

Joint Forest Management

- 1) The Joint Forest Management (JFM) is the generic term in India for partnership in forest management involving the state forest department and the local communities. The local village committees and the forest department enter into an MoU to manage the forest area jointly with forest department and are entitled to get usufructs benefits from the forest area managed under JFM.
- 2) JFM is a participatory approach in forest management as envisaged in the National Forest policy of 1988 for creating a massive people's movement for the protection and conservation of forest resources of the country through democratic governance and implementation of various schemes.
- 3) The democratic constitution of the JFM committees with the due representation to the weaker sections of the society and women strengthens the democratic decision making process. In some states like Orissa, the member secretary is also an elected representative. Further in many JFM committees the women are increasingly being elected as Chairpersons.
- 4) The nomenclature of Joint Forest Management Committees varies in different states like the Van Panchayats in Uttranchal and Vana Samrakshana Samities (VSS) in Andhra Pradesh.
- 5) The State Governments have passed their enabling resolutions based on local conditions regarding composition of the village institutions, the nature of the forest areas to be taken up under JFM, rights and responsibilities of the partners and usufructs sharing arrangements.
- 6) The report on the Status of Joint Forest Management in India as on June, 2011 by the ICFRE brought out the following:
 - a) As on March, 2011 there are 1,18,213 JFM committees across 298 States and UT of Andaman & Nicobar Islands which are managing 22.94 million ha of forests in the country.
 - b) Madhya Pradesh is having the largest number of JFMCs among all the states with 1,228 JFMCs and also the forest land being managed under JFM with 6.69 million ha.
 - c) A total of 14.5 million families are involved all over the country which includes 4.6 million Scheduled Tribe (ST) families and 2.5 million Scheduled Caste (SC) families.
- 7) Externally Aided Projects and schemes of Central and State Governments are implemented through JFM approach including the Centrally Sponsored Scheme, the National Afforestation Programme (NAP).

- 8) Recently the **concept of JFM** plus is gaining momentum by including the livelihood concerns of the communities in addition to conservation and management of forests. This concept also addresses the drivers of degradation while gainfully providing employment to the people.

- 9) The **approach has also been envisaged in the recently launched Green India mission** which proposed to increase quality of forest cover in 5 million ha and increase in forest cover in another 5 million ha. The JFMCs is one of the overarching institutions in the implementation of the scheme together with other institutions especially in non forest areas. The reform agenda in GIM implementation has also brought out further strengthening of JFMCs by **revamping** them as **bodies of Gram Sabha**.