

Proceedings of the State Level NGO workshop on

Evolving Frame Work for NGO Association in APCFM (WB Project) in Future

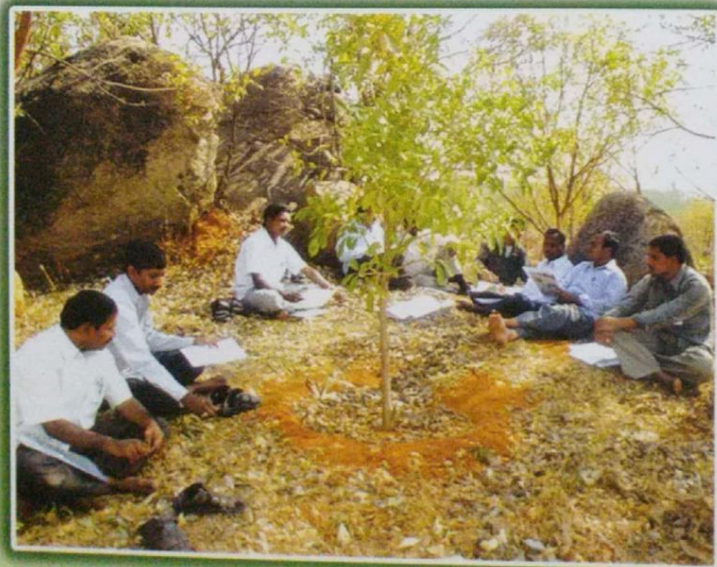
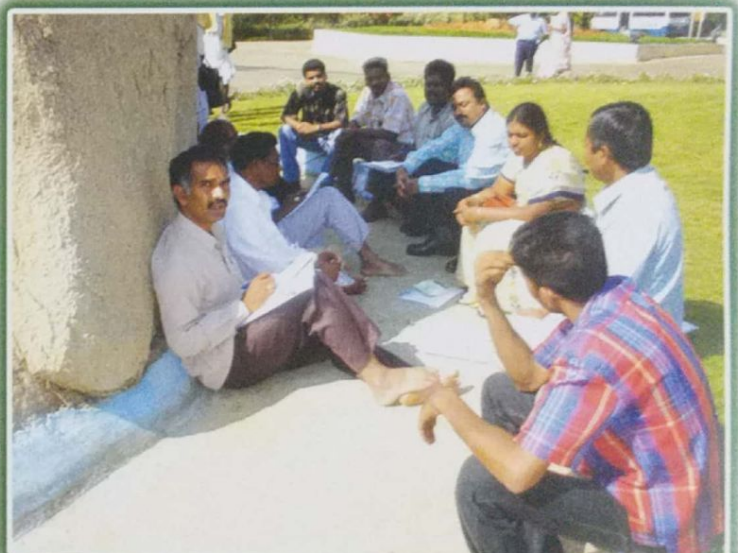
13th and 14th February 2006

Organised by

Centre for People's Forestry & AP NGO Committee on PFM

Supported by

AP Forest Academy / AP Forest Department



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CONTENTS

1. BACKGROUND	4
2. THE WORKSHOP	6
3. WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS	7
4. RESPONSE OF FOREST DEPARTMENT AND JOINT RECOMMENDATIONS	13
5. FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION	.....	15

List of Annexures

i. Excerpts from the guidelines on NGO involvement – November 2002	.....	16
ii. List of Participants	.....	22
iii. Programme Schedule	.....	25
iv. Hand outs of presentations made by CPF team	.....	27

1. BACKGROUND

The contribution made by NGOs during the JFM Phase and the subsequent lobbying for formal space for NGOs, resulted in such provision in the CFM GO (No.13) of 12th February 2002, under section XI, which is reproduced here under in italics:

"XI. Role of NGOs, NGIs, other line agencies

- a). *Associated NGOs, NGIs and other competent authorities will facilitate the functioning of the VSS and impart training to VSS on marketing and value addition of the forest produce, accounting procedures, micro-credit, conflict resolution etc".*

To operationalise the above provisions, APNGO committee on PFM in collaboration with the AP Forest Department conducted a series of regional workshops and evolved guidelines for involvement of NGOs. The same was published in November 2002 and disseminated widely among the NGOs and the field level officials of Forest Department. Sections 5,6 and 7 of these guidelines clearly defined the – Method of association, Criteria for selection of NGOs, Method of selection, Areas of association and the nature & limits of financial support. The relevant parts of the publication are reproduced and enclosed as **Annexure 1**, for ready reference.

Thus, NGO participation in the implementation of CFM was formalized since November 2002/April 2003, under an MOU with the Forest Department. The MOUs were in force for a two year period, i.e. up to March 2005.

The NGOs contribution during these two years was mostly – in taking the concept to VSSs, facilitate Micro Plan preparation, guiding them to resolve conflicts, enabling them to understand and internalize the concepts of equity and equality and build communication between the VSS members and the local field level officials etc. However, forest product based livelihood enhancement and implementation of resettlement action plan have not received adequate attention, though the ground to focus on such matters has been prepared. Both NGOs and the Forest Department felt that there is need to set direction towards livelihood enhancement. The Forest Department further expressed that, the CEWs (community extension workers) engaged either directly by the department or through the NGOs can take up the role NGOs hitherto have performed and informed NGOs accordingly. Interactions of AP NGO committee on PFM with the FD for a continued role for NGOs in the project, led to the need for redefining the role of NGOs. Thus, it has been agreed to review the performance of NGOs over the past two years and during the process communicate the need for redefining the role and/or come up with ideas for such changed roles.

As such, the AP NGO committee on PFM and the Forest Department together have facilitated the self assessment by NGOs on their performance, during the end of year 2004. The intention of this exercise was to identify the strengths and weaknesses as well as opportunities and limitations of each of the NGOs and redefine the role & training needs to suit to the overall objectives and direction of the Project.

The above process was completed and the related reports/strategies were submitted to the department by the AP NGO committee on PFM during early 2005 and the process got stuck at that stage somehow.

While AP NGO committee was in engagement with the FD on this subject, Centre for People's Forestry in consultation with the FD and GCC formulated a collaborative project titled "Adda leaf based livelihood enhancement" to be facilitated by local NGOs. Background work related to this project was initiated in November 2004 and with much persuasive effort, the project could be grounded since May 2005. Since then, about 32 NGOs of Visakhapatnam forest circle have been associated with the project. Around the same time, the Forest Department took initiative to involve NGOs to facilitate work related to RAP (resettlement action plan). Both these initiatives were in Visakhapatnam circle and NGOs from other regions started approaching both the department and CPF.

It is in this backdrop, the present workshop was planned jointly by Centre for People's Forestry and AP NGO committee on PFM, in consultation with the Forest Department.

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