, the 'Chipko Movement' was viewed by some scholars as an assertion of community control over forest resources (Lynch and Talbot, 1995: 5-6). Even Guha considers the Chipko movement as local peasant protest against marginalisation of their source of livelihood and for having access to forests (see, Guha, 1989).
enacted in 1988, prohibiting the clear cutting of well-stocked natural forests and banning plantation of exotic species.

4.1.5. The National Forest Policy, 1988
One of the important factors, which distinguished the new policy from that of the 1952, is its approach towards sustainability. Unlike the previous policy of 1952, which was primarily production oriented, the new policy has given much priority to environmental stability, soil conservation, maintenance of ecological balance and above all meeting the subsistence requirements of the local people. The policy set the national goal of having one-third of the total geographical area under the forest cover.

The basic objectives of the National Forest Policy, 1988 may be stated as the following (GOI, 1988):

- To maintain environmental stability through preservation and restoration of the ecological balance.
- To conserve the natural heritage of the country by preserving the remaining natural forests with vast variety of flora and fauna.
- To check soil erosion and denudation in the catchment areas of rivers, lakes, reservoirs in the interest of soil and water conservation, for mitigating floods and droughts and for the retardation of siltation of reservoirs.
- To increase substantially the forest cover through massive afforestation and social forestry programmes.
- To meeting the requirement of fuelwood, fodder, minor forest produce and small timber of the rural and tribal population.
- To increase the productivity of forests to meet the essential national needs.
- To create a massive people’s movement with the involvement of women, for achieving these objectives and to minimise pressure on existing forests.

The revised policy strongly felt that people who were living in and around forests must have a stake on the forests and the aspirations of such people must be met. Further, environmental stability and maintenance of subsistence requirements of local people were seen above earning revenue from the forests. Thus, mono-cultural plantation was discouraged and mixed forests were preferred. With this the focus shifted form 'commerce' and 'industry' to 'ecology' and satisfying the basic needs of the people, providing fuel wood, fodder and strengthening forest-tribal linkage.

In the changing scenario, with the awakening of environmental awareness and passing of the New Forest Policy of 1988, the term 'conservation' received a wider
connotation. The attention now shifted from ‘preservation of forests’ for industrial and other commercial use to ‘sustainable management of forests’ through conservation and sustainable utilisation, which could fulfill the present and future needs of the local people and the national interests as well. While the earlier conservationist policies debarred the local people from gaining access to forest lands, the later management techniques created space for involvement of local people, local knowledge and local wisdom in a wider range of activities such as preservation, maintenance, sustainable utilisation, restoration and enhancement of forest resources.

4.1.6. Evolution of Joint Forest Management

The years following the launching of the National Forest Policy, 1988 have been a period of great development in Indian forest history. Several attempts have been made to come out with policy resolutions in conformity with the objectives of the new forest policy, one of which is the implementation of the Joint Forest Management (JFM) Programme. The historical ground for the JFM was prepared by the New Forest Policy, 1988, which emphasised environmental protection, meeting the requirements of fuelwood, fodder, minor forest produces (MFP) and small timber for rural and tribal population; and creating massive people’s movement with involvement of women for achieving these objectives. On June 1, 1990, the Government of India adopted a National Joint Forest Management Resolution, which set guidelines for partnership between local communities and state Forest Department for the protection and management of state owned forests through Forest Protection Committees. In a radical departure from earlier focus on policing and protection of state owned forests, the new approach emphasised the shared responsibility for management and sharing of profits with the local communities.

The genesis of the JFM can be seen in two sources. On the one hand, it is located in the efforts of some progressive Foresters to form forest protection committees (FPCs), particularly in west Bengal. Here, the Arabari Project initiated by Dr. Ajit Banerjee is widely cited as a classic example (see, Campbell, 1992). When the Arabari experiment was successful in protecting forests by the FPCs, other forest officers too adopted the approach widely leading to a rapid spread of JFM. On the other hand, a growing body of research argued that JFM represented a spontaneous reemergence of community forest management in the region, or a reassertion of tribal
autonomy movements, which had a long history in the region (Deb, 1993 and Poffenberger et al., 1996). Giving a subaltern approach to the origin of JFM, Deb (1993) writes:

"...a thread of the sense and intention of an community control of the forests seems to have been spun from the popular spirit of indigenous peoples' movement in the region" (Deb, 1993: 371).

JFM represents a significant policy shift in the Indian forest management system, which can be best illustrated by comparing it with earlier policies. Comparing it with the earlier practices of forest management, Joshi (1998: 4 – 5) identifies the following distinguishing features that sharply differ from the earlier policies.

- From production for commercial market and to generate revenue, to production for fulfilling the basic needs of the forest dependent people,
- From an exclusive focus on timber to focus on Non Timber Forest Products (NTFP) like fuel wood, fodder, etc. which are central to the livelihood of forest dependents,
- From monoculture to mixed forests that includes a diversity of tree species,
- From plantation of similar age to plantation of diverse age for sustained supply of timber and other forest products to meet the needs of the forest dependent,
- From authoritarian administration through policing to participatory management through sharing,
- From de-empowering people to empowerment of people.

In the new JFM model, people dependent on forests are to be consulted and their views are to be taken as the basis to plan the management of forests. The execution of management plan is to be done through Village Forest Committees, which will be constituted by taking two members from each family (one male and one female), maintaining complete transparency in all matters. The Forest Department is to provide necessary funds for various activities in the forest to the village forest committee and also essential technical guidance. Contractors are not to be brought for execution of works. Species selection for planting is to be made only as per people's preference. The people are entitled to take the usufruct right free of cost. They are also entitled to take a share in timber and other major forest products when harvested as per JFM plans (Mukherji, 1995: 35).

Having discussed the evolution of JFM in India from a historical perspective, by tracing the history of forest management since the colonial rule, let me now move
forward to deal with the specific data pertaining to the state of Orissa. Though the basic objective of forest management in both colonial and post-colonial periods in the state of Orissa is not very much different from that of the all India situation, yet there are some particular happenings in the state, which distinguishes it from the rest of India. The remaining sections of the chapter attempts to historically analyse the process of people’s involvement in the forest management, which finally took the shape of Joint Forest Management.

4.2. The History of Forest Management in Orissa and the Evolution of JFM

4.2.1. Forestry in Pre-Independent Orissa

The history of formation of Orissa as a separate State and the history of forest management had coexisted in the pre-colonial period. Prior to being a separate State, several parts of Orissa were under the then British Indian Provinces of Madras, Central Province and Bengal and Bihar Presidency. On April 1, 1912, the Province of Bihar and Orissa was created bringing together parts of Bengal Presidency and Central Province. It was only in April 1936, that the present State of Orissa was born as a new Province of British-India by separating Orissa from the combined State of Bihar and Orissa, and then combining with it some of the Oriya-speaking areas of the then adjoining States of Madras Presidency and Central Province. Thus, an organised attempt to manage the forests Statewide by establishing monopoly through reservation of the forests started in 1936 with the creation of Orissa as a separate State.

Given the dispersed nature of Orissa under colonial rule, forest management too had a varying origin. Forest management started in Orissa more than a century ago during 1883 – 84, when it was a part of Bengal Presidency. For the first time, in 1884, the ‘Orissa Forest Division’ was constituted for both Bihar and Orissa at Angul (Dhenkanal District) under the administrative control of the Conservator of Forest of Bengal Presidency with the headquarters at Darjeeling; and forest blocks were declared as Reserved Forests under the Indian Forest Act, 1878, with effect from January 1, 1884. The total area of Reserved Forests of Orissa Forest Division at Angul was 692 sq. km. (Padhi, 1984: 180). Demarcation of forest areas for settlement and reservation was the main focus of the then management strategy. Notifications were
issued in this regard in Angul and Khurda. By 1888 – 89, there were a total of 968.6 sq. km. of Reserved Forests in Orissa Forest Division. In 1891 – 92, the Orissa Forest Division was divided into two subdivisions, namely, Angul and Khurda, with Reserved Forests of 725 and 303 sq. km respectively (RCDC, 1996: 3).

Out of the total of seven Forest Divisions of the newly formed Province of Bihar and Orissa, there were three Divisions in the Orissa part, namely, Angul, Puri and Sambalpur, with a total of 1,920 sq. km of Reserved Forests and 2,769 sq. km of Protected Forests under its administration (RCDC, 1996: 4). Before being a part of Bihar-Orissa Province, Sambalpur was in Central Province, where the Sambalpur Forest Division was already existing since 1887. The old Sambalpur Division had a vast geographical area with scattered forest patches. Thus, the Division was bifurcated into Sambalpur East and Sambalpur West with effect from April 1, 1928 for efficient management.

Forest management in the true sense, started in Orissa with the reorganisation of the State as a separate Province on April 1, 1936. In that year a Forest Department was formed under a Conservator of Forests with headquarters at Angul. With the merger of Ganjam district with the new Province, Ganjam and Parlakhemundi Divisions were transferred to Orissa from Madras Presidency. Forest administration in Ganjam started from 1885–86, and by 1906 almost all forest blocks were reserved under the Madras Forest Act, 1882. In 1936, Sambalpur East and Sambalpur West were renamed Sambalpur and Barapahar Division. In 1938, Ganjam and Parlakhemundi Divisions were reorganised with effect from January 3, 1938, into four divisions, namely, Russelkonda, Chhatrapur, Parlakhemundi and Baliguda. Later, Russelkonda and Chhatrapur were renamed Ghumsor North and Ghumsor South with effect from April 1, 1941. In October 1945, Baliguda Division was divided into Baliguda and Udayagiri Division. Thus, by the time India got independence, there were nine Forest Divisions in Orissa, namely, Angul, Puri, Sambalpur, Barapahar, Parlakhemundi, Ghumsor North, Ghumsor South, Baliguda and Udayagiri Divisions, with Reserved Forests of 3,615.6 sq. km, Demarcated Protected Forests of 541.3 sq. km and Reserved land of 3,286.7 sq. km, making a total of 7443.6 sq. km forest area (RCDC, 1996: 4).
4.2.2 The Post-Independence Period

4.2.2. a) The Period of State Monopoly (1947 – 85)

The major factors affecting forest administration and management in post-independence Orissa have been merger of ex-princely and ex-zamindari areas with the State, the enactment of Orissa Forest Act, 1972, and several other Government resolutions. Several feudatory States were merged with the State of Orissa with independence, as a result of which the forest areas under their control also came into the hands of the Orissa Government. To prevent these rulers of ex-princely States from destroying or selling away the forestlands in their territory, two important Acts were passed soon after independence – the ‘Orissa Preservation of Private Forests Act’ in 1947, which prohibited the owners (mainly rulers of princely States) of any forest ‘to sell, mortgage, lease or otherwise alienate whole or any portion of the forest area’; and the ‘Orissa Communal Forest and Private Lands (Prohibition of Alienation) Act’ in 1948, which came into force with effect from February 5, 1948. This Act prohibited any landlord ‘to sell, mortgage, lease or otherwise assign or alienate or convert any communal forest or private lands into Raiyati land or create occupancy right there in’.

In 1948, 25 feudatory States merged with Orissa and the extent of forest area under the control of Government increased. After the merger of the princely State of Mayurbhanj in January 1949, the Reserved Forest areas including the Demarcated Protected Forests and Reserved lands totalled 26,332.5 sq. km. In this year, the headquarters of Forest Department shifted from Angul to Cuttack, the then State capital. Before being a part of Orissa State, these ex-States had their own separate forest administration under their respective kings. In some of the big ex-States like Mayurbhanj and Bolangir-Patna, there were full-fledged Forest Department with rules and regulations for management of forests almost similar to those in vogue in the British-Indian Provinces. These princely States belonged to a political group called ‘Eastern States Agency of Orissa and Chhatisgarh Districts’ under a political agent with headquarters at Sambalpur. A Conservator of Forests was posted at Sambalpur, who was acting as Forest Advisor to princely States except Mayurbhanj.
In the mid-fifties, another important event took place in the history of forest management of the State. With the abolition of the Zamindari system in 1952, the forest areas under the Zamindars came under the direct control of the Government. Though most of the Zamindars vested in the Government of Orissa since November 27, 1952, the management of forest areas under these Zamindaris continued to be under Anchal Sasan (regional administration) till November 14, 1957. From November 15, 1957 these forests were transferred to the Forest Department, Government of Orissa. With the merger of ex-princely and ex-Zamindari areas into the State of Orissa, the total forest area increased from 7,443.6 sq. km to 65,677.76 sq. km by 1959.

Even though Orissa became a separate State in 1936, there was no single unified forest management practice in the State. The independent State Government also did not pay any attention in this regard. It was only in 1959, that the State Government appointed a Forest Enquiry Committee, which in its report observed that the total forest area was 65,677.7 sq. kms, constituting about 42 per cent of the total land area of the State. Thus, for the first time in 1959, the legal status of different types of forests under the administration of the State of Orissa as a whole came into the picture (see Table 4.1 below).

**Table 4.1: Legal Status of Forests in Orissa in 1959**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Forest</th>
<th>Area (in sq. km)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reserved Forest (A Class)</td>
<td>20,619.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserved Forest (B Class)</td>
<td>1,865.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserved Land</td>
<td>2,495.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demarcated Protected Forest</td>
<td>537.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Un-demarcated Protected Forest, unreserved lands, Khesra Forest and un-classed Forests</td>
<td>19,840.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex-zamindari Forest</td>
<td>20,132.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Forest</td>
<td>187.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>65,677.72</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: (Padhi, 1984)*

However, most of the areas under un-Reserved, Khesra Forests, un-Demarcated Protected Forests, un-Reserved Lands and open forests including those of the ex-Zamindari areas were only barren land and hills without vegetation, although they were called ‘forests’ under the law.
One of the important recommendations of the Forest Enquiry Committee was the passing of a unified Forest Act to be applied to the whole State of Orissa. In the absence of a single Forest Act for the whole State, there were two Forest Acts applicable to the State till 1972. The Madras Forest Act, 1882 was in force in the districts of Ganjam, Koraput, Baliguda and some areas of Kandhamal district, whereas Indian Forest Act, 1927 was applicable to the rest of the State. Under Madras Forest Act, 1882, there were two categories of forests: Reserved Forests and Unreserved Forests. Different princely States and ex-Zamindari areas in the above mentioned districts framed their own rules under the Madras Forest Act, 1882. Under the Indian Forest Act, 1927, there were three categories of forests: Reserved Forests, Village Forests and Protected Forests. However, in practice, no Village Forest was formed in Orissa till 1972. Protected areas were managed differently in different areas by rules framed under Indian Forest Act, 1927. For example, while there were demarcated Protected Forests in Angul and Khurda, no such forests existed in Sambalpur.

The existence of two different Acts within a State often created confusion and administrative difficulties. It imposed extra strain on the Government machinery. Thus, it was felt that this could be avoided by one unified Forest Act. Consequently, Orissa Forest Bill was introduced in the State Legislative Assembly in 1942. However, owing to certain controversies, the Bill was dropped. Finally, in 1954, the Indian Forest Act (Orissa Amendment) was passed as a follow-up of the Indian Forest Act, 1927, as applicable to Orissa. Before the enactment of the Orissa Amendment Act, 1954, there were Reserved Forests under both Madras Forest Act, 1882 and Indian Forest Act, 1927; Reserved Lands and Unreserved Lands under Madras Forest Act and Demarcated Protected Forests and Un-demarcated Protected Forests under Indian Forest Act, 1927. Recall that in the princely States there were A and B type Reserved Forests and Khesra Forests. The Khesra Forests were named differently in different localities, e.g., Sadharan Forests, Katra, Krisi, Gramya Jungle, etc; which were meant for the fulfillment of requirements of the local people. However, with the
amendment of Indian Forest Act in 1954, all Reserved Forests, whether A or B, became Reserved Forests and the Khesra Forests were declared as Protected Forests.²⁵

In a similar fashion to the all India situation, where the policy of commercialisation in forestry sector continued even after independence, the Orissa government continued to rely on the earlier colonial legal framework, thus reinforcing the rights of the State to exclusive control over forest protection and management. The 1954 Orissa Amendment of Indian Forest Act brought more and more forest areas under Reserved category, depriving a large number of local communities of the usufruct rights and concessions that they enjoyed earlier. Moreover, by declaring Khesra Forests as Protected Forests, the rights and concessions of local people were further curtailed. Though there were provisions for Village Forests in the Indian Forest Act, 1927, they were only on paper, as is evident from the report of the Forest Enquiry Committee, 1959, which did not recognise any existence of such Village Forests in Orissa.

Though the Forest Enquiry Committee, 1959, recommended a unified forest Act, it took thirteen years for the Orissa Government to materialise the Act, when in 1972 Orissa Forest Act was passed. But the Orissa Forest Act, 1972 did not have any new promise for the forest-dependent communities of Orissa, rather it re-established the colonial legacy. The forest areas that were already declared as Reserved Forests and Protected Forests under the Indian Forest Act and the Madras Forest Act remained the same under the new Act. The draft bill of the Orissa Forest Act, 1972 had freely drawn from the Madras Forest Act and other existing State Forest Acts and followed the sequence of Indian Forest Act, 1927.

For administrative convenience, the Orissa Forest Act, 1972 had divided the total forest area into three categories, such as Reserved Forests, Village Forests and Protected Forests. Chapter II of the Act was devoted to the Reserved Forests,

²⁵ Property rights over the forestland determine the difference between different types of forests, such as Reserved, Protected or Village. While in the case of Reserved Forest, the Forest Department enjoys property rights over the forestland, in Protected Forests, the management rights and responsibilities of the forest are conferred on Forest Department, whereas the property rights on land remain with the Revenue Department.
according to which the State Government was conferred with the power to declare any land as Reserved Forest, in lands which were the property of Government or over which the Government had property rights. Once declared as Reserved Forest, the Government enjoyed monopoly rights not only on the physical area of the forest, but also on the trees and other forest produce therein. The sheer monopoly of rights was visible from the fact that under Section 26 of the Act, a Divisional Forest Officer was empowered to close any public or private way or watercourse or stop use of water by any people inside a Reserve Forest without the previous sanction of the State Government. Although there was a provision in the same section that such an action could be taken, if a substitute arrangement for the similar already existed, it was the State Government, which had to be reasonably convinced about such alternatives, not the common people, who are the real users of the resource. Entering into the forest area, which was declared as reserved, grazing cattle in it and/or using any forest produce was also regarded as an offence, punishable under section 27 of the Act.

Chapter III of the Orissa Forest Act, 1972 was devoted to ‘Village Forests’ with only three sections in it (Section 30 – 32). Even though the Act spoke of the formation of Village Forests and vested the responsibility of management of such forests with the village communities, it was silent about the details of such management by them. The details pertaining to how the Village Forest Protection Committee would be constituted, their rights, duties and responsibilities or how it would share benefits from such forestland were also not dealt within the Act. Instead, the State was given powers to declare all or any provisions of the rules for Reserved Forests as being applicable to the Village Forest, thereby extending its rights to Village Forests also.

The legislation regarding ‘Protected Forests’ was dealt with in Chapter IV of the Orissa Forest Act, 1972. Under Section 33 of the Act, the State Government was vested with power to declare any land that was not included in the Reserved Forests, but which was the property of the Government or over which Government enjoyed property rights as ‘Protected Forests’. Whereas in the case of Reserved Forests, the forestland was reserved by the Government, in Protected Forests, the Government was given the power to issue notifications to declare any ‘trees or class of trees in a Protected Forests’ as reserved. Unlike the case of Reserved Forests, where the Forest
Department enjoyed property rights over the land, in Protected Forests the management rights and responsibilities of the forests (mainly trees and forest produces) was conferred to the Forest Department, whereas the property rights of the land remained with the Revenue Department. Section 36 of the Act empowered the State Government to make rules to control and regulate certain matters like cutting, sawing, conversion and removal of trees and collection of any forest produce from the Protected Forests. The provisions regarding punishing those who enter into a forest area and collect any forest produce, as was in vogue for Reserved Forests, were also made applicable for Protected Forests.

4.2.2. b) Beginning of a New Era: Involving Local People in Forest Management (1985 -)

The 1980s have been an important decade for India from the developmental point of view. That was the time when concepts and approaches like ‘people’s participation’, ‘indigenous rights and practices’, ‘bottom-up approach’, ‘community-based resource management’, etc. were gaining momentum not only among academicians but also among development practitioners and policy makers. The decade-long debate on poverty and environmental degradation also influenced policy makers to recognise people’s requirements and rights on environment. The large-scale deforestation and resource degradation had made it amply clear that conservation of natural resources without the involvement of people is hard to accomplish and cannot ensure sustainability. As a consequence, the Government of India came out with its resolution on National Forest Policy in 1988, which treated ‘the requirements of fuelwood, fodder and small timber such as house building materials for tribals and other villagers living in and around forest area as the first charge on forest produce’.

The changes that took place at the national level had, in fact, already begun to emerge in several States. In keeping with these changes in approach, the situation in Orissa too began to change. A new era may be Stated to have begun in Orissa’s forest history during the mid-80s with the declaration of the ‘Orissa Village Forest Rules, 1985’. Orissa was one step ahead of the rest of the country by implementing the Orissa Village Forest Rules in 1985, three years earlier than the National Policy. It was, indeed, the first Government resolution to involve people in forest management. Though the Orissa Forest Act, 1972 under Section 30 – 32 (Chapter - III) had dealt
with the formation of the Village Forests, the modalities regarding the process of such management had to wait till 1985.

As per the 1985 Rules, the management of every village forest was vested with a committee comprising the sarpanch of the gram panchayat concerned, and its ward members, the Forester, Revenue Inspector and the village-level workers and such other persons of the community as may be nominated by the village. The total number of members of the committee was limited to eight. The Rules also called for representation of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Women and Landless persons. It now became the duty of the committee, and therefore, of the community to protect and ensure preservation of plantations and report to the nearest local forest office or police station in the event of any injury to such plantations. The proper distribution of forest produce among the members of the community became the responsibility of the committee, which was empowered to formulate principles for that purpose.

The first step towards the involvement of local people in protection and conservation of Reserved Forest was taken in the 1988 Government resolution. This stated that:

"the question of involving village communities for effective protection and conservation of Reserved Forests was, for sometime past, under the active consideration of the Government. After careful appraisal, the Government is of the view that the task of protecting forests is so urgent and so enormous that the rural community should be fully and actively involved in it. Accordingly, it has been decided that the scheme of involving rural community will be implemented in the State".

As per this resolution, the villagers were assigned specific roles in the protection of Reserved Forests adjoining their villages and in return were granted certain concessions in the matter of meeting their bonafide requirements of firewood and small timber for house construction and agriculture.

26 Through Resolution No 10F (Pron) – 47/88/17240 FFAH dated August 1, 1988 of Government of Orissa in Forest Fisheries and Animal Husbandry Department, which came into force on October 2, 1988.
The resolution stated that it would be the duty of the Divisional Forester concerned to assign peripheral Reserved Forests to adjoining villages and constitute Forest Protection Committees for each assigned village. The committee comprised the sarpanch of the gram panchayat concerned, the ward members belonging to the village, the local Forester, Revenue Inspector, V.L.W. and such other persons of the said village not exceeding three as may be nominated by the gram panchayat concerned. It was mentioned in the resolution that the sarpanch of the gram panchayat and the local Forester would be the chairman and convener of the committee respectively; and that care would be taken to ensure that the committee included persons belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, women and landless categories, as far as possible. The villagers were instructed to furnish an undertaking to the Divisional Forest Officer concerned through the committee for proper upkeep and maintenance of the assigned Reserved Forest areas. This resolution was amended in October 1988 and as per this new amendment the committee need to be constituted in consultation with local villagers and the non-official members of the Forest Protection Committee should be selected by convening a meeting of the villagers concerned. However, the sarpanch of the gram panchayat and the local Forester continued to be the chairman and the convener of the committee respectively. By another Resolution in December 1990, the Protected Forests were also included for assignment to the adjoining villages.

It can be pointed out from the review of Government attempts to involve local people in forest management in the State that the endeavour to give people access over the forest resource and a voice in management had come in a phased manner, depending upon the legal classification of the forest. One of the major drawbacks of these policies was that it made the Forest Protection Committees of the villages a political body by making the president of the gram panchayat its chairman. Several intricacies were overlooked by making the panchayat president as the head of the village Forest Protection Committee. While the gram panchayat was a political unit, which constituted more than one village, Forest Protection Committees were confined


to particular villages and/or in certain cases to a segment of a village. In actual practice, one sarpanch was to take care of several Forest Protection Committees falling within his/her panchayat, which obviously was a difficult task. Besides, the sarpanch coming from a different village might not be truly committed to the cause of forest protection for an alien village.

4.2.2. c) Evolution of JFM in Orissa

At the national level, the ground for Joint Forest Management was prepared by the New National Forest Policy, 1988, which emphasised creating a massive people’s movement with involvement of women for achieving its objectives. On June 1, 1990, the Government of India adopted a National Joint Forest Management Resolution, which set guidelines for partnership between local communities and the State Forest Department for the protection and management of State owned forests through Forest Protection Committees.

In response to the Government of India Resolution and to make the involvement of local people in forest protection more effective and transparent, the Government of Orissa issued a Resolution29 to implement the Joint Forest Management programme in the State. This marked the beginning of JFM as is understood today, in Orissa. It dealt with exhaustively the involvement of the local community in the protection of adjoining forests, formation of Vana Samrakshana Committees, and the constitution, function, duties and responsibilities of such committees. It also provided for the constitution of a State-level steering committee chaired by the Minister of Forest to monitor and guide the implementation of this scheme.

The Joint Forest Management Resolution of the Government of Orissa entrusts the gram panchayat with the duty of convening a general meeting of all adults living in the selected village on the suggestion of the D.F.O/Range Officer/Forester, where the forest official/s will explain the scheme of Joint Forest Management to the villagers. Based on the response, motivation and willingness of the villagers and after taking account of other related factors facilitating the community protection of the

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forest, the D.F.O will recommend the establishment of Vana Samrakshana Samiti (VSS) of the village. According to the resolution, the VSS should include two adults, including a woman member of every household living in the village as its members.

Under this new Joint Management Plan, the protection and management responsibility of the forest patch is wholly entrusted to the members of the forest protection committee. It shall be the duty of the members to prevent forest offences and pass on relevant information and intelligence in this regard to the forest department officials. The management activities of the forest are to be carried out by the executive committee of the VSS. Each VSS should have its own executive committee comprising ten to fifteen members, which should include Ward Members representing the village, six to eight representatives selected/elected by the villagers, the Forester and Forest Guard concerned, and nominee of an NGO functioning in the local area to be selected by the D.F.O. The Forester of the locality concerned and the Naib Sarpanch (Vice-President of the gram panchayat) will be the convener and chairperson of the executive committee respectively. It is stated in the Joint Management Plan that usufructs like leaves, fodder, grass, thatch grass, broom grass, thorny fencing materials, brushwood and fallen lops and tops and twigs used as fuelwood shall be available to the members of the VSS free of cost. It shall be the duty of the executive committee of the VSS to ensure equal distribution of all intermediate yields in the shape of small wood poles, firewood, etc., as may be obtained in periodical clearance of the forest. However, the timbers and poles, as may be obtained from a major harvest or final felling, shall be shared between the Forest Department and the VSS in equal shares.

4.2.3. Analysis of Forest Policies in Orissa
The forest policies of the country since independence can be summarised in three points, which also influence the forest management practices in Orissa. First, during the early colonial period, there was large-scale deforestation, which later led to the introduction of scientific management of forests in India and the first ever Indian Forest Act, 1865. Though specific data for such a period are not available for Orissa, the situation of the country was no different from that of Orissa at that time. Second, during the late colonial and early independence period, the State strengthened its monopoly over the forests and adopted the policy of conservation, whereby more and
more forestland was put under the category of 'Reserved Forest', and access to such forests was denied to common people. Third, being unsuccessful in its attempts to increase the forest cover by creating a monopoly over it, the State adopted 'participatory policies', and is making efforts to involve people in the protection and management of forests.

The scientific management of Orissa's forests has had significant consequences for the lives of those who depend upon forests for their daily livelihood as well as the physical area of the forest itself. The State's monopoly over forest resources by putting more forestland under 'Reserved' categories has deprived a large number of people of the usufruct rights and concessions enjoyed before. It was perceived that people's interference inside the forest area, even if for their livelihood, would result in a decrease in forest resources. Thus, the policy of the state monopoly was adopted for greater enhancement of forest resources itself. But an analysis of the physical area of the forests after independence reveals that deforestation has continued in spite of tough policies to keep the local people away from the forests.

**Table 4.2: Physical Area of the Forest in Orissa after Independence (Area in Sq. Kms.)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Reserved Forest</th>
<th>Demarcated Protected Forest</th>
<th>Un-demarcated Protected Forest</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>3,615.6</td>
<td>541.3</td>
<td>3,286.7</td>
<td>7,443.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>24,979</td>
<td>538</td>
<td>39,973</td>
<td>65,490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>24,166</td>
<td>562</td>
<td>42,733</td>
<td>67,461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>60,223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>28,311</td>
<td>19,625</td>
<td>7,848</td>
<td>55,784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>27,087</td>
<td>16,133</td>
<td>13,967</td>
<td>57,167</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: RCDC, 1996 & CPSW, 1994*

It can be pointed out from Table 4.2 that the forest area had suddenly increased soon after independence from 7,443.6 sq. km. in 1948 to 65,490 sq. km. in 1959 and on till 1969. The inclusion of ex-zamindari and ex-princely forest into the State of Orissa might be cited as two major factors behind such an increase in forest area after independence. In the year 1960–61, ex-zamindari forests of 1,500 sq. km., which were initially under the control of the State revenue department, were transferred to the State forest department (CPSW, 1994: 32). From 1969 till 1985, the
physical area of the forest had decreased, increasing slightly in 1993. Despite this total decrease in forest cover, there has been an increase in forest area in the ‘reserved’ category from 24,166 sq. km. in 1969 to 28,311 sq. km. in 1985. This clearly reveals that the Government policy of putting more forest areas in the ‘reserved’ category, thereby denying local people of access to the forest did not serve the desired result of increasing forest cover in the State. This calls for an analysis of the cause of deforestation in the State elsewhere rather than putting the blame on the forest-dependent communities. Deforestation in the State from independence till 1985 amounted to 2,073.97 sq. km. according to forest department records, out of which 542.79 sq. km. were reserved forests, 308.64 sq. km. were demarcated protected forests and 1,222.54 sq. km. were un-demarcated protected forests (see, Table 4.3). These included multipurpose river valley projects and subsequent resettlement of displaced people besides several other purposes like railways, roads, minor irrigation projects, etc.

Table 4.3: Deforestation in Orissa from 1947 to 1985 (Area in sq. kms.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose of Deforestation</th>
<th>Reserved Forests</th>
<th>Demarcated Protected Forests</th>
<th>Un-demarcated Protected Forests</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>River valley projects and resettlement of displaced people</td>
<td>397.52</td>
<td>288.08</td>
<td>1,170.16</td>
<td>1,855.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial purposes</td>
<td>31.49</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>34.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital conservation</td>
<td>7.79</td>
<td>13.14</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railways</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor irrigation projects</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>11.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public purposes</td>
<td>30.57</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>49.47</td>
<td>80.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous purposes</td>
<td>39.79</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>46.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>542.79</td>
<td>308.64</td>
<td>1,222.54</td>
<td>2,073.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Status of Orissa's Environment, 1994, CPSW, Bhubaneswar.*

Of the total area deforested, 1,855.76 sq. km. (89.47 per cent) was attributed to river valley projects as per Government records. However, in real practice, once a river valley project came up, it not only submerged a few sq. km. of forests, but caused massive deforestation in its periphery. For instance, during 1930 – 75, more than 45 per cent of the forests were lost around Sambalpur and Jharsuguda in a radius
of 20 miles because of the Hirakud Dam Project (CPSW, 1994: 46). Table 4.4 reveals the actual land area lost due to various multipurpose river valley projects in Orissa.

Table 4.4: Land Degradation in the Peripheries of Reservoirs of Multipurpose River Valley Projects in Orissa between 1972 and 82 (Area in sq. kms.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Project</th>
<th>Open Degraded Forest</th>
<th>Closed Forest</th>
<th>Total Forest Lost</th>
<th>Area without Forest Vegetation</th>
<th>Total Area Lost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hirakud</td>
<td>765</td>
<td>1,290</td>
<td>2,055</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>2,094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machkund</td>
<td>988</td>
<td>1,491</td>
<td>2,479</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>2,540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rengali</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>1,143</td>
<td>1,612</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>1,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salandi</td>
<td>722</td>
<td>1,930</td>
<td>2,652</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>2,716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,944</td>
<td>5,854</td>
<td>8,798</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>9,050</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Diversion of forest areas for non-forest purposes, including agriculture, constituted another potential source of deforestation in Orissa. During 1972, the Orissa Government decided to provide land for agriculture to the landless poor in the name of 'Land Distribution Fair'. As a result, the Tehsildars not only distributed land from Un-demarcated Protected Forests to the landless, but also regularised all sorts of earlier encroachments over these lands (RCDC, 1996: 16).

The Government polices concerning forestry, whether regulatory in the initial years of independence or participatory since the mid-1980s', have always targeted increased forest cover in terms of more trees. This emphasis on quantity of forest cover has neglected the issue of quality of our forests. The National Forest Policy of 1988 also envisaged a target of 33 per cent of national forest cover. From the State’s point of view increased forest cover had always been the end (motive) of the forest department, and the community’s involvement in forestry activities either through Social Forestry Projects or JFM had been perceived as a means to that end. A quick look at the physical status of the forest cover in Orissa during 1981 – 83 and 1993 – 95 reveals that though the total forest cover had not changed as per the forest department records, there was a substantial decrease in the quality of the forest (see,

30 Through Resolution No.16419-10F – M – 149/72 (FAH Dt. 16 – 12 – 72).
Table 4.5). However, the recent World Bank study (Kumar et al. 1999) emphasised quality of our forests, and given priority to the problem of ‘degradation’ rather than to that of ‘deforestation’.

Table 4.5: Quality of the Forest Cover in Orissa, 1981 – 83 and 1993 – 95 (Area in sq. kms)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Dense Forest (40% or More Crown cover)</th>
<th>Open Forest (10 – 40 % Crown Cover)</th>
<th>Total Forest Land</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981–83</td>
<td>28,573</td>
<td>24,391</td>
<td>59,555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993–95</td>
<td>26,101</td>
<td>20,629</td>
<td>59,555</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Sundar et al., 2001: 17

The continuous decrease in forest cover of the State since 1969 has been of great concern from the policy perspective; and has resulted in the enactment of several policy resolutions restricting the access of local people to the forests. An analysis of the Forest Policies in the State of Orissa reveals that merely blaming the people for deforestation and thereby gradually decreasing their use rights over the resource had not resulted in increased forest cover. With the failure of the Government mechanism to protect its forest resources, on the one hand, and the growing demand from the local people for greater rights over the resource, on the other, and above all with the paradigm shift in academia over the discourses of development and participation, the focus of the forest management shifted from a kind of regulatory administration to a participatory one, involving local people in management.

A striking feature of forestry activities in Orissa is that the Government’s policy of involving communities in protection and management of forests has come much later than the actual efforts by the communities themselves. The traditional village governance system of forest resources both by tribal and non-tribal communities had existed strongly in Orissa much before the enactment of State

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31 The total forestland in this table also includes degraded forests with less than 10 per cent crown cover and thus is more than the added forest area of dense and open forests.

32 For a detailed discussion of ‘quantity vs. quality’ debate in Indian forestry, see, Sundar et al., 2001:15 – 20.
policies of involving them in forest management. Unlike in other States where policies were framed to involve local people in forest management, forest policies in Orissa may be viewed as an attempt to give an official shape to the efforts of the local people to protect their forest and to bring them into an umbrella policy of the state government. As per an estimate, by the late 1980s, there were 3,000 – 4,000 village communities protecting 10 per cent of Orissa's forest area (Kant, 1990 in Poffenberger and McGean, 1996: 34). By the end of 1993, with the State Government order of JFM, the area under community protection in Orissa had increased to 27 per cent (Poffenberger and McGean, 1996: 34 – 5).

Several reasons are cited for such community control of forests in the State of Orissa. Increasing resource scarcity due to deforestation and degradation of local forestland and the resulting livelihood insecurity is identified as a dominant reason for community's involvement in forest protection in Orissa (cf Poffenberger et al. 1996). Inadequate livelihood alternatives due to limited urbanisation and industrialisation in the State are also cited as reasons for compelling villagers to preserve their local resources for livelihood security (Raju et al. 1993; cited in Sundar et al. 2001: 79).

The existence of village-level local institutions, often parallel to gram panchayats, has also played a crucial role in community control of forest resources in Orissa. Sashi Kant observes that (1990) the formation of bigger gram panchayats, which in some cases spanned several villages, had created a space for local organisations at the community level to retain their functions of fulfilling the needs of single communities in a less politicised manner. While the panchayats functioned as political institutions of the locality with active party politics, village-level institutions were engaged in activities like management of village ponds, temples, schools and other common resources. Such institutions in many cases included traditional village organisations with the village head as its leader, emerging youth clubs, women's organisations, etc.

Sundar et al. (2001), from their study of JFM in four Indian States including Orissa, also point out the important role played by village youth clubs in the protection of local forest resources in Sambalpur and Koraput districts of Orissa. Complementary to these village-level organisations, several NGOs at the State level
have also tried to promote participatory forestry at the community level. Several State-level NGOs like Regional Cooperation and Development Council (RCDC), Vasundhara, Bruksha O Jeevara Bandhu Parishad (BOJBP) have created mass campaigns for community forestry and have facilitated the formation of federation of Village Forest Protection Committees at the State level (see, Mohapatra, 1999).

State intervention in forestry activities starting from colonial days, which threatened the livelihood security of the local people dependent upon forests, is also treated as a reason for community’s involvement in it in certain cases. A few studies outside the state of Orissa are worth mentioning here. Agrawal (2000) from his study of Van Panchayats in Kumaon, Uttar Pradesh, states that sustained protest by the communities against the State’s monopoly of forest resources resulted in the origin of the community’s involvement in forest protection. ‘The incessant, often violent, protests forced the then British Government to appoint the Kumaon Forest Grievances Committee to look into the local disaffection’, which, in turn, recommended the formation of Forest Councils and empowering them to control their local forests (Agrawal, 2000: 60).\footnote{See (Guha, 1989: chapter 4 and 5) for a detailed description of such protests against the State’s monopoly over the forest resources in Tehri Garwal area of Uttar Pradesh.} In another context, Sivaramakrishna (1999) mentions that in colonial west-Bengal there were large forested areas, which had remained beyond the direct control of colonial Government — ‘zones of anomaly’ as he phrases it (1999: 30) — and it was these areas in which community forest management revived. Contrary to this, Sundar \textit{et al.} (2001: 31) argue that community management of forest resources had not been ‘a sphere of non-intervention, but a different type of intervention’. Now, reverting to the discussion in the context of Orissa, it can be observed that the different management strategies to Reserved Forests and Protected Forests by the Government authorities also contributed to some extent to the resurgence of community forestry in Orissa. While the Reserved Forests are directly controlled and managed by the Forest Department of the State, Forest Department has limited control over Protected Forests, since the ownership of the land lies with the Revenue Department. Saxena (1997: 60) argues that this ‘ambiguous status of the protected forests’ had created a space for community initiatives in forestry. The limited control of the Forest Department over Protected Forests is further revealed by the fact that in some of the Protected Forests in Orissa, ‘villagers had even the rights
to cultivate (with permission from the revenue department), in addition to access to forest produce' (Orissa Forest Enquiry Committee, 1959; cited in Sundar et al. 2001: 80).\textsuperscript{34} Weak control and poor management practices by the forest department is also cited as a reason by Saxena (1997) for community initiatives in the Reserved Forests of Orissa.

It is very difficult, however, to isolate any particular reason for the emergence of community’s involvement in forestry activities in Orissa and its quick spread even before the enactment of State policy resolutions in this regard. Degradation of local forest resources and the consequent livelihood insecurities because of it, existence of prior institutional arrangements at the community level to look after common village affairs, loose and complex forest rules, active efforts by several leading NGOs, etc., are among several reasons for the rapid spread of community’s involvement in forest protection in Orissa. Once a village community assumes the responsibility of forest protection, its demonstration effects have often led to similar initiatives by the neighbouring villages, which, in turn, had led to the quick spread of community protection. Whatever be the reasons for community protection, it is an accepted fact that in Orissa, the Forest Department has played a limited role in involving people in forest protection and management, even long after the passing of the State resolution concerning JFM. Owing to several factors like this, people’s involvement in forest protection in Orissa is more appropriately termed ‘Community Forest Management’ (CFM) or ‘Community Forestry’ (CF) than ‘Joint Forest Management’.\textsuperscript{35}

4.2.4. Functioning of JFM in Orissa
The working of the JFM in Orissa can be best understood, when viewed from an institutional perspective. Joint Forest Management is an institutional alternative to involve the local communities in the protection and management activities of the forest resource. In order to understand the functioning of such institutions in Orissa, we have to look at the overall institutional arrangements that exists in different parts of Orissa to involve people in protection and management activities of the forests.

\textsuperscript{34} It should be mentioned here that Protected Forests in Orissa constitute 52.6 per cent of the total forest cover of the State compared with the all India figure of 29.2 per cent (Sundar et al. 2001: 80).

\textsuperscript{35} For details regarding Community Forest Management Practices in Orissa, see, Human and Pattanaik, 2000; Sundar et al. 2001.
4.2.4. a) The JFM – CFM Ambiguity

It is worth mentioning that people’s involvement in forest protection and management in Orissa is an age-old phenomenon. In other words, JFM is not the only institution to involve local people in forestry activities. In fact, initiatives for people’s involvement in forestry have begun in the state much earlier to the formal announcement of such policies by the government. Several village communities in Orissa have been protecting the forest attached to their village on their own initiatives for long. There are also instances of village institutions with more than century’s old history of forest protection in Orissa (see, Sundar et. al., 1996).

Over the years, three different types of community institutions have emerged to give shape to people’s initiatives in forestry activities. The first type of institution has evolved out of people’s initiatives where the community manages the forest on its own without any coordination with the State or voluntary organisations. Though there is no comprehensive information about this practice of Community Forest Management (CFM) in the State, an NGO report is, perhaps, the only systematic attempt to count these cases. It says, 5,402 villages are protecting some 309,750 hectares of forest area in fifteen out of thirty districts of Orissa (for details, see Down to Earth, Vol. 8, No. 9).

The second type of institution developed as a result of the Social Forestry Project of the Government of Orissa, where several villages are involved in plantation activities in both forest and non-forest areas. As per the available data, 9,055 Village Forest Protection Committees are protecting some 78,646 hectares of land, including village wastelands, under Social Forestry Project in fifteen districts of Orissa (for details, see, Ori-Forest, Jan. – March, 1997).

The third type of institution emerged under the JFM programme in which both the village community and the Forest Department share the responsibility of forest protection and management. There are some 6,768 Vana Samrakshana Samitis protecting 645,176.64 hectares of forests as of April 1, 1999.
Out of these three institutions, the former and the latter are engaged in involving local people in the management of forests in forest-fringed villages, and the institutions have emerged out of social forestry programme in developing forests in village wastelands or village commons. The existence of these three types of institutions often creates confusions and the state government is yet to prioritise these three. Further, most of these institutions only exist in pen and paper without functioning properly. Even in the JFM programme, the state Forest Department, in order to increase the number of committees, formed VSSs in several villages. But it hardly paid any attention whether the committees were functioning or not. For several committees the department did not even sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), and the number of committees, where the Micro Plan for JFM was prepared was even much lower. As the government record shows, while the total number of JFM committees formed in Orissa was 6,768 as of April 1, 1999, the number of committees where the Micro Plan was prepared for joint management was just 172 (see, Table 4.6). It clearly indicates the seriousness of the state Forest Department towards the implementation and sharing joint responsibility with the village communities in protection and management of local forest resources. Further, no serious attempt has been made so far by the state government to coordinate all the three types of institutions that are engaged in a common endeavour of involving rural communities in forest conservation.
### Table 4.6: Formation and Working of Vana Samrakshyana Samiti in Orissa
(As on April 1, 1999)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL. No.</th>
<th>Name of the Division</th>
<th>No. of VSS formed</th>
<th>Area assigned for protection (in Hect.)</th>
<th>No. of VSS where Executive Committee formed</th>
<th>No. of VSS where MoU signed</th>
<th>No. of VSS where Micro Plan prepared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Angul</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>37,586.18</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Athagarh</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>7,349.59</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Athamallik</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>7,017.36</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Dhenkanal</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>13,774.98</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Keonjhar</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>16,322.14</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Baliguda</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>10,378.00</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Boudh</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>52,222.60</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Ghumusur (N)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Ghumusur (S)</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>13,489.30</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Nayagarh</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Parlakhemundi</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>46,639.00</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Phulbani</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>29,504.04</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Puri</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5,580.00</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Bolangir</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>36,882.31</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Jeypore</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>27,628.24</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Kalahandi</td>
<td>669</td>
<td>52,840.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Khariar</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>21,268.00</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Nabarangpur</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>31,995.06</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Rayagada</td>
<td>748</td>
<td>48,133.55</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Badarama</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Bamra</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>25,664.26</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Bonai</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>8,496.45</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Deogarh</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>11,633.44</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Rairakhol</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>9,676.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Sambalpur</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>58,941.00</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Sundargarh</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>46,881.57</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Baripada</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>21,822.37</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Karanjia</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2164.20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>6768</td>
<td>645,176.64</td>
<td>3651</td>
<td>2618</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Forest Department, Government of Orissa*

#### 4.2.4. b) The Problem of Boundary

One of the major shortcomings of JFM in the state of Orissa, or for that matter in India, is the conflict arising from boundary issues. Resolution of conflicts that arise in the process of management is the major challenge before any community protecting forests. Sarin (1996) identifies four potential sources of conflict in community based forest management, i.e. first, conflict among the community institution's members;
second, conflict with neighbouring non-members; third, conflict with other external commercial and industrial agents; and finally, conflict with the State, primarily with the Forest Department. A Forest Protection Committee under the JFM programme may be efficient enough to resolve the conflicts arising among its own members by frequent negotiations and meetings among themselves. However, conflict with the neighbouring villages poses a serious challenge for a community protecting forests though Joint Forest Management plans. Conflict with neighbouring villagers arises mainly because of the weak and controversial legal and organisational framework of the State Joint Forest Management policy. In many cases, communities living in distant areas also have use rights on the forest over generations. When the same forest patch is given to the adjacent community for protection according to the Joint Forest Management programme, the rights of the community that was earlier dependent upon the forest for its livelihood get curtailed, as it does not share the protection responsibility. The protecting community usually never allows other communities to access its patch of forests. Thus, here arises a conflict between the community that protects the forest and other communities that do not protect it but depend upon it for their livelihood.36

4.2.4. c) The Legal Challenges in JFM
Conflict over boundaries, as discussed above, may chiefly be attributed to the ambiguous legal status of the village forest protection committees under JFM. The State Government resolution declares the Vana Samrakshana Samitis only as functional groups. However, these committees have no legal or statutory ground, and thus, it becomes difficult for them to manage resources on a long-term basis. Though the 2000 JFM resolution of Government of India spells out the legal backup of the Vana Samrakshana Samitis, the details have not been worked out in the State. Thus, whenever a forest protection committee catches a forest offence, it has to be handed over either to the police or to the Forest Department. The forest protection committees, as formed under the state government JFM resolution, do not have any power to solve the case at their level. Moreover, if a protection committee awards punishment to anyone on this issue of forest offence, it can be challenged in a court of law, as the committee does not have any legal power in this regard.

36 See, Rout, 2003 for a detailed case study of a boundary conflict in JFM between two neighbouring communities in the state of Orissa.
4.2.4 d) Problem of Attitude in JFM

The problem of attitude, especially of the Foresters, presses another challenge to the working of Joint Forest Management in the state of Orissa. The authoritarian attitude of forest bureaucracy finds no place in the Joint Forest Management agreement. The foresters have to give up their narrow attitude and share the responsibility of management with the people. The Arabari experiment in West Bengal became successful only because of progressive bureaucracy. The forest officials should not think that the forest area belongs to them and that people have no business in it. The Forest Department has its own style of functioning and it has to be satisfied before it signs the JFM agreement. Such an antipathy towards the capability of the people to protect the forest and to the process of involvement of local people in forest management on the part of forest department officials often poses a real challenge for the success of Joint Forest Management in the State.

To conclude, the success of any co-management regime depends upon the genuine participation of its stakeholders. Both the partners in JFM, the local community and the Forest Department or the State need to work together for the success of the programme. Challenges in JFM can emerge from both sides. If the Forest Department does not become serious in the agreement, people will gradually lose interest in forest protection. The opposite also holds true in many cases. The major thrust of ‘Joint Forest Management’ lies in its ‘jointness’ or the developing partnership between community and forest department on equal terms, which suffers the most in the case of Orissa.\(^\text{37}\) Since several institutions that have emerged in different periods are in existence for community’s involvement in forest protection, and Government’s role in establishment and functioning of these institutions has been limited, a healthy partnership on equal terms between communities and forest department has become a misnomer in the context of Orissa. It is, of course, true that unlike several other States like Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, where the programme is being implemented with heavy outside funding, JFM in Orissa has been implemented with State Government funds. There has not been any sincere attempt by the State forest department to implement JFM in the true sense of the term. Moreover,

\(^{37}\) For a critique of ‘jointness’ in Joint Forest Management, see, Lele, 1998; Sundar, 2000; Sundar et al., 2001.
the recent Supreme Court orders concerning eviction from forest areas and formation of Central Empowerment Committees to look after these issues has put a question mark on the Government’s attitude towards real participatory forestry involving forest-dependent communities. Besides, several communities engaged in forest protection in Orissa also do not want to come under the State JFM programme, since they have to share the woodlots, which they have created and maintained out of their own efforts since long (see, Mahapatra, 1999). Thus, in such a context, what is required is commitment and trust on the part of both the partners of JFM, i.e., communities and forest department to make the JFM a truly participatory programme in the State.