

Management of Forest Fire through Community Forestry: Case of Madhya Pradesh

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Worldwide there has been increased concern towards forest fire. These forest fires have caused large-scale human suffering and irreparable damage to biodiversity. India is no exception to forest fires. Forest fires are one of the major causes of degradation of country's forest. In India, about 90% of the forest fires are due to humans. The main cause of forest fires are: use of fire during collection of non-timber forest products (NTFPs) such as tendu leaves, mahua flower and honey collection and to make way or for getting a better yield of fodder etc. Madhya Pradesh is one of the largest Indian state in area having a population of 66 million people. The forest accounts 35% of the states geographical area. The forests of the state possess unique biodiversity. It is a fact that along with the various factors, forest fire is one of the causes of degradation of forest. Joint Forest Management committees have been formed at the village level to involve people in forest protection and conservation. These committees have been given responsibilities to protect forest from fire. There are no studies to suggest how formation of JFM committees has helped in creating community support in fire management. A study was conducted in East Mandla division of Madhya Pradesh to:

- Identify and analyze the underlying causes of forest fire in the study area and the technical and organizational capacities of community in relation to management of forest fire;
- Examine whether forest protection committees constituted under JFM facilitated the forest fire management.