

Country: India

Focus of case study: Community Forest Management

Summary: Erratic rainfall in the Himalayas causes soil erosion and damage to natural resources and agricultural land. Some communities in the in the Himalayas protect against soil erosion by managing small wood lots. Wood lots are either government owned, private, or communal and are important an important source of livelihood for rural villagers. Wood lots can provide a community with food, fuel wood and non-timber forest products than can be sold in the market.

Co-management of small forest resources in the Himalayas provides for the protection of the forests and benefit of rural villagers. Sacred wood lots are a traditional practice in which an entire forest or small wood lot is protected in the name of a village deity. No one is allowed to harvest timber and a perennial water source is managed either in the forest or near it, for common use by the village for drinking purposes. Other wood lots are government owned and managed by the villagers as common properties. These forests are divided into small blocks and each block is allowed to a family for protection, management and collection of produce. Some forests are privately owned, but managed by the community. Every household in the village contributes grain or cash for the employ of a caretaker. The forest is divided into compartments and households can harvest fodder or non-timber forest products on a rotational basis.

Class of adaptation practice:
diversification, exchange

External support: none

Local rural institutions:
social/collective, private

External institutions: public, private

Capacity Building: coordination among households and organizations, ability to plan and strategize, ability to maintain operations

Source: UNFCCC Local Coping Strategies Database: “Community Forest Management in the Indian Himalayas.”