

## Ecological and Economical Indicators of Successful Community Based Forest Management: A Case of Lowland Community Forestry in Nepal

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**Abstract :** The Community-Based Forest Management (CBFM) approach is often glorified as the best forest management alternatives in the developing countries. However, how the approach has been understood by the local user households, who implement it is remained unanswered for many planners, policy makers, and sometimes researcher as well. The study attempts to assess the understanding of ecology and economics of CBFM in Nepal, where community forest program has been implemented since the 1970s. In order to understand the impacts of the program, eight criteria and sixteen indicators for ecological conservation and similarly same number of criteria and indicators for socio-economic impacts of the program were designed and compared between before and after the program implementation. The community forestry program has positive effects in forest ecology conservation and at the same time rural livelihood improvement of local people. The study revealed that collective understanding of forest ecology and economics leads the CBFM approach towards the sustainability of the program in a win-win situation. The recommendations of the study are expected to be useful to natural resource managers, planners, and policy makers.

**Keywords :** community, forest management, ecology, economics, Nepal

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