

Forest Policy and Its Implications on Private Forestry Development: A Case Study in Rautahat District, Nepal

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Abstract : Community forestry in Nepal has got disproportionately high level of support from government and other actors in forestry sector. Even though master plan for forestry sector (1989) has highlighted community and private forestry as one component, the government policies and other intervention deliberately left out private forestry in its structure and programs. The study aimed at providing the pathway for formulating appropriate policies to address need of different kind of forest management regimes in Rautahat district, Nepal. The key areas the research focused were assessment of current status of private forestry, community forest users' understanding on private forestry; criteria for choosing species of private forestry and factors affecting establishment of private forestry in the area. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected employing questionnaire survey, rapid forest assessment and key informant interview. The study found out that forest policies are imposed due to intense pressure of exogenous forces than due to endogenous demand. Most of the local people opine that their traditional knowledge and skills are not sufficient for private forestry and hence need training on the matter. Likewise, local use, market value and rotation dictate the choice of species for plantation in private forests. Currently district forest office is the only government institution working in the area of private forestry all other governmental and non-governmental organizations have condoned. private forestry. Similarly, only permanent settlers in the area are found to establish private forests other forest users such as migrants and forest encroachers follow opportunistic behavior to meet their forest product need from community and national forests. In this regard, the study recommends taking appropriate step to support other forest management system including private forestry provide community forestry the benefits of competition as suggested by Darwin in 18th century, one and half century back and to help alleviate poverty by channelizing benefits to household level.

Keywords : community forest, forest management, poverty, private forest, users' group

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