Decentralised Forest Governance, Institutions and Livelihoods in Odisha: A Study of Evolution of Policy Process and Politics

Bishnu Prasad Mohapatra

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Foreword

The Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS) was established in 1980 to undertake research in the field of economic and social development in India. The centre recognises the need for an interdisciplinary approach in order to have a comprehensive study of the economic and social development issues and hence tries to involve researchers from various disciplines. The centre's focus has been on policy relevant research through empirical investigation using sound methodology. Being a Hyderabad-based think tank, it has focused on, among other things, several distinctive features of the development process in Andhra Pradesh, though its sphere of research activities has expanded to other states as well as to issues at the national level.

The Research Unit for Livelihoods and Natural Resources (RULNR) was established in the CESS in the year 2008 with financial support from Jamsetji Tata Trust. The core objectives of the RULNR are to conduct theoretical and applied research on policy-relevant issues on human livelihoods and natural resource management, especially in areas related to river basins, forest and dryland ecosystems and to provide an effective platform for debates on policy relevant aspects for academicians, policy makers, civil society organizations and development practitioners. The RULNR intends to adopt a multidisciplinary approach drawing on various disciplines including ecology, political science, and social anthropology.

The present monograph titled "Decentralised Forest Governance, Institutions and Livelihoods in Odisha: A Study of Evolution of Policy Process and Politics" by Mr. Bishnu Prasad Mohapatra undertaken under the RULNR, CESS Research Programme, attempts to understand the emergence of decentralised forest governance in the State of Odisha during the post-independence period as an outcome of policy process and politics associated within such process. Further, the study also analyses the effects of pro-poor forest polices on the livelihoods of the forest dwellers of the state while examining the policies such as Joint Forest Management(JFM), Forest Rights Act(FRA) and Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP) deregularisation policy, and above all the emergence of such policies during different periods of time.

Based on the objectives and the collected data-primary as well as secondary, the study is divided into six chapters. Chapters 1 and 2 discuss the conceptual framework and literature review while summarising various theoretical, conceptual and empirical evidences on decentralised forest governance, policy process, politics and livelihood effects of pro-poor forest policies. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 discus the core aspects of the study such as decentralised forest governance and its evolution in Odisha, along with the major forest policies in Odisha and their implications on the livelihoods and forest

politics. In Chapter 6, which is the summary and conclusion chapter, the monograph summarises as follows:....

"The forest policy process has influenced the process of forest governance at different levels and this trend also helped in strengthening the forest-governing institutions and livelihoods of the forest-fringe communities. The issue of decentralisation has evolved in the forest governance and administrative system as a result of policy process, guided by the politics in the forest policy process. Forest politics have a significant influence on the policy process and in the case of Odisha it has been found that forest politics discourses are greatly influenced by the multiple actors and institutions. The Forest policy process in the forest sector has created space for the inclusion of the voices of the different actors, particularly the non-state actors, in the policy making and implementation processes. However, it is suggested that the policy process in the forest sector should focus on the involvement of the non-state actors in a sustained way. The voice of the traditional self-governing institutions should be heard and policy making and implementation should be done accordingly. Legislative debate on forest policies and implementation should also highlight why certain policies are not able to reach the doors of the desired communities, instead of highlighting the success of such policies. Corporate lobby on the formulation and implementation of the forest policies should be managed effectively and the state should not follow the agenda of the corporate bodies while making and implementing forest policies. Similarly, policy implementation issues also need better attention. The current pattern of forest policy implementation in the state needs fresh review considering the livelihood interests of the forest dependent communities and the view of the forest protection groups should also be taken seriously in the policy process. Overlapping of the implementation of different pro-poor policies should be avoided and the state legislative assembly should play a proactive role through highlighting the deficiencies in the functioning of the forest administration in the state".

I hope that the recommendations of this study will help to strengthen the forest policy formulation and implementation mechanism in Odisha. Further, I hope that the findings of the study will enrich the forest policy study and provide new insights to the researchers, academicians, policy planners, and implementers.

S Galab

Director, CESS

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Abbreviations

BALCO	:	Bharat Aluminium Company Ltd.
BJP	:	Bharatiya Janata Party
BJD	:	Biju Janata Dal
CIFOR	:	Centre for International Forestry Research
CFM	:	Community Forest Management
CSO	:	Civil Society Organisation
CZM	:	Coastal Zone Management
DFO	:	Divisional Forest Officer
DLC	:	District Level Committee
FD	:	Forest Department
FRA	:	Forest Rights Act
FSI	:	Forest Survey of India
GOI	:	Government of India
IAY	:	Indira Awas Yojana
JBIC	:	Japan Bank for International Credit
JBP	:	*Jagannath Bana Prakalpa*
JFM	:	Joint Forest Management
KBK	:	Kalahandi-Balangir-Koraput
MDF	:	Moderately Dense Forest
NF	:	Non-Forest
NGO	:	Non-Government Organisation
NTFP	:	Non-Timber Forest Products
NTR	:	National Test Range
OF	:	Other Forest
OTELP	:	Odisha Tribal Empowerment and Livelihood Programme
PCCF	:	Principal Chief Conservator of Forest
PFM	:	Participatory Forest Management
RDF	:	Rural Development Fund
RLTAP	:	Revised Long Term Action Plan
SC	:	Scheduled Caste
SIDA	:	Swedish International Development Agency
SDLC	:	Sub-Division Level Committee
ST	:	Scheduled Tribe
VLC	:	Village Level Committee
VDF	:	Very Dense Forest
WORLP	:	Western Odisha Rural Livelihood Project

Acknowledgements

Executive Summary

Decentralised forest governance in the present context of policy discourse has received enormous attention because of the fast-changing policy regime mechanism and institutional arrangements. The policy analysis debate in the forestry sector has also received equal attention because of the renewed efforts given by the policy researchers to unravel the different stages of policy making and the process of implementation of such polices while examining the influence of political decision making (politics) and institutional contexts (polity) over such process. The dynamic nature of the informal institutions and their interfaces with the formal institutions with regard to the management of forests resources have also motivated many policy researchers to explore such dynamism and uncover the internal and external political factors involved with such process.

The present study entitled "Decentralised Forest Governance, Institutions and Livelihoods in Odisha: A Study of Evolution of Policy Process and Politics" aims to understand the dynamics of forest polices and politics of Odisha. The study also seeks to explore the policies and politics of livelihoods in the state forestry sector and tries to understand how and to what extent the political forces in the state have gradually steered their focus towards the issue of livelihoods while formulating policies for effective forest management. Forest Policies in Odisha have been viewed as an integral part of the national forest policies, despite the presence of state-specific legal and institutional provisions to manage the forest resources. Beginning from the Colonial Era, the forest policy process has paved the way for the emergence of a neo-political order and has opened the era of collaboration as well as contestation between the state and non-state actors in the state forest policy process. Policy as a political process has also received enormous attention from different corners. The debate over forest policies and forest governance and administration issues in the formal policy-making bodies such as the State Legislative Assembly has also provided a systematic trend while unraveling the issue of livelihoods. However, the policy process and legislative debates over the issue of forest governance and livelihoods have created a void with regard to focus on the livelihoods of the forest-dependent communities, despite the enactment of some path-breaking legal provisions. Nonetheless, the issues of livelihoods have drawn significant attention since the 1990s when the Participatory Forest Management regime emerged, and in 2002 when the NTFP rule was enacted; and further flourished in 2006 when the Forest Rights Act was introduced and implemented in the state.

The present study is based on the analysis of secondary data, extensive field visits and interactions with the key actors of the state forest policy making bodies. The study has particularly tried to systematically examine the legislative debates on forests issues during different periods of time (re-independence as well as post-independence periods) and how such debates focused on the issues of the livelihoods of the forest dwellers during the pre- and post-independence periods. The core part of the study has been divided into three parts based on the analytical framework described in the Chapter-2 of the monograph. However, in order to understand the body of literatures available on the issues of decentralised forest governance, policies and politics, an attempt has been made to explore these literatures and highlight the persisting potential gaps and discuss how the present research work would bridge those gaps. In the literature review part, literature on "discursive politics" has provided much emphasis and the analytical framework of politics-policies-governance derived on the basis on the gaps identified through the review of literature.

In the Chapter-3, we have tried to uncover the evolution of forest governance in the state of Odisha from the pre-independence period to the current period. The chapter describes the different legal frameworks of forests governance and administration while highlighting the process of evolution of such laws (acts and rules) and their potential contribution towards strengthening the livelihoods of the forest dwellers. Further, this chapter has also tried to highlight the importance of formal and informal institutions that play a catalytic role in addressing the issue of livelihoods of the forest-dependent communities. Further, the current pattern of decentralised forest governance and administrative arrangements are discussed in order to understand the changes in the structure and functioning of the forest administration in the state. Field evidences are also mentioned based on the collection of primary data.

In Chapter 4, an attempt has been made to discuss the livelihood issues in the forest policies in the state. In this context, we have focused on the two major national forest policies and state- based legal frameworks along with the implications of these laws on the livelihoods of the forest- fringe communities in the state. Further, different livelihood-based forest development programmes implemented by the Forest Department in the State have also been discussed in this chapter along with the current trends of such programmes.

In Chapter 5, we have focused on the forest politics in Odisha starting from the pre-independence period to the current period, highlighting the various discourses associated with such politics. Particularly the discourse of the Legislative Assembly, various governments, political parties, non-state actors, and international organisations are

described in this chapter. The chapter in the summary and conclusion section mentions "Politics in the state forest policy process have steadily emerged from the pre-independence era to the recent period, while creating scope for the involvement of multiple actors in such process". However, the involvement of non-state actors has influenced the forest policy process in a positive way though the roles of such non-state actors are not properly recognised by the government.

In Chapter-6, the monographs summarises "Forest policies in the state are guided by the existing political factors and regime politics. The politics in the state forest governance are closely linked with the design and redesign of forest policies. The legislative debates on forest related issues show a systematic shift from a corporate approach to communitarian concern, though government's stand on forest governance and policy matters justify as positive and pro-people in nature, despite the negative implications of some of the draconian legal provisions. However, the current pattern of forest policy implementation in the state needs fresh review considering the livelihood interest of the forest dependent communities. Further, the view of the forest protection groups should also be taken seriously in the policy process and overlapping in the implementation of different pro-poor policies should be avoided. The State Legislative Assembly should play a proactive role through highlighting the deficiencies in the functioning of the forest administration in the state".

Chapter-1
INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Background

The bourgeoned global interest on the study of forest policy has motivated many researchers to explore the different streams of the forest policies such as the policy process, implementation, evaluation and change. Part of this scholarly interest has been focused on understanding how, when and to what extent the policies in the forestry sector have emerged and shaped the behaviour of the different actors within a complex institutional arrangement. Such motivation has also paved the way for unraveling the process of administrative arrangements and democratic decisions in the forestry sector, since it is believed that the policy reforms and decentralised governance reforms are inter-twined and the latter is an outcome of the former. With the expansion of the scope of the policy studies in forests and the emergence of the extensive policy reforms for the management of forests and other natural resources, the focus on democratic decentralisation has received heightened importance while vigorously arguing "democratic decentralisation can improve efficiency, equity, democracy in the management of forests and sharing resources". As a result, the democratic decentralisation of forest management has become a global phenomenon with a firm belief that such process may lead to sustainable forest management and improved livelihoods. This has motivated many countries in the world to adopt the path of decentralisation viewing the fact that decentralisation can sustain the forest management and improve the livelihoods of the dependent communities.

Hence, in the case of forest, decentralisation has become an instrument that improves the institutional capability in order to achieve effective results. Further, the emergence of the global economic regime has also pushed many countries in the world to embark on the path of decentralisation with an aim to improve the governance of forests. Thus, in the forestry sector, governance issues have become a key point of discussion and policy reforms in forest governance have been manifested in several ways in the form of strengthening state economy, ensuring the livelihoods of forest-fringe communities, and taking proactive measures to alleviate poverty through a number of forestry sector development programmes.

However, Decentralisation of forest governance in the present order of world economy has also faced multiple challenges. Failure of representative democratic system, flounder of the state economy under the canopy of globalisation and the rampant exploitation of natural resources particularly forests for the different development projects have been motivated many developing and transitional countries to re-examine the existing forest management policies Further, emergence of the formal and the informal institutions to deal with forest-related issues has also drawn significant attention of the policy makers and implementers towards the need to re-look into the existing policy making frameworks for forests.

The forest policy process and the decentralisation debate have also motivated many scholars to explore the following two fundamental issues: "decentralisation for what?" and "who will mediate the space between the decentralisation and its outcome?" Hypothesising these two fundamental and complex issues, the researchers have focused on the issue of livelihoods and role of institutions, while arguing that "institutions are panacea" and can mediate the space between the decentarlisation and its outcomes, particularly the effects of decentralisation on the livelihoods of the forest-dependent communities.

There is a significant relationship between decentralisation, forest managing institutions, and livelihoods. The most fundamental aspect of Decentralisation is that it is expected to improve governance (Litvack *et.al.*1998; Francies and James 2003) which would have a positive impact on the livelihoods. Further, the increased focus given by the government agencies, donors, planners and policy researchers on the poverty of the forest dependent communities has also widened the scope to understand the interconnection between forest governance and livelihood and this has resulted in the search for the "specific path" by which decentralisation affects livelihoods, which has also motivated many scholars to delve deeper into this aspect.

The emerging issues of the functioning, role and importance of institutions, with regard to shaping policies, and linking the policy outcomes with the desired community has received widespread importance among the "institutional theorists and practitioners". This has been motivating them to understand "how effective institutional arrangements can shape forest governance effectively and affect the collective decision-making process in "the management of forests as commons". These scholarly initiatives have also contributed significantly to the study of forest as policy and the policy-livelihoods interface, unfolding the "source of dynamics" in the forest policy process and livelihood outcomes. The understanding of the dynamics of forest policy process has also further explored

within the framework of "political decision making" and "politics in decision making". The emergence of the multiple actors in the policy process and their influence on the policy decision making processes has posed a critical question regarding "whether Policy Process is a rational or a political process". As a result of this "the politics in forest policy process" has emerged as a key area in the study of forest policy and has attained enormous attention from the policy researchers and practitioner' circle. This attempt has gained further impetus due to the ongoing policy reforms and emergence of multiple actors and institutions in the process of policy-making and implementation.

India since the last two decades has also witnessed an enormous shift in the management of natural resources and policy reforms in their governance particularly in forests. The flourishing nature of the country's economic condition with ongoing debates on poverty in the forest regions has forced the Government to re-look into the existing policy mechanism taking into account the livelihoods issue of the forest dwellers. Sustainable Management of natural resources has also witnessed a paradigm shift since the 1990s[1] and in the case of forest management; decentralisation has become a significant and distinct policy, which gradually evolved in the context of emergence of the multiple formal and informal institutions. Further, Policy reforms have gradually flourished, and particularly from 1980 onwards, the forest sector in India has witnessed extensive policy reforms, which are not only state-centered but also believed to be society-centered and pro-people in nature. Devolution of the authoritative and the administrative powers to the local level institutions has become a reality, which has provided adequate strength to the local institutions to manage the forest resources in a sustainable way.

Further, the policy process in forests has attained prominence because of the increasing demand for access to and control over the forest resources by the people, as well as the emergence of formal and informal institutions. Further, continuous human development issues such as poverty and illiteracy among the forest-dependent communities also questioned the management mechanism of the forest resources and the functioning of the forest-governing institutions. According to Larson and Ribot (2007:189) forest-based marginalised communities still live in a disabling environment of policy and practice that overrides some of the positive effects of increased participation and ownership. The continuous debate on forest and forest related issues by the progressive civil society groups, academia and media has also led to the redesigning of the framework of forest policies. Thus, in India, forest policies since the last few years witnessed a paradigm shift

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[1] India witnessed the early era of participatory forest management while framing different acts and rules in order to manage the forest resources in a sustainable way by ensuring the participation of communities.

because of the emerging political complexities, dynamism in government regimes, and above all the emergence of the state and non-state actors as well as institutions which control the forest governance affairs. Such policy changes have affected the political process in the policy-making regime. It is assumed that politics in forest policy process have shifted towards a new direction because of the changing political orders and emergence of the state and non-state actors. The decentralisation of forest governance has emerged as an outcome of the policy reforms in the Indian forestry sector, which is believed to have replaced the hither to colonial approach.

In Odisha, which is bestowed with rich natural resources and has become a hub of the different forest finger communities, it is observed that the forests since time immemorial have been playing a significant role in matters of livelihood subsistence. The state has highest concentration of the forest-dependent communities and the tribal people in the state usually depend upon the forests for the sustenance of their livelihoods. However, the state's position in the formulation and implementation of the pro-poor policies provides a dissenting picture. The high degree of poverty in the forest regions and less access to basic minimum facilities by people in these regions reflects the state's failure in the formulation and implementation of forest policies. Further, the pattern of the policy formulation process in the state's forest sector which has been routed through the colonial policies of commission and omission is still controlling to the state forest policy environment.

In the case of Odisha, forest governance is believed to have coincided with the emergence of the neo-socio-political orders, emerging economic and ecological concerns, institutional arrangements and behaviour of the actors and believed to be evolved over the period of time in the tune of Decentralisation. It is observed that, most forest policies that the state experienced has their roots in the omissions or commissions of colonial rule. The urge to expand regime legitimacy and control forest resources for commercial reason forced the colonial rulers to frame and reframe forest policies. Taking advantage of the forest dwellers, the colonial power often tried to stringent their claws over the forest resources in the state as well. In the post-independence period, the State Government vigorously inherited the colonial legacy of the forest policies which is still fuelling tensions between the state and the forest dwellers with regard to the issues of right to access and control of the forest resources, despite the implementation of different pro-poor policies.

The forest policies formulated in the state during the post colonial regime can be regarded as an outcome of the decentralisation process. Starting from the colonial forest policies induced by commercialisation and territorial control of the current policy approach

based on the participatory forest Management (PFM), the forest governance in the state has witnessed a transition with regard to institutional arrangements. Sustainable forest management was embedded in policy process, which also actively persuaded the issues of inclusion and inclusive policy. It is believed that the long standing centralised approach and emergence of the free-market-oriented policy (Anderson,2006) approach has sown the seed for more decentralised institutional arrangements and emphasised on the involvement of the local actors and communities in the policy process especially at the implementation level. Furthermore, the implementation of the FRA in the state can also be considered to be a result of the pro-poor policy process, which has become a prominent source of livelihoods for the millions of forest dwellers in the state.

In this context, the present research work has tried to unfold the wide array of the policy issues in the State of Odisha. Considering the significance of the state of forest governance and the livelihoods issues of the forest-dwelling communities in the current development scenario, this study has attempted to understand the evolution of the forest policies in Odisha and the nature of discourses that are involved in the evolution of the forest policies. Further, the paper has also covered extensively the politics in the forest policy process in the state, focusing on the political decision-making process, involvement of the formal and informal institutions and implications of such policies on the process of governance. The process of political decision making involved with the forest policy process has been covered along with analysing the "legislative debates", "political parties and forests" and "politics of the non-state actors particularly the CSOs (NGOs, CBOs, forest groups and federations) and the international agencies". The study has also captured the livelihood effects of the forest policies and forest politics while providing some case studies. Both the cases of the PFM and the FRA have been covered in order to understand the policy environments and their implications on the livelihoods of the forest-dependent communities.

1.2. Problem Statement and its Relevance

Odisha since the year 1936 (when the state became a separate province) till the period of the enactment of the FRA in 2006 and the implementation of this act in the state has witnessed the enactment of a bunch of legal provisions including Acts, Rules and Government Orders with regard to the governance of forests. Particularly, the post-independence policy regime contributed immensely to the state's forest governance frameworks and the legal provisions associated with such process. The enactment of such legal and constitutional provisions has provided a unique status to the state, despite the fact that the state has a vast forested area spreading from the south to the north with a strong presence of poverty in these regions.

Forest policies in Odisha are argued to be guided by the national level policy process except for some state specific measures (such as the Odisha Village Forest Rule, 1985) that are taken to frame state specific Acts, Rules or Government Orders. However, since the forest governance and administration is also a part of the state matters, there is ample opportunity for the state to frame its own legal provisions, beyond the scope of the central legislations. In this context, Odisha government also framed its own legal provisions, though some researchers have expressed their doubts that these are not policies.

Studies with regard to the forest governance and policies such as the Forest Rights Act(FRA), Joint Forest Management(JFM), Community Forest Management(CFM), Participatory Forest Management(PFM), governance and management of the Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs),and policies of *kendu* leaves, carried out by scholars discuss both the negative as well as positive aspects of the forest policies in the state. In these studies, the scholars have been highlighted the process of implementation, effects of such policies on the livelihoods of the forest-fringe communities(Sarap,2012), historical and institutional factors associated with the emergence of such policies(Patnaik and Brahmachari, Sarin,1996), the injustice meted by the state government and forest administration to confer the rights to the people(Sarin,1996), and above all the failure of the state government to address the livelihood issues(Sarap,2012) despite the presence of the progressive legal and constitutional provisions such as the JFM Resolution, the NTFP Rule and the FRA.

The policy studies in the state forest sector fall under the line of conventional discussion of "structure-actor problematic"(ineffective implementation of policies such as JFM, FRA) or "state centric-society centric dichotomy"(CFM-JFM divide) where the real issue of livelihoods has proceeded towards a different direction, except for some studies which have tried to capture the livelihood effects(Sarap,2012) of the different forest policies and legal provisions (such as policy like JFM Resolution or FRA implementation). However, the political decision making factors associated with forest policy making and the discourses involved among the policy-actors have provided a limited space to understand the forest policy process (politics) and institutional settings (polity) in a systematic way. Further, instead of highlighting the number of policies (Rules, Acts or Government Orders) and timing of these policies (year wise analysis), it would be analytically sound and appropriate from the policy science perspective, if a study could uncover the political factors and decision-making process involved with the forest policy process in the state. Further, different scholars through their studies on forest policy and associated problems in the state have already discussed both the success as well as failure aspects, without considering the concomitant political factors, political structures, process

of decision making and above all "the politics in policy decisions" which are quite significant and needs to be uncovered in order to understand the influence of the political regime or regime politics over the forest policy process. Policy studies in the case of forests in Odisha cannot be seen as an isolated process as the political classes play a significant role in shaping policies particularly in the forest sector. Further, the emerging nature of the non-state actors and the emergence of advocacy coalition politics (Sabatier, 2007) has also enhanced the role of the non-state actors and motivated them to understand the discourses.

Based on these assumptions, this study was conducted to understand the relationship among the different forest policies, livelihoods and politics in the context of Odisha. Considering the ongoing policy process and the so called policy reforms in the era of global economic regime, realising the importance of livelihood needs of the forest-fringe communities, examining the influence of the political regimes on the forest policy process, and considering the present political system, the nature of the political institutions, the emergence of the so called para-statal institutions, the present study was designed. Based on the scope of the study and considering the title of the study, an attempt has been made to focus on the policy-process rather than on the effects of such policies, considering the post-independence policy process regime of the state as a bench mark.

1.3. Review of Literature

Over the past three decades many scholars have been focusing on their attention on the decentralised forest governance and policies, forest governance-policies and livelihoods, and decentralised forest governance-policies and the politics involved. The available literature on forest governance and policies, forest livelihoods, and politics in the forest policy have provided a wide array of the conceptual perspectives, theoretical underpinnings, and empirical evidences which has helped researchers to go deeper into the different aspects of forests. While under the conceptual part, literatures have provided rich ideas about the concept of governance, policy, livelihoods and politics with regard to forests, theoretical underpinnings have provided wide theoretical frameworks such as theories of policy process in porests (Elite Theory, Group Theory, Institutionalism, Rational Choice Theory, Political System Theory and Policy Process), theories of decentralisation (fiscal federal, public choice, public administration and public finance, political economy and social capital), Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA) and politics in policy process approach (political decision making, advocacy coalition, discourse analysis and framework). Empirical evidences have provided an understanding of the ground realities and analysis the gap between the theories and practices.

The present study has tried to capture the theories of policy process in forests and their link to the forest governance, forest livelihoods and forest politics under the literature review, while paying attention to the empirical works of different researchers in the context of *Odisha*. Starting from the conceptual discussions, the study has also tried to draw attention to the research gaps and how the present research work would bridge these gaps while focusing on the different theories and empirical works.

1.3.1. Conceptual Framework and Theoretical Narratives

1.3.1.1. Forest Governance and Decentralisation

The evolution of forest governance and emergence of decentralisation for the effective management of forests have been vigorously explored by social science researchers, while trying to understand the different aspects of the governance process and effects of decentralisation on such process. Decentralisation can be conceptualised as a "deconcentrated administrative organ for reliving administrative congregation, since over-centralised governance may not have a way to find out what needs to be done for different places, and what needs and desires of the people are to be met(Islam,2003). Decentralisation can also defined as the transfer of powers and resources in a political system in three different forms including deceoncentration or administrative decentralisation, fiscal decentralisation and devolution or political decentralisation (the World Bank, 2002). Further, decentralisation can be usually understood as a political process, where by administrative authority, public resources and responsibilities are transferred from central government agencies to lower level organs of government or to non-government bodies or private sector actors (Johnson,2003).Decentralisation can be considered as a key instrument in governance which enhances the scope for promoting people's participation, ensuring greater accountability and greater degree of transparency in the functions and institutional arrangements. However decentralisation as an instrument of effective governance and administration has not been entirely supported by the scholars, apprehending that the process may further strengthen the "regime of elite capture" in the governing institutions and resource sharing mechanism. Bose (2008) argues that "the success level of local community forest management is not an outcome of decentralisation". However, this is not enough to undermine the effect of decentralisation, as taking note from the CIFOR's perspective, Monditoka (2011) summarises that "some degree of local authority over forests is essential for democracy, grass-root development and sustainability of world's forests".

In the case of forests governance, the whole debate on the effective functioning of the forest administration is based on the two major and much debated discourses;

centralisation and decentralisation. Researchers (Litvack *et.al.*1998, Francies and James 2003) argue that the most fundamental aspect of decentralisation is that it is expected to improve governance. Assertions in favour of decentralisation of forest governance are based on its "institutional arrangements and capability to address the livelihood needs and development issues". This institutional arrangement issues are discussed several time by the researchers (Osterm et.al. 1993, Agrawal, 2007, Leftwich and Sen,2010, Bose, 2008) to understand the nature of institutions and functioning of such institutions while focusing on the different aspects of Institutions such as institutional design (Ostrom,1999), the nature of institutional mediation (Agrawal and Yadama,1997) and the necessity for broad-based participation in institutionalised governance (Ribot, 2002). However, researchers (Leftwich and Sen, 2010) believe that the success of institutions only depends on the way they are functioning and interacting with organisations and individuals, and influencing (negotiating and bargaining) policy decisions. According to Ostrom et al., (1993) the success of decentralisation is based on the nature of institutions and the kind of institutions it has been produced. These institutions may either be formal or informal, which actually work as a connecting point between the decentralisation and its outcome (for e.g. decentralisation-institution-development or decentralisation-institution-livelihoods). However there is a disagreement among the researchers as they do believe that decentralisation has potential indirect effects on livelihoods and forests, though it is hard to find any direct link. Further with regard to the role of institutions to make decentralised forest governance effective, researchers have focused on the effective integration between institutions and organisations, as Leftwich and Sen(2010) believe that institutions are not self-generating or self-sustaining and they achieve little on their own.

The emergence of decentralisation in forests with an aim to improve governance, strengthening institutions and ensure livelihoods of the forest-fringe communities has a long history of evolution. Continuous failure of the national and state governments with regard to addressing the livelihood needs of the people living in and around the forest regions, coupled with the increasing growth of poverty, hunger and associated human development issues are believed to be the main source for the stimulation of decentralised forest governance. Such evolutions are also believed to be an outcome of the policy reforms measures taken by the different governments in order to improve the system of administration for better service delivery. Researchers (Monditoka, 2011) believe that decentralisation has become a theme in forestry only since substantial political changes have taken place in many countries. Such political changes are also believed to have influenced by the ongoing policy process in forests in the different countries.

Recognising that governance problems are central to the associated forest problems, the policy makers have tried to shift their focus on the conventional aspects of forest administration such as improving forest administration and management to the relatively populist or pro-poor issues of forests governance such as "decentralised governance for improving livelihoods or eradicating poverty from the forest regions" while focusing on the appropriate policy formulation process and policy implementation. While doing so, the policy planners and implementers have either covertly or overtly laid heightened emphasis on "decentralisation" with a firm belief that "decentralisation is a means of institutionalising and scaling up community based natural resource management and conservation of such resources" (Taconi *et.al*,2006). Therefore, the much-debated aspects of decentralisation and whether decentralisation can improve forest governance and fulfill the livelihoods needs of the forest-dependent communities have provided several dimensions to the issue with a central focus on policy process. An important outcome of the decentralised governance is that it opens up the political process to make and implement more transparent and responsive public policies, as a result of a variety of new actors that motivate participation in the policy process.

Further, there is also a growing discussion on democratic decentralisation of forest management, which is conceived to be a part of decentralised forest governance. Researchers have used several connotations of decentralised forest governance such as democratic forest governance or democratisation of forest governance which are contextually similar with different narratives. While democratic forest governance has been defined as a system which is sensitive to the needs of the multiple stakeholders and particularly the forest fringe communities, democratic decentralisation of forest governance aims to improve administrative efficiency, ensuring participation in forest management, conservation and restoring ecosystem as well as protecting the rights and livelihoods of the millions who are dependant over forest. The idea of decentralisation based on democratic principles or democratisation of forest governance through the principles of accountability, transparency, participation, and equity in sharing resources are also linked to the improvement of livelihoods and the enhancement of popular participation in the management of forest resources. According to Tacconi *et.al.* (2006) the current theory and narratives state that democratic decentralisation of forest management leads to sustainable forest management and improved livelihoods .According to Larson and Ribbot (2004) democratic decentralisation can improve efficiency, equity, democracy in resource management. It is further believed that democratic decentralisation will have positive environmental outcomes by empowering the local communities (Ribot, 20002 b). The stated theory and related narrative clearly indicate that democratic

decentralisation is expected in result positive environmental outcomes. However, the effect of democratic decentralisation of forest governance has country specific and region-specific variances, as Bose (2008) mentioned that "case studies from Philippines and South Africa indicate that devolution policies have addressed equity and enhanced actor-empowerment in decision-making (Bose cited in Shackleton et.al.2002). However, the case of Latin America and Africa demonstrates that the central governments limit the ability of local authorities to exercise power (Bose, 2008. cited in Ribot *et.al* 2006; Ribot, 2007). Sarin (2003) summarises that the so called devolution policies as propagated by the government are increasingly 'decreasing space for exercising democratic control over forest management decisions, affecting adversely livelihoods.

1.3.1.2. Forest Governance and Livelihoods: The Effects of Decentralisation and Policies: Understanding the effects of decentralisation and policy process on livelihoods in the context of forests is a complex subject, since the studies shows as variety of findings. Livelihoods can be defined as a "set of activities, involving securing water, food, fodder, medicine, shelter, clothing and the capacity to acquire the above necessities working either individually or as a group by using endowments(both human and material) for meeting the requirements of the self and his/her household on a sustainable basis.(Wikipedia,2014). According to Chambers and Conway (n.d), a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living: a livelihood is sustainable which can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels in the short as well as long term. In the case of forests, livelihood issues of the forest dependent communities have been discussed several times since it is believed that forests affect the livelihoods of the forest-fringe communities in several ways. Forests provide livelihood support to a significant proportion of population ,especially the marginalised tribal and other vulnerable groups .There are an estimated 147 million people living close to officially designated forest lands in over 170,000 villages (FSI,1999) and there is a clear overlap between the forest, poverty and tribal maps of the country(Poffenberger and Mc Gean 1996).

Figure-1.1, Framework to Understand the Relationship between Decentralisation, Forests and Livelihoods
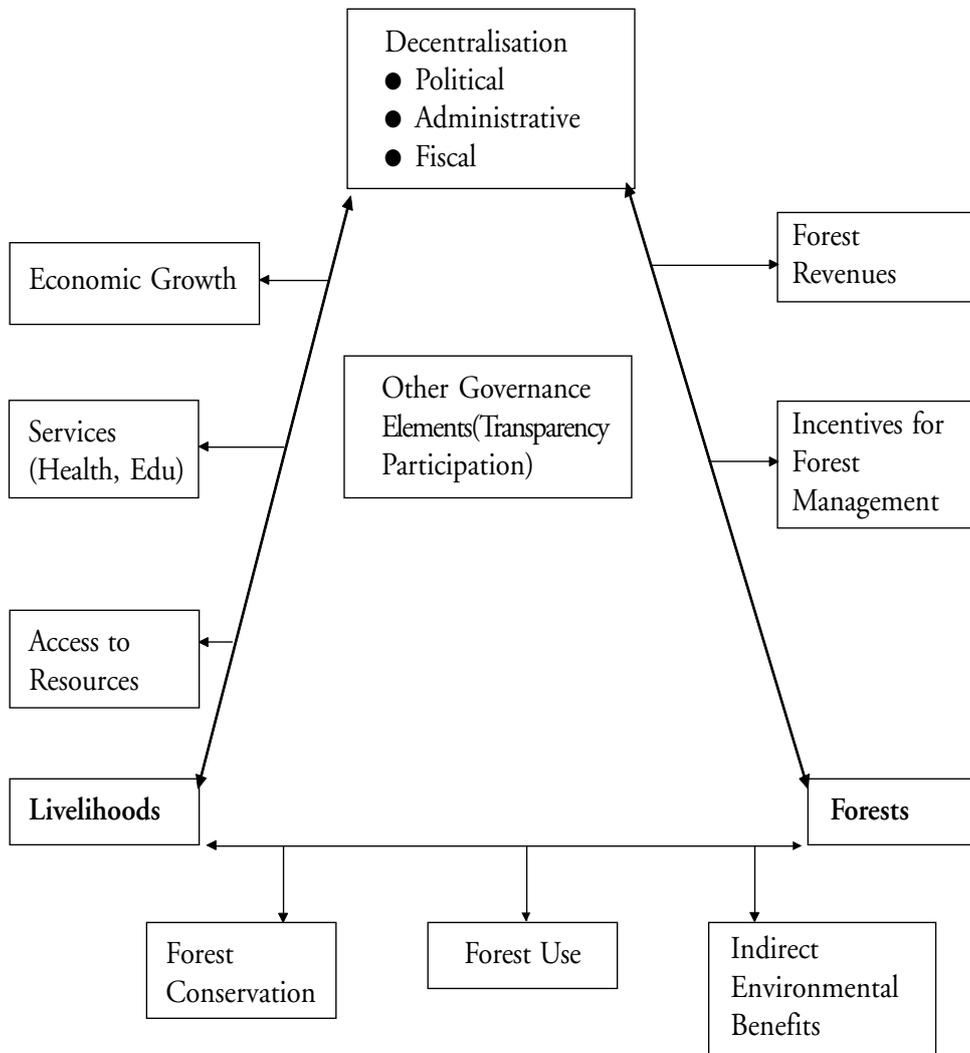
Source: Analysis of literatures and models suggested by different researchers

Since the last few decades, researchers have tested various theories to understand the relationship between the decentralised forest governance and livelihoods with regard to the formulation and implementation of pro-poor policies. The first sets of theories suggest various models to understand the relationship between decentralisation and livelihoods in general and decentralised forest governance and livelihoods in particular. Taconi et.

al(2006). summarise that "three assumptions underlie the arguments that democratic decentralisation of forest management leads to sustainable livelihoods such as decomcratic decentralisation is a means of institutionalising and scaling up community based natural resource management, Rural people benefit from forest and conserve it ,and the success of the process can be measured by the lack(or lower) of deforestation. However, they conclude that "the first two assumptions do not hold when tested with primary and secondary data and the third assumption is incorrect". Vien and Quang(n.d) in their study on "Understanding the Effects of the Forest Decentralisation Policies on Livelihoods" summarise that "no signs of any direct impact that the forest decentralisation policies have upon people's living conditions". However, in the case of Tanzania, Kajembe et.al. (n.d) summarise that decentralised forest management has positive impact on the functioning of institutions. Further, with regard to livelihoods, they summarise that "it is limited to access the firewood only and no other effects are visible".

Understanding forest policy process (policy formulation, legitimation and implementation) in the context of livelihoods has provided complex theoretical underpinnings and empirical evidences. The framework in Figure-1 has been used by different researchers to understand the complex relationship between decentralisation, forest and livelihoods".

The above framework can be considered as an appropriate framework to understand the effects of forest governance on livelihoods. However, considering the scope of the present study "we have focused more on policy process and their relationship with livelihoods presuming that policy process can improve governance of forests and better governance has positive results on the livelihoods of the forest dependent communities. Therefore we have focused on the discursive model to understand such relationships.

1.3.1.3. Theories of Policy Process and Forests Governance

Public policy is often described as a dynamic and continuous process which involves, and involves many elements (Jenkins, 1993). Understanding public policy requires an examination of the activities of the government and the bureaucracy of the state (Hill, 1993). The most enduring aspect of understanding public policy is to examine whether "the method" fully correspond to the realities of power and policy-making. According to Thomas Dey (1995) understanding public policy is a part of understanding"…. whether governments choose to do or not to do". The analysis of public policy is linked to examining the reason why certain decisions are made over others, and how, and why actors behave in the process; which are the central to the policy research. Such research exploration is otherwise known as policy process analysis or study. Policy process can be conceptualised as the means by which policy is conceived, negotiated, expressed and, perhaps, brought into law, and the procedures of the implementation and practice (Blaike

and Springate-Baginski, 2007). The policy process as a tool of policy analysis is developed to understand the different stages of how policy emerged and the enabling and disabling factors (social, political and economic) that influence such process. Jos Mooij (2003) mentioned that the study of policy process is based on empirical questions of why, how and by whom, which are key to the understanding of the policy making process and their link to implementation. Policy process is also linked to a set of logically-interlinked steps, which move from one step to another in a cycle. According to Thomas Dey (1995) there are many aspects of policy which have become the focus of analysis, including how policies are developed, how policy decisions are made, the contents of policy, and the consequences of the policy.

The recent approach to understand the policy process is largely based on understanding the politics in the policy process; since, as such is linked to the process of political decision making. The political process of policy making argues that "citizen involvement in the decision-making process enhances the acceptability of the policy and its prospects for better implementation. The involvement of intended beneficiaries in policy design and implementation results in better outcomes" (Sangita; 2008).

Policy analysis in the forests has given heightened focus to the span of increasing debates on policy making and the implementation process. Forest policy is a study of forest participants, forest policy-making processes, and actual forest policy programmes. The latter including, laws and regulations, taxation, subsidies, public ownership of forest resources, technical assistance, and land owner education, is sometimes labeled as forest policy. However, the evolution of forest policy analysis as a sub-discipline of forest sciences is not a new phenomenon, as Arts (2011) mentions that "it was forester rather than policy scientists who primarily became involved in forest policy analysis". Arts (2011) further summarises that policy scientists became more involved in forest issues, probably because "green politics" has become a serious topic within their discipline.

Theories of the forest policy process in the recently emerging policy environments have provided promising and widely-used theoretical frameworks to present the different dimensions of such processes and the frameworks to analyse such processes. Furthermore, the use of theory in forest policy studies has also provided a new face to the forest policy sciences, as it matured from an applied academic field to a specialised sub-discipline. In the last few decades several researchers have used different theories, as it is believed that the contributions of forest policy research to policy theory development is immense. Researchers believe that the successful use of theory in analysing a specific forest policy issue is not only a test of the theory but also an important contribution to the general academic discussion of each theory. According to Bass Arts (2011), two important ideas have been influencing forest policy with regard to taking a position while using different

theories such as structure-actor problematic (Giddens, 1984) and idealist-materialist divide (Inglehart, 1997); the whole debate over forest policy theories is concentrated on these two ideas. Such factors have led to the emergence of a number of theories in forest policy studies, making policy science an important sub-theme of forest studies.

Since the last few decades, researchers have used different theories such as institutional rational choice (Ostrom), multiple streams (Zahariadis), punctuated equilibrium (Jones et al.), advocacy coalition framework (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith), policy diffusion (Berry and Berry) as well as the recently developed theories such as social construction and policy design (Schneider *et al.*) and policy networks (Adam and Kriesi). Further there is also use for the so called popular theories such as the discourse theory (Foucault,1994), institutional-discursive (Arts,2011), political discourse analysis(Schaffner and Kelly-Holmes,1996;Howarth et.al.,2000), and interest group coalition(Sabatier,2007) which have been helpful to the forest policy researchers to explore the different aspects of the forest policy processeses. Such theories have also provided a much more serious analysis of the different aspects of policy process and key policy-decision streams (problem stream, policy stream, and politics stream). Hence, Arts (2011) summarises that, in the study of forest policy, the theories which are used maximum times are; rational policy analysis, institutional policy analysis, policy network analysis, advocacy coalition framework and critical policy analysis.

However, despite the emergence of the different inter-disciplinary theories such as institutional-discursive (Arts,2011), interest group coalition(John,1998), advocacy coalition(Sabatier,2007) and the much debated political discourse analysis(Schaffner and Kelly-Holmes,1996; Howarth et.al.,2000), the rational choice theory is still dominant in guiding the policy studies environment and the forest policy making process. Arts (2011) summarises that in the stream of policy studies, the rational choice theory is still dominating the policy analysis regime. However in the study of forest policies; in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the advocacy coalition framework and policy network theories were very popular, where as other theories such as rational, institutional and critical policy analysis are gained momentum in only recently. Particularly, the discourse theory (Foucault, 1994) has been receiving academic attention from the Policy Science discipline and application of this theory in understanding forest policies have enhanced significantly. However, the application of discourse method for our study is not based on the growing application of this theory in forest policy studies but considering the context of the study we have designed and assumed that policy is a political process and needs to understood through the intensive analysis of the "ways of deliberation, discussions, and arguments involved in making policy decisions, legislation and implementation of such policies" which are the part of the discourse theory.

Discursive Theory and Politics of Decision Making

Based on the above mentioned discussion, our research work is focused on the discourse theory and further specify the model of political discourse analysis, in which we have tried to focus our attention on the political and non-political actors as well as institutions with regard to formulating forest policies. In this context, the selection of this approach to understand the nature of policy process and political decision making and institutional arrangements that shaped such process is based on striking a balance between the political theories and policy theories.

Therefore the present study uses the model of political discourse analysis, which is a part of the discourse theory and has also been used several times by the other researchers in order to understand forest policies and politics. Further, since our study aims to understand the forest policy process and the politics involved in the different steps such as agenda setting, policy formulation, policy legitimation and policy implementation, which is part of the policy cycle(Figure-1.2), so we have controlled our robustness within these four stages, following stages approach (Sabatier,2007). The analytical framework has been discussed in Chapter-2.

Figure-1.2: The Policy Cycle Model or Stage Approach
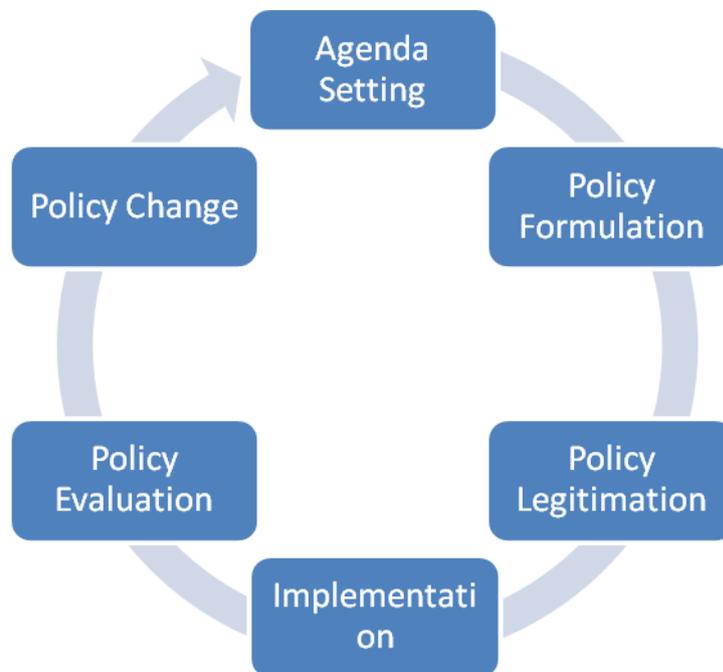
Source: Sabatier, 2007

1.3.2. Politics in Policy Process-A Conceptual Framework

Politics according to Heywood (1997) includes conflict and cooperation; conflict between interests, opinions, wants and needs, and cooperation to reconcile these differences into rules by which people live. As public policy is a game of political decisions, so understanding such decisions forms an important component of understanding politics in public policy. Political analysis or the analysis of politics in the study of forest policy process and its associated relationship has provided a systematic way to understand how policy decisions within and outside the political circles are made, in addition to how the politics of the non-state actors (NGOs, CBOs and networks) influence policy decisions and the nature of discourses involved within such process. It is argued that the study of forest politics is linked to the understanding of the institutional settings, decision-making processes, discourses of the policy actors, and actual policy delivery. Besides, forest policy as a political process is also linked to the process of negotiations, bargaining, lobby and intense factional politics. Thus, it is argued that all policy programmes made through a political process create winners and losers; the winners may be an individual, or a group of individuals.

The study of politics in policy process has two main objectives: first it provides policy makers with a more realistic perspective on their programmes and projects and increases the chances that they will be successful, second; it gives policy researchers information about how the policy decisions have been shaped and who played a major role in shaping those decisions. Understanding the politics in policy process as defined by a researcher is to understand the "fight to divide the cake". Further, Daowe, (n.d) has emphasised that policy studies under the forest governance should cover two broad aspects including "policy process or politics" and "institutional settings or polity" as the two are closely connected with one another. However, the literature under these two aspects has not been explored much particularly by the forest economists; though in the stream of political science and institutional analysis, forest policy literature has started to expand beyond the analysis of policy; particularly focusing on the analysis of politics.

There are several approaches to understand politics in forest policy. Moore (1999) in the interest group economism model of policy process has mentioned five important characteristics involved in the process a) actors who mainly pursue short-term self interest, b) individuals who aggregate in interest groups that are exclusive in membership, c) policy that is made by the interaction of competing interest groups, d) high level of information that is available and e) each policy decision that is a separate event unrelated to other policy decisions. It is believed that Moore's model is an offshoot of the public choice theory and popular among economists who wish to apply an economic model to the realm of politics (Mooij: 2003). Another approach towards understanding politics

in the policy process is the pluralist theory which is based on the importance of pressure groups influencing policy process, through which the pluralists underrate the influence of institutional structure (Smith:1990) in policy process. However, in the recent studies on policy process, Frank Fischer (n.d) suggests a new model; discursive politics, which is a part of the school of discourse theory, combining together the theoretical, methodological and political dimensions of the policy studies with politics in policy process.

1.3.2.1. Forest Politics: Theoretical Issues and Analytical Frameworks

The study of politics under the stream of forest policies emerged to be central to understanding the different aspects of the decision-making process, assuming that it is a political process. However, over the period of time, researchers have emphasised on exploring more about the effects of policies on political-economy rather than on understanding the process involved in shaping a particular policy with regard to decisions, legislation and execution. Particularly with regard to the decision-making process within a policy framework, it has become imperative to understand why and how that particular decision was made and who played a major role. The theories of forest politics are described through various models which are also closely linked to the forest policy and associated theories. Arts and Buizer (2008) summarise the trend in forest politics analysis as follows "analysing forest politics has shifted from the traditional structure-actor problematic (Giddens, 1984) to recently developed models such as advocacy coalition (Sabatier, 1999) and discourse theory (Fischer, 2003). Gidden(1984) in this theory of actor-structure problematic summarises "whether historical, social and political outcomes are the result of the intentions, motivations and behavior of individual agencies, or whether these are shaped by the social structures of societies such as political institutions, power hierarchies and cultural conventions". This has become a common model for understanding forest politics as researchers (Arts,2011, Arts and Buizer,2008) mention that the dominance of structure-actor problematic model is still a valid axis on the basis of which different theories and models can be positioned (Arts,2011). However, the emergence of the discourse theory as an alternative model to understand forest politics has provided a new dimension to understand the forest policies and analyse the different dimensions of the process with respect to power relation, institution and the decision making process, despite the dominance of rational-choice model and institutional approaches.

Discourse Theory as mentioned by Fischer (2007) is based on the post-empiricist approaches to the study of politics in the policy process is believed to be a part of the school of critical policy analysis (Arts,2010). Variously discussed by the policy researchers as discursive politics (Fischer,2007), political discourse analysis(Schaffner and Kelly-Holmes,1996; Howarth et.al.,2000), critical discourse analysis(Van Dijk, Wodak and Mayor,2008) ,or institutional-discursive(Arts,2010), this theory focuses on the power

of language. Hajer (1995) defines Discourse as "a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts and categorisations that are produced, reproduced and transformed in a particular set of practices and through which meaning is given to physical and social realities". Hence, if understanding the power of language is an important path to understand the politics in policies, then discourse analysis helps understand that path with regard to construction of ideas, concepts and categorisations within a policy decision process. Srinivasulu (2004) summarises that "in discourse model, policy-making is assumed to be an objective and value neutral exercise and by implication the policy experts become bearers of objectivity. The real strength of the discursive model is based on the democratic ideas or principles of taking decisions while deciding policy matters. In this aspect Habermas (1996) mentions "…. all relevant arguments are heard in the democratic process and the best argument wins on the basis of rational argumentation and consensual procedures".

The application of discourse theory in understanding the forest politics has been enhanced over a period of time, though the researchers have been using different frameworks or models under this theory. Georg Winkei (2012) in his essay "Foucault in the Forests-A Review of the use of Foucauldian Concepts in Forest Policy Analysis" has tried to understand how discourse theory which was propounded by Michel Foucault in the stream of language (1994) has gradually evolved in the study of the forest policy analysis. The essay summarises that "the Foucauldian thoughts have inspired the analysis of forest policy in two major ways: first, via post-structural political ecology studies and, second, via post-positivist discourse analysis. While nearly all papers were written by geographers, anthropologists, and policy analysts affiliated with European or North American universities, most of the studies analysed forest policies in developing countries".

1.3.2.2. Political Discourse Analysis: A Framework to Understand the Forest Politics: Understanding of the discourses of the policy actors in the forests has evolved with the flourish of the different frameworks. Researchers since the last few decades have paid much attention to understanding the nature of political decision making or discourse in the forest policy making process and have applied different frameworks to understand such discourses. According to Sally Hewitt (2009) the term 'discourse' is used in the day-to-day language interchangeably with discussion or dialogue. Such analysis aims to expose patterns and hidden of how language is used and narratives are created". With regard to understanding the politics in policy process, scholars have used the term political discourse analysis or discursive politics (Fischer, 2007), which is conceptualised as "to focus on the analysis of political discourse, is about the text and talk of professional politicians or political institutions such as President and Prime Ministers and other Members of Government, Parliament and Political Parties, both at the local, national and international levels (Van Dijk, n.d).

In the study of forest policy, discourse analysis framework has been used by researchers (Elands and Wiersums, 2001) and among them political discourse analysis has attained prominent space. The main motivation behind this is to understand the complex power relationship between the different policy actors and institutions. Figure-1.3 provides the framework of political discourse analysis, based on the framework suggested by different discourse theorists (Fischer, 2007). The analytical framework (in Chapter-2) applied for our study is based on this model.

Figure-1.3: Understanding Discourses in Forest Politics
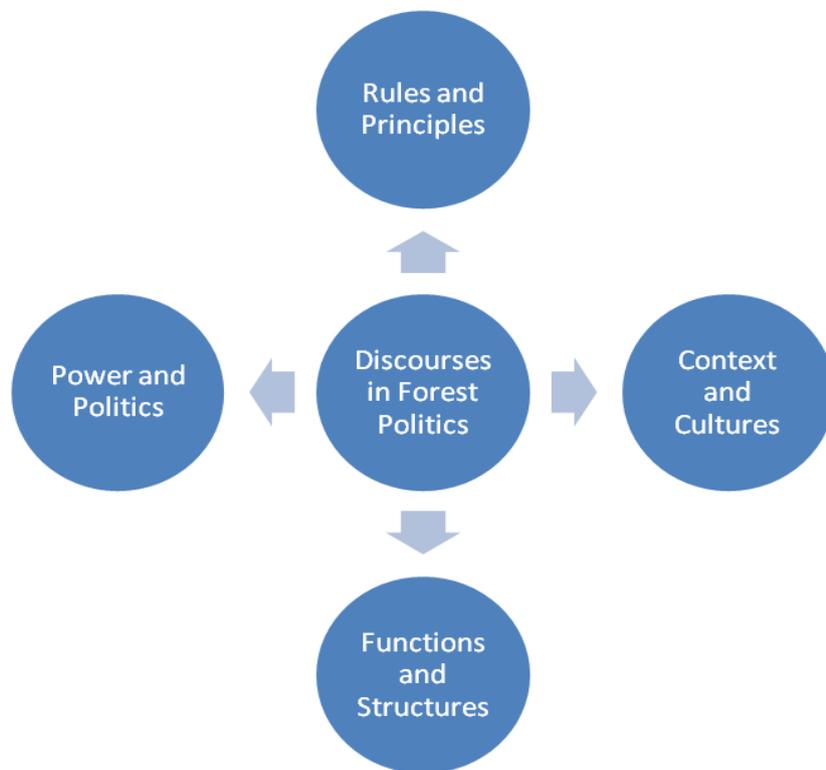
Source: Based on the Analysis of Literatures on Discourse Analysis

1.3.3.   Empirical Evidences

Studies on forest governance and policy process and political decision making within such policies disclosed that decantralisation has become a distinct policy with an objective to improve the governance system and enhance the livelihoods of the forest-fringed communities. Empirical evidences show a number of research works done over the period of time on decentralised Forest governance and policies, covering specific issues such as

livelihoods, governance and institutions, politics in process, and policy evaluation. However, based on the available literature, we have tried to analyse these literatures as per the follows;

1.3.3.1. Understanding Discursive Politics is the Key to Understanding the Nature of Forest Policy Process

Studies on forest policy show that an important aspect of understanding policy process is to understand the politics of such process. Researchers (Srinivasulu, 2004, Mooij, 2004) believe that policy process is a non-linear process which needs understanding through a systematic analysis and such analysis is mainly based on the discursive model. With regard to understanding politics in forest policies, researchers (Arts and Buizer, 2008) used the discourse model to analyse the trends of the development of global forest policy since 1980. Particularly understanding forest policies with regard to bio-diversity, sustainable forest management and private governance, has received increasing attention. Such studies show that understanding discursive politics is an important aspect to understanding the nature of forest policies particularly from the view point of decision making, involvement of institutions and politics of policy actors. Khan (2009) in applying discourse theory to understand forest policy discourse in Bangladesh concludes that "Bangladesh's state policy response to the problems and development of forestry sector has been rhetorically loaded but politically cautious, covert and calculated".

Further, studies also carried out to understand the decision making process in forest policies, in which researchers have tried to understand the drivers of such decisions and the specific path through which decisions have emerged. It was found that "forest policy decisions are largely influenced by the behaviour of the different actors (Bose,2006). Blaikie and Muldavin (2004) justified the political approach in reframing biodiversity policies and showed that how the rational approach has a negative implication on the forest policy making processes. Fischer (2003) also tried to understand the implication of discursive politics on policy process, though his work does not reflect any aspect of forest policy. Researchers have also tried to prove that rationalist approach to policy process neither provides any positive result to policy making nor helps the policy researchers to analyse the critical issues of policy process. Therefore, understanding discourses is an important way to understand the policy process of forests.

In India, studies related to forest policies and politics is involved with the different dimensions of the decision making and institutions. However, with regard to application of the discourse method understanding forest policy is certainly limited. Bose (2010) has tried to understand the evolution of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) in terms of the policy and politics involved. In his study, he concluded that "the case of FRA highlights the importance of protests or campaign politics in India, and the simultaneous importance

of activities to form effective coalitions involving individuals and groups in order to influence the course of legislation" However, his work is based on the advocacy coalition approach (Sabatier, 2007), though he tried to understand the discourses involved among the different actors at the time of the evolution of the Forest Rights Act.

In Odisha, a number of research studies have been carried out on forest policies (Sarap,2007, Sarin,2005 Guha, 1983,Patnaik and Brahmachari,1996) while focusing on the different aspects of policy issues and the implications of such policies. However, the major gaps in these studies are that, only the policy evolution process has been covered highlighting the effects of such policy on livelihoods of the forest-fringe communities; while no critical analysis was made to understand the nature of the discourses.

1.3.3.2. Effective Policy Process for Strengthening Forest Governance and Improving Livelihoods

Understanding the nature of effectiveness of the policy making and implementation process in forests have been examined through a number of studies, which can be subsumed as follows (i) forest policies for strengthening institutions and improving governance, (ii) forest policies and different legal frameworks, (iii) effect of forest policies on livelihoods, and (iv) challenges in implementing different forest policies. Apart from this, researchers have also focused on the different issues of forest governance such as democratisation of forest governance, forest governance and decentralisation, forest administration in Odisha and problems, and livelihoods and forests in Odisha. These studies are country-specific, area-specific, policy-specific (FRA, JFM, and CFM.) as well as livelihood specific (NTFP, and Forest Lands).

Firstly, with regard to forest policies and institutions, researchers (Bose, 2008, Bose, 2011) tried to summarise that the institutions need to be strengthened and such process can be done through improving policy making regime in forests. Further, researchers (Singh, 2001, Poffenberger *et.al.*,1996, Patnaik and Brahmachari, 1996) also explored the nature of discourses involved between formal and informal institutions, providing different aspects of the forest governance system and institutional arrangements. Further, researchers (Haan, 2006, Sarin,2005) also highlighted the problems of forest administration and how such problems have been inherited from the colonial policy regime. These research studies summarised the much-debated dichotomy between the institutions developed under the JFM and CFM as Sundar (2000) points out that the jointness is a new feature of the JFM Policy in India. This JFM-CFM dichotomy also motivates researchers to identify policy and practice level gaps, arguing that self-initiated forest management process should be a part of the government policy. Somanathan. *et.al.* (2003) summarise that "a recent study based on satellite imagery found that the

quality of van *panchayat* forests is as good as Reserved Forests (RFs), despite the van *panchayats* being starved of funds and government support". However researchers also tried to find out the inherent weaknesses in both the systems (JFM and CFM) and expressed doubt regarding the effects of such policies over the livelihoods of the forest dwellers.

Secondly, with regard to understanding the forest policies in India and particularly in Odisha, researchers (Sarap,2012, Haan,2006, Sarin,2005, Saxena,2003, Sundar,2000, Patnaik and Brahmachari,1996, Guha,1983) provided a historical perspective of the evolution of the forest policies at the national level. Summarising the problems such as the colonial approach, exploitation motive, and dominance attitude, these researchers tried to justify the forest policy problems during the post-independence era in India as an outcome of the colonial forest policy; while in the case of Odisha, researchers (Sarin, 2005, Sundar, 2000, Patnaik and Brahmachari, 1996 Guha, 1983) explored the policy evolution, implementation and evaluation process starting from the post-colonial era and linked such process with the pre-colonial policy process. These analysis provided important trends such as historical evolution of forest policy in Odisha(Patnaik and Brahmachari, 1996), Policy formulation and legal frameworks (Sarap and Sarangi,2009), specific forest policies such as CFM, JFM, and FRA,(Sarin, 2005, Sundar,2000) livelihood effects of the forest policies on forest-fringe communities(Sarap,2007, Sarin,2005 Sundar,2000), and policy implementation and problems (Sarin,2005 Sundar,2000) .

Studies on forest policy and livelihoods and related aspects of livelihoods such as improving livelihoods, problems of forest livelihoods, and poverty in forest regions were carried out by the researchers(Sarap, 2012, Reddy *et.al.*2012, Dash,2010) in the case of India as well Odisha. In the case of Odisha, the forest policy and livelihood effects were explored in order to understand the nature of forest livelihoods in Odisha(Sarap,2012), forest livelihoods, and different forest policies such as NTFP Rules, JFM Resolutions, and Kendu Leaf (KL) Rules. Further, in the context of the implementation of FRA, researchers (Dash, 2012) also tried to understand the livelihood effects of this policy by unraveling the process of implementation and the gaps involved.

However the most significant aspects of these literatures are, that some of these are trying to present a comparative picture among the different rules and their impact on the forest livelihoods of the forest-fringe communities. On the other hand, some researchers (Sundar,2000, Sarin,2005) also criticised the forest policies such as JFM; according to them, JFM is not the right answer to the livelihood problems of the forest-fringe communities of Odisha, while some researchers (Haan,2006) also blame the forest governance and administration for problems involving the livelihoods of the forest dwellers.

The most significant aspect of the above stated literatures is that in some way or the other the conclusion focuses on improving the policy-making process, hypothesising that an effective policy-making process can improve the governance system and strengthens the livelihoods of the forest-fringe communities. Based on this hypothesis, our study also designs to cover the policy-governance relationship with respect to forest livelihoods and institutions. Hence, through this study, we have focused on the context and process of forest policy evolution, rather than on policy evaluation, in order to address the research gaps indentified in the previous research studies.

1.4. Identified Research Gaps

The review of literature has identified the following research gaps;

1. The above review shows abundant literatures is available in the stream of forest policy studies and their link with different aspects of forest governance and livelihoods, along with the different methods and models used to understand the various dimensions of the forest policies. However, these studies are more focused on the effects rather than the process. A critical analysis from process to effect is quite missing.

2. With regard to understanding the forest policy process and the politics through discursive analysis, the literature shows that various studies have been carried out in different countries, particularly in the developing and transitional countries; no such study was conducted in Odisha. In the case of Odisha, despite the availability of a number of forest policy studies, the politics of policy process have not been covered thoroughly.

3. The relationship between policy and livelihoods is quite complex and in this context while some researchers have argued that effective policy (policy making ,policy implementation, and policy change) can strengthen the livelihoods of the forest dwellers, while others have criticised the different policies as disturbing factors for the livelihoods. Hence, this debate calls for a fresh investigation on the contribution of policy process on the livelihoods of the forest dwellers. In this context, it is essential to understand the livelihood-focused forest policies in Odisha.

Based on the above mentioned research gaps, the proposed study is designed to examine the forest policies in the state as a process along with the politics involved within such a process. Further, the study is also intends to focus on the issues of livelihoods and the functioning of forest governance and different institutions.

1.5. Organisation of the Chapters

The entire study is divided into six chapters. Chapter-1 provides the conceptual framework with focusing on the Literature available on decentralised forest governance, along with

the Policies, Livelihoods and Politics involved. Considering the scope of the study and the research works carried out by different researchers, this Chapter attempts to highlight the research works carried out in the context of Odisha. Further, based on the literature review, this chapter highlights the research gaps and how this study would bridge those gaps. Chapter-2 focuses on the methodological issues and derived an analytical framework based on the identified research gaps and available data with regard to forest governance, policies and politics in Odisha. Chapter-3 unravels the evolution of the decentralised forest governance in Odisha with respect to political and administrative decentralisation and institutional arrangements in the forest governance in Odisha. This chapter also focuses on the relationship between the decentralised forest governance and livelihoods in Odisha while answering a pertinent question that "Can decentralisation in forest governance address the issue of livelihoods? providing insights from the field data. Chapter-4 presents policy process in the case of forests in Odisha while providing a comparative picture between the forest policies in India and their link with Odisha. The chapter has captures the major forest policies and legal provisions starting from the post-independence period to the current period through the ongoing policy reforms in the forest sector in the era of globalisation. Chapter-5 focuses on "politics in policy process in the state forest sector" while examining the major forest policies and associated political decisions starting from the pre-independence to the present period. Particularly, this chapter analyses the influence of regime politics over forest policies through examining the legislative debates, executive decisions, decisions of the political parties, NGOs and international agencies on forest policies and the livelihood issues of the forest dwellers. Finally, Chapter-6 presents a summary of the research, its findings, and recommendations in order to draw conclusions from the study.

1.6. Summary

Decentralisation is a process of devolving more powers to the local-level governments in order to improve the functioning of local institutions. In the case of forest governance, the process of decentrlisation has evolved into a means to improve the system. The issue of policy process in the case of forests has been discussed through the different models with an intention to understand the evolution and evaluation of the forest policies. However in the case of forest policy evolution, the role of institutions and the processes of decision making have been discussed by the policy researchers through the "discursive policy model" and such initiative provided ample opportunities for the forest policy researchers to understand the different aspects of policy evolution and politics associated with such process. However, in the case of Odisha, study on the forest policy process, particularly the policy evolution and the associated decision making processes have provided limited space to understand such processes. Based on this, the present study has been designed and in the subsequent chapters we have tried to analyse the forest policy process in Odisha through the discursive politics model.

Chapter-2
CONTEXTUAL IMPORTANCE AND
METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

2.1. Introduction

The enormous and growing discussions on forest policy studies as discussed in the earlier chapters have attracted many scholars and policy researchers with a firm belief that unraveling such process may help to understand the critical ways of the policy making process and politics involved within such policies. Particularly in the case of forests, the nature and extent of the policy studies provide different dimensions starting from forest management to improving the conservation regime and ensuring the livelihoods of the forest dwellers. Further, policy analysis in the case of forest governance and policy in Odisha provides limited space to the researchers, policy analysts, and activists to understand the nature of policies and their implications on livelihoods, notwithstanding the studies conducted during different periods of time to understand the nature of forest governance in the state. Based on this, the present study attempts to unravel the process of decision making and associated discourses within a well-defined analytical framework.

The present chapter discusses the methodological issues and analytical framework of the research study. In this chapter, an attempt has been made to explain the methods used for this study and analytical framework used to analyse the data.

2.2. The Study Design

The Study was carried out using a set of qualitative and quantitative methods. As discussed in Chapter-1, the design of the study was based on two important factors; exploring the politics-policy relationship in the context of forests governance in Odisha and understanding the effects of the policy process on forest governance and administration. The selection of Odisha as the universe for the study was based on several important factors including the availability of forests in the state and the dependency of people on forest for the subsistence of their livelihoods. Further, the emerging nature of forest-based pressure groups, forest federations, and NGOs as well as their involvement in the different aspects of the forest policy process has also motivated the researcher to select Odisha for this study. Besides, the familiarity of the researcher with the forest related

issues and his experience while working in different districts of the state was also another reason for selecting Odisha as the universe for the study.

Filed level information was collected to understand the relationship between policy process and implementations. With regard to understanding the politics-policy relationship in forest governance of Odisha, policy-related literature was collected and analysed through the framework of "content analyses". Besides, field data were also gathered from different locations in Odisha for further analysis and review.

2.3. Objectives

Considering the above-stated issues, the main objective of this study is to examine why and how forest policies (Acts and Rules) evolved during the different periods of time in Odisha and how these processes were influenced by the decisions of the different actors and institutions. As we have already discussed, the principal objective was to understand the processes rather than the effects; so, considering this, the focus was laid down to explore the nature of the discourses involved among the policy-actors and how such discourses, decisions, and action/ inaction influenced the policy making processes.

Further, the study also aims to examine the major legal frameworks such as Acts, Rules and Government Orders that were made with regard to the governance of the forests and how such provisions were focused to address the livelihoods issues of the forest dwellers in the state.

In order to focus the study on getting more insights, the following specific objectives were derived;

1. To understand the nature and evolution of decentralised forest governance in Odisha during the different periods starting from the post-independence era to the post-FRA implementation era.

2. To examine the evolution of the different forest policies and legal frameworks associated with such policies in the context of forest governance in Odisha.

3. To understand the legal and political context in which the livelihood issues emerged within the forest policy process, while focusing on the pro-livelihood forest policies such as the PFM and the FRA.

4. To explore the nature of forest politics in Odisha with respect to decision making, involvement of different actors and institutions, and how different factors of politics such as conflict, negotiation, collaboration, and governmentalism influenced the forest policy process in the State.

2.4. Research Methods:

The study was carried out using a set of research methods such as analysis of secondary data and interview with key stakeholders. As a part of this process, the secondary data were collected from the state's forest department (OFD), Bhubaneswar, Odisha, the State Archives of Odisha, Library of Odisha Legislative Assembly, public libraries, libraries of different NGOs such as Vasundhara and Regional Centre for Development Cooperation (RCDC) and the Divisional Forest Office (DFO) of Sundargarh and Koraput. Apart from this, data were also collected through in-depth interview with the Forest Department Officials, NGO functionaries; and people from academic institutions, media and knowledgeable persons. Further, literature review of different aspects of forest governance, policy process, poverty in forest regions of Odisha, and issues of livelihoods were also undertaken in the context of the objectives of the study; and data were also collected from the different news papers to explore the developments related to forest policy and legislative debates on forest issues.

2.5. Data Collection

The data collection process was based on several periods of exploratory field visits and extensive discussions with key stakeholders apart from analysis of secondary data. For the purpose of data collection, a detailed checklist was prepared based on the key objectives of the study. The data collection process mostly involved the collection of qualitative data.

The data collection process was carried out in the following phases:

In the first phase, some secondary data were collected to conceptualise the study and understand the research gaps. In this phase, literature was explored using online /web search and accessing different libraries. Further, based on the findings of the earlier studies, a data collection plan was designed in the form of a checklist. Two types of checklists were developed, one for the collection of secondary data and the other for conducting discussions/interviews with the key informants.

In the second phase, field visits was planned to collect data from the field, different offices/departments and libraries apart from meeting people who are aware about the forest policies in the state. In this phase, intensive field work was carried out to complete the data collection process.

In the final phase, another round of field work was also carried out after preparing the report and realising the data gaps. In this phase, an attempt was made to bridge the data gaps through accessing different policy-related documents (notes, files, orders, reports, proceedings etc.).

2.6. Analytical Framework

The data analysis on decentralised forest governance, livelihoods, policies and politics was carried out using different models and frameworks to understand the various aspects of these issues. On the aspects of decentralised forest governance and policy, researchers have used "the policy evolutions and historical analysis model" (forest governance-historical evolution-policy), in order to understand the evolution of policies and issues of livelihoods. With regard to understanding the policy effects on livelihoods in forests, the researchers have used the "five capital model". In the case of understanding the effects of governance on development, researchers have used the governance-institution-development model, which is also termed by some researchers as governance-to-development model. With regard to understand the effects of the European Union and international agencies on agricultural policies of Ireland, Lenschow (2006) has used the polity (institutions)-politics (decision making)-policy(rules) model.

However, based on the scope of the present study and considering the nature of data as well as research gaps, we have taken the framework of politics-policy-governance model with regard to forests, viewing that governance in forests is an outcome of policy process and policy decisions can be influenced by the politics. Therefore we have designed the following framework as the analytical framework for the study.

Figure: 2.1; Analytical Framework for the Study
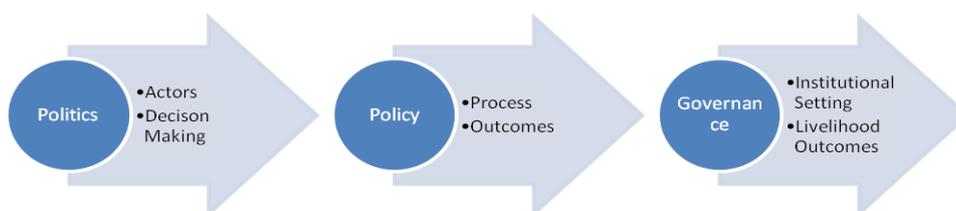
Sources: Based on the Research Gaps and Discursive Politics Framework (Chapter-1)

2.7. Analytical Narratives and Indicators

Politics: The study has used the term "politics" in several places which is similar to the "process of decision making and involvement of different actors in such decisions" within a democratic set-up. As policy process is a democratic process and it requires the involvement of the different actors, it is essential to understand the nature of discourses (policy debates and discussions) in order to understand the policy process. Based on this assumption, the study has tried to control the robustness of forest politics analysis within the limit of the nature of discourses among the different actors in the course of policy

decisions. Towards this end, two indicators are considered such as actors (who are the actors, why and how they are involved in the policy decisions, and what is the nature and content of discussions) and decisions making (how decisions are made, why some decisions are not taken, and why some decisions override others).

To understand the politics in forest policy, **Chapter-5** discusses such issues highlighting the case of Odisha.

Policy: This study has used the term "policy" with regard to forests; it is linked with the terms such as Acts, Rules, Resolutions and Government Orders. As in the case of Odisha, forest policies coincide with the above terms; considering this, the study highlights these aspects while analysing and describing forest policies. Only forest policies linked with Odisha are captured, and for the analysis, two factors are focused in this study; the processes (how policy emerged, and why it emerged during that particular period) and the major outcomes of such policies (success or failure with regard to concomitant political set-up). For this purpose, the stage analysis method of a policy cycle involving four major stages including agenda setting, policy formulation, legislation and implementation has been followed.

With regard to Forest Policies in Odisha, **Chapter-4** gives a detailed picture based on the empirical findings, analysis of secondary data and ethnographic insights.

Governance: The term governance has been described in this study as a part of forest administration and management and some associated components such as the status of forests in Odisha, forest groups such as CFM and JFM, and the relevance of forest in the state economy, etc. We have also used the terms such as decentralised governance and democratic governance interchangeably, while analysing forest governance, though in the actual sense the meanings are not the same. Under the analysis of forest governance, decentralisation, and livelihoods, focus is given to the institutions (formal and informal institutions), based on the assumption that institutions are the outcomes of the decentralised governance process and can influence the livelihood system in forests.

In order to understand the nature of forest governance in Odisha, **Chapter-3** vividly discusses such issues, by examining the ongoing trends in the governance reforms in the case of forestry in the state.

2.8. Limitations of the Study

The present study plans to provide a broader perspective on the issues of forest policies, politics and their association with the livelihoods of the forest dwellers in Odisha. However, availability of data particularly data related to the political decision making process in

Odisha and their influence on the state forest policy processes has provided limited findings. Some important records such as reports and policy documents were not available in different libraries and government record rooms, which was a hindering factor for the study.

During the data collection process, particularly at the time of discussion with different key informants, some people hesitated to provide a clear picture presuming that this might create a problem for them. The respondents particularly from the state and district-level forest offices shared their own views rather than providing a broader perspective on different forest policy issues.

The study, rather than capturing one particular forest policy and its association with governance, livelihoods and politics, examined a number of policies within a designed research framework. This choice also compelled us to focus on so many policies within a semi-rational framework. Though the discourse method was taken up for the study, considering policy as a cycle, we were also forced to follow the stage analysis approach.

Chapter-3
DECENTRALISED FOREST GOVERNANCE IN ODISHA: AN OVERVIEW

3.1. Introduction

Forest governance has witnessed a paradigm shift across the globe in the recent times because of the emerging governance issues, policy reforms and political complexities with regard to the decision-making processes and formulation of policies. Continuity and change in the governance frameworks coupled with the adoption of decentralisation and emphasis on society-centric as well as pro-poor policy process has given some new dimensions to the effective functioning of the forest administration and delivery of services. As a result, forest administration and governance issues are being much discussed and debated and decentralisation has emerged an instrument of governance in order to improve the institutional capability. Such scenario has been motivated to many developing and transitional countries to adopt decentralisation as a means to improve their governance system.

This trend has also resulted in the search for appropriate policy measures considering that such measures may improve the governance system and enhance the capability of the institutions. Further, the emergence of the global economic regime has also pushed many countries in the world towards the path of decentralisation with the sole intention to improve forest governance. Thus, in the forest sector, governance issues have become central to discussion and policy reforms in forest governance have been manifested in several ways in the form of strengthening the state economy, ensuring the livelihoods of the forest-fringe communities and taking pro-active measures to alleviate poverty through a number of forest sector development programmes.

However, the path of decentralised forest governance has also encountered many problems; for example continuous issues of under-development and poverty in the forest regions, rapid depletion of the forest resources, rapid privatisation of the forest lands for the non-forest use, sinking of the forest economy and above all faulty forest policy process and the dominating attitude of the forest departments have created problems and forced

many people to believe that the current pattern of decentralisation is not the right answer to the existing problems. It is also observed that the current pattern of governance may not solve the long-debated livelihood issues of the forest dwellers as it is a state-centric and administrative-oriented governance system.

Likewise, the shift of the forest administration from the government to governance has provided several interesting trends and patterns in the case of forest administration in Odisha. In this chapter, we have focused on the evolution of forest administration in Odisha, including the strategic and practical shifts of forest administration from government to governance, the present pattern of forest governance, emergence of the informal institutions and their involvement in forest governance and above all, forest governance and livelihoods in Odisha. In this chapter, we have tried to highlight the field realities about forest governance in Odisha.

3.2. Profile of Odisha

Odisha is located on the East Coast of India, spanning a geographical area of 155,707 sq. km, which constitutes 4.74% of the country's total geographical area. It lies in the tropical zone between the latitudes 170 47'N and 220 34'N and longitudes 810 22'E and 870 29' E. Physiographically, the state can be divided into four regions, viz. the Northern Plateau, Eastern Ghats, Central Tableland, and Coastal Plains. The state is rich in mineral resources including coal, iron, bauxite, chromites and nickel. The annual rainfall in the state ranges between 1200 and 1600 mm; and the mean annual temperature ranges between 250C and 27.50C. As per the 2011 Census, the total population in the state is 41,947,358, of which rural population constitutes 67% and Scheduled Tribes (STs) constitute 22.19%.

With regard to the administrative set-up, the state has three Revenue Divisions, South, North and Central, 30 districts, 316 *Tahasils*, 314 blocks and 6,234 gram panchayats. The state has 51,349 villages out of which 47,529 are inhabited and 3,820 are un-inhabited.

The economy and livelihood of the state and its people is predominantly agriculture-based, with 75% of the working population involved in the sector. As much as 47.1% of the population in the state lives below the poverty line, and of the total poor, 90% live in rural areas; the intensity of poverty is particularly high among the tribal population located in forest-fringe villages (Sarap;2004). The economic survey during 2011-2012 shows that the agriculture sector is declining in comparison with industrial and service sectors and the poverty level has been reduced to 7.25% from 1999-2000 to 2004-2005.

Table-3.1; Administrative Profile of Odisha

Area (in sq.km)	Population			Administrative Set up			
	M	F	T	Dist	Block	GP	Villages
1,55,707	21,201,678	20,745,680	41,947,358	30	314	6,234	51,349

Source: Economic Survey, Odisha, 2011-2012

3.3. Forests in Odisha:

Forests and human beings have been very closely related to each other since the very beginning of human history. The great social value of forests and the many ecological and economic services that they render is a significant contribution towards maintaining life conditions on earth. Forest resources also have vast economic potential and ecological advantages. Since time immemorial, forests have played a vital role in contributing substantial fiscal revenue to the different states as well as providing livelihoods to the forest-fringe communities. Thus, the contribution of forests to the human civilisation is immense. In some areas, particularly in the tribal areas, forest has also become a part of the tradition, culture and custom of the people. Studies conducted during different periods of time show that forests have had a symbiotic relationship with people.

Forest provides subsistence and farm inputs, such as fuel, food, medicine, fruits, manure and fodder. Income from forests including forest lands and NTFPs has been regarded as a lifeline for millions of people living in and around the forest areas. The economy of people living in forest- fringe villages has traditionally been dominated by subsistence based on the forest-land based agriculture, which is known as shifting cultivation or *podu* cultivation in Odisha. However, apart from forest land, income from NTFPs also plays a significant role in providing income and subsistence for living (Sharma and Arunachalam, 2011, *cited* in peters *et al.*, 1989; Hegde *et al*, 1996).NTFPs such as fuel-wood, medicinal plants, wild edible vegetables, and house building materials, are an integral part of the livelihoods of the forest-fringe communities, particularly, the STs.

In Odisha, the contribution of forests to the livelihoods of the people is immense and state's economy is also partly influenced by the forest resources, though the amount is quite meager and is gradually declining. It is estimated that the revenue from forest sector is only 0.27% (2000-2001) of the net-state domestic product. However, this is not an appropriate indicator of the measure of the forest sector's contribution, because the contribution of the forests to the livelihoods of the people in the state is immense. The dependence on forest of the forest-fringe communities in Odisha is quite evident and it is estimated that the SCs and STs are the most dependent communities on forest resources for their livelihoods.

Forest, as a major component of the state's natural resource hub has played a significant role in terms of the ecological and economic aspects while enormously contributing to the livelihood economy of the people. However, the recent times have been witnessed a sharp decline of the forest cover in the state. This scenario has posed serious questions regarding the governance and policy of forests in the state.

3.3.1. Forest Cover in Odisha:
Since the last few decades, the state has witnessed massive depletion of the forest resources due to rampant deforestation and rapid conversion of forest lands for non-forest use. Samal (2001) has mentioned various macro and micro-factors that are directly and indirectly responsible for deforestation. These factors include (i) commercialisation of forest products, (ii) higher price for agricultural products, (iii) lower wage and non-availability of non-farm jobs, (iv) technical changes that increase agricultural yield, (v) greater access to forest and market through construction of roads, and (vi) absence of well- defined and secure property rights for forest dwellers.

Kashyap (1990) has cited a number of reasons contributing to deforestation in the country as a whole. These include: (i) population pressure leading to increasing encroachment on forest land for raising crops and for fuel and fodder, (ii) diversion of forest lands for development projects such as water reservoirs and physical infrastructures including roads, railway tracts, power, industrial estates etc. , (iii) over exploitation of forest for industrial raw material, railway sleepers, and timber for a variety of purposes, (iv) heavy grazing by the cattle,(v) practice of shifting cultivation by different groups in tribal regions, and (vi) destruction of forests due to insects, pests and fire.

Researchers are also argue that the so-called approach to scientific management of forests is a factor causing the rapid depletion of forest resources in Odisha. Further, low level investment by the Government of Odisha in the forest sector is also another reason for the massive depletion of the forest resources.

The state's forest cover has been declining alarmingly since the last few decades from 43.5 % (1971) to 38.0 % (1981), to 35.2 % (1991) and at present (1999) with a marginal increase of 37.3 %. However, the statistics given by the different agencies such as the Forest Survey of India (FSI), Planning Commission, State Forest Department and international organisations are contradictory in nature.

In the state, over-exploitation of the timber-based forest resources for revenue generation is a major contributing factor to deforestation. The policies of the State Government of leasing out forests to paper mills for timber harvesting and the cutting of bamboo have paved the way for the rapid depletion of such resources. Diversion of forest land for non-forest use is an important contributing factor to the reduction of forest cover in the

state. It is estimated that the forest area diverted for non-forest use in the 1980s and 1990s was 27,466 hectares (Sarap; 2004). During the period from 2005-06 to 2010-11, the extent of diversion of forest land was high, and most forest lands were diverted for mining (471.4ha) followed by miscellaneous purposes (344.6 ha).However, researchers also attribute various other reasons for deforestation, based on the finding that the degradation of forests is not due to state control, but due to the fact that there is no control.

Table-3.2;- Forest Cover in Odisha-2005 Assessment (Area in sq.km)

Type of Forest	VDF	MDF	OF	Scrub	NF	Total
Very Dense Forest (VDF)	7,608	0	0	0	9	7,077
Moderately Dense Forest (MDF)	0	21,376	18	0	27	21,421
Open Forest (OF)	0	1	20,207	0	49	20,257
Scrub	0	0	0	4,790	7	4,797
Non-Forest(NF)	5	17	163	62	101,908	102,155
Total	7,073	21,394	20,388	4,852	102,000	155,707

Source: Forest Survey of India, 2004

Table-3.2 shows the status of forest cover in the state during 2005 as per the data given by the FSI. It is observed from the table that the state has 155,707 sq.km of forest land of which 102,000 sq.km falls under the non-forest category; only 48,855 sq.km   is the actual forest area in the state, which is 37.34% of the total area in the state. The Economic Survey Report of Odisha, 2011-12, reveals that the actual forest cover of Odisha in 2007 was 48,855 sq.km., which constitutes 31.38% of the state's geographical area in terms of forest canopy density classes.

Box.3.1: Forest Cover in Odisha-Fact and Figures

Data related to actual forest cover has provided various trends to arrive at a conclusion, though all these facts show an important point that the forest cover in the state has been declining over the period of time. In this context, the Odisha Economic Survey Report of 2011-12 has summarised that the State has a recorded forest area measuring 58,136 sq.km. This includes 26,329 sq.km.(45.29%) of reserve forests, 15,525 sq.km.(26.70%) of protected forests and 16,282 sq.km.(28.01%) of un classed forests. The total recorded forest area in the State is 37.34 % of its total geographical area.

Source: Odisha Economic Survey Report, 2011-2012

Table-3.3: Actual Forest Cover in Odisha during Different Years
(based on Satellite Data)

Year/Period	Closed Forest Area as a % of Total Geographical Area (Effective Forest Cover)
1972-75	23.97
1980-82	18.50
1990-91	17.56
1995	17.44
1996	16.76
2003	18.09

Source;- (1) Government of Odisha, 2004 cited in CYSD;- 2008 (ii) www.odishaforest.org

Table-3.3 shows the status of forest cover in the state during different periods including the status of forest in the state in 2003, based on satellite data. The trend in Table-3.3 shows that the forest cover in the state has been declining gradually over the period of time, which reflects upon the state's failure to manage the rich natural resource despite the claim of success of the social forestry program in the state[2]. The FSI data from 2003 assessment reveals that the actual forest cover in the state (very dense forest, moderately dense forest, open forest, and mangrove forest) is 48,366 sq.km. which is 31.06% of the total land area in Odisha; while the actual tree cover is 6381 sq.km. which is 4.10% of the total land area in the state.

Box-3.2; Forest Land Diversions and Debate in Odisha Legislative Assembly

Status of Forest Land Diversion: Replying to a written question over the diversion of forest lands for the purpose of mining, irrigation, power, roads, railway, industries and defense, the Minister of Forests and Environment, Government of Odisha, mentioned that "forest land to the tune of 41,891.25 hectares (or 1,03,515.53 acres) has been diverted in Odisha till March 6, 2013 since the enactment of the Forest Conservation Act,1980 by the Centre.

The minister further mentioned that the forest land diversion has been effected for various sectors including mining, irrigation, power, roads, railway, industries and defense and asserted that mega industries such as NALCO benefited from the forest land diversion in the state. The land diversion process has been carried out as per the provision under Section 2 of the Forest Conservation Act, 1980.

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[2] The Social Forestry Program was initiated in the state with SIDA's support during the 80s and 90s with the objective to develop forest resources, and manage the forests and benefit distribution.

Forest Land Diversion under-Consideration: The State Government is sitting over 431 Proposals (till March 6, 2013) for Forest Land Diversion across sectors such as irrigation, industry, mining, energy, railway, roads and bridges and human habitations. Mining sector tops the list with 205 proposals pending for diversion of forest land. Other sectors with forest land diversion proposals in the pipeline are irrigation (27), industry (29), energy (44), railway (21), roads and bridges (37), human habitations (2) and miscellaneous (66).

Kendujhar (Keonjhar) District has witnessed the maximum diversion of forest lands for mining, which is 8194.86 hectares (or 20,249.94 acres) which is nearly one-fifth of the total forest land diversion in the state.

Under the social forestry programme, the state has claimed to achieve plantations in 107,644.3 ha. (Directorate of SF, GoO, 1998). According to N.C. Saxena (2003) the actual forest cover of more than 10% tree density declined by 12% in Odisha during 1987-1999, compared to a decline of less than 0.4% in the entire country. During 1980-1995, Odisha lost 9.4% of its dense cover, whereas during the same period, India as a whole improved its dense cover by 1.6%. If a longer period of 1972-1999 is considered, Odisha has lost more than a quarter of its forest cover. The major factors attributed to these trends include massive deforestation for different development projects including mega dams, mines, and industrial hubs.

<div align="center">Box-3.3; Plantation in Odisha; Over-view and Trend</div>

The Government of Odisha has taken several measures to regenerate forests through various afforestation programmes. These programmes include economic plantation, integrated afforestation and economic development projects, development of city forests, area-oriented fuel wood and fodder project, development of NTFP Species including medicinal plants, river valley projects, afforestation programme in Kalahandi-Bolangir-Koraput (KBK) under Revised Long-Term Action Plan (RLTAP) and plantation through Odisha Tribal Empowerment and Livelihood Project (OTELP).

 Towards this end, data related to plantation in Odisha provided by the different agencies and Forest Department presents a rosy picture of the success of the plantation programme in Odisha. The data summarises that "at present there are 9,606 number of *Vana Samrakshyana Samities* (VSSs) in Odisha protecting 6,828 sq.km.of forest land. Massive plantations of 50,727 ha have been completed by them within their assigned forest areas during 2003-04 and 2005-06 with financial assistance from the National Afforestation and Eco Development Board(NAEB), of Government of India, through the 34 forest development agencies in Odisha.

Under the RLTAP till 2005-06, about 58,852 ha block plantation and 76868 ha of RDF have been undertaken in KBK districts, 2370 ha. of *Phasi* plantation have been

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> undertaken under the *Jagannath Bana Prakalpa* (JBP) during 2000-2004. In-situ conservation and ex-situ plantation of medicinal plants have been raised over 1212 ha. during last three years. Besides, millions of seedlings have been freely distributed to the people by the Forest Department to plant them in private holdings and institutions.

Source: Compilation of different data source provided by the researchers (Udgata,2006) and the Government of Odisha, Forest and Environment Department.

3.3.2.Forest Lands in Odisha

In the case of Odisha, the legal frameworks for determining the forest lands have been suffering severely due to the unsound policy of identifying the jurisdiction of forest lands. This has resulted in serious tenurial and land use conflicts, unclear boundaries, and jurisdictional disputes between different departments (Sarin,2005). Forests categories in Odisha, such as Reserve Forests, Demarcated Protected Forests, Undemarcated Protected Forests, and Village Forests are under the control of Forests and Revenue departments. According to N.C. Saxena (2003), roughly half of the total area under forests is not under the ownership of the Forest Department, as only the Reserve Forests are vested. The land used by the forest dwellers in Odisha for shifting cultivation has witnessed a paradigm shift because of the state policy to use these lands for non-agriculture purposes. This has seriously challenged the livelihoods of the forest-dwelling communities.

Table-3.4: Land Use Pattern in Odisha

Land Use Pattern		
Land Use in Details	Area in '000 ha'	Percentage
Total geographical area	15,571	
Reporting area for land utilization	15,571	100
Forests	5813	37.33
Not available for cultivation	2138	13.73
Permanent pastures and other grazing lands	494	3.17
Land under misc.tree crops and groves	342	2.20
Culturable waste land	375	2.41
Fallow lands other than current fallows	229	1.74
Current fallows	576	3.70
Net area sown	5604	35.99

Source: Land Use Statistics, Ministry of Agriculture, GoI, 2008-09.

Table-3.4 shows the land use pattern in the state vis-à-vis forest land, which states that 5813 thousand hectares of the total land area in the state falls under the forest category, which is 37.33% of the total land in the state. Thus, in Odisha, without proper survey and scientific assessment, thousands of hectares of land has been declared as "deemed to

be forest" by subjugating the tenurial rights of the people, the majority belonging to the STs.

3.3.3. Forest Economy in Odisha

Forest resources in Odisha have been considered as a potential source for revenue to the State Government, and constitute a renewable resource base for the state's economy.

The following arguments have been presented by scholars (Haley and Smith,1976, Nautial,1967) regarding the link of forests to the state as well as regional economy, and how forests help in improving the economy of a region.

● A wide range of products flow from forests into many sectors.

● Forests and forest-based industries substantially augment the tax and non-tax revenue of a regional government. Some forest products are also a source of foreign exchange.

● The protective functions of the forests constitute the basic lifetime of a region. Their bio-aesthetic features enrich the quality of life.

● Forests support rural and tribal development in several ways. Forest roads dynamise the social life in the interior areas and difficult terrains. Forestry is complementary to agriculture, not only ecologically by regulating water, soil and microclimate, but also economically through efficient utilisation of the underutilised rural and tribal human power.

Table, 3.5: Production and Revenue Collection from Kendu Leaf in Odisha (2005 to 2010)

Sl. No.	Year	Quantity(in Lakh Quintals)	Sale Value(Rs. in Crores)
01	2005	3.769	142.05
02	2006	3.895	248.55
03	2007	4.454	259.32
04	2008	4.192	301.96
05	2009	4.406	326.64
06	2010	4.431	364.24

Sources: Odisha Economic Survey Report, 2011-12

Odisha's position in forest economy is mainly controlled by the production from *kendu* leaves, as the state is the third largest producer of *kendu* leaves after Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. It is estimated that the annual production of *kendu* leaves in the state is around 4.5 to 5 lakh quintals.(Odisha Economic Survey Report, 2011-12) The contributions of kendu leaf to the direct and indirect wage employment are also quite immense. Apart from *kendu* leaf, production from bamboo, also significantly contributes

to the state's economy. Bamboo cultivation in both the state as well as private forests spread across 17,795 sq km and the annual production is nearly 2 lakh MT of which 50,000 MT of the produce is from private lands. The details of production of *kendu* leaf since the 2005 is shown in Table-3.5.

However, it has been observed from the secondary data that the contribution of forests to the state's revenue has reduced significantly. The production of major forest products on which the state's revenue depends heavily such as timber, firewood, bamboo, *kendu* leaf, and *sal* seed, has also reduced significantly. This affects the state's revenue. Table. 3. 6 presents the average revenue from various forest products in Odisha.

Table-3.6: Average Revenue from Different Forest Products in Odisha from 1952-53 to 2004-05(Rs. in crores)

Year	Timber	Firewood	Bamboo	*Kendu* Leaf	Other NTFP	Misc.
1952-56	0.43	0.15	0.07	0.17	0.35	0.07
1956-61	1.23	0.29	0.18	0.51	0.28	0.11
1961-66	2.13	0.43	0.33	0.79	0.22	0.13
1966-71	2.46	0.46	0.49	1.75	0.37	0.29
1971-76	3.36	0.63	1.04	3.19	0.6	0.54
1976-81	12.32	2.87	2.42	5.62	1.17	0.81
1981-86	21.47	5.32	3.56	14.3	3.16	1.12
1986-91	18.00	4.55	5.55	45.22	3.15	1.43
1991-96	10.77	1.66	9.71	66.58	3.11	2.59
1996-01	8.69	0.79	7.34	51.54	2.49	13.55
2001-05	7.39	0.49	1.28	49.81	16.47	9.11

Source: (i)Various Economic Survey Reports, Government of Odisha, (ii) PCCF, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, (iii), CYSD, Bhubaneswar, Odisha

Table-3.6 reveals the trend of forest revenue (non-tax component) of the Government of Odisha from various forest products during the period 1952-2005. The state's forest revenue during 1976-96 is observed to be more in the case of timber and firewood, which later reduced. However, in the case of *kendu* leaf, the revenue earnings during these periods are observed to be quite significant and consistent, though the early period (till 1986) presents a dissenting picture. Nationalisation of the *kendu* leaf in 1973 has significantly contributed to the state's forest revenue, while in the case of timber, massive felling during the period from 1970 to 1990, has contributed significantly to the state's revenue. Similarly, nationalisation of bamboo has also led to the enhancement of the state's revenue. However, the overall trend shows that, massive depletion of forest resources, coupled with inappropriate government policy, has adversely affected the

contribution of such resources to the state exchequer. The state's policy to maximise revenue was truly reflected during the 70s and 80s because during this period forest, revenue was in an uprising mode.

3.4. Forests Governance in Odisha- Decentralisation and Institutions

Odisha, since the last two decades, has witnessed an enormous shift in its economic order and political system, which has made the state fast-developing one in India However, this trend was not truly reflected in all the sectors and has not been able to provide substantial benefit to all sections of the people. Particularly the livelihoods of the SCs and STs in the state are still in a bizarre condition. This trend is particularly visible in the forest regions in the state.

However, sustainable management of forest resources in the state has also witnessed a gradual shift and since the 1990s[3] and this departure has received enormous support. In the case of forests, decentralisation has become a significant and distinctive policy, which gradually evolved in the context of the emergence of multiple formal and informal institutions. Policy reform initiatives in the forestry sector gradually flourished, and particularly since 1980, the forest sector in the state has witnessed extensive policy reforms, which are not only pro-state but are also believed to be pro-people in nature. The phase of forest governance and emergence of institutions in Odisha can be analysed in terms of pre-independence and post-independence reform phases while capturing the important legal frameworks and institutional mechanisms.

3.4.1. Forest Governance during Pre-Independence Era

Forest governance during the pre-independence era was based on the state-centric legal frameworks and administrative control. The State had its own traditional pattern and self-initiated forest management mechanism which existed in the different parts of the state since a long period of time. However, the governance of forest emerged as a part of the state administration during the eighteenth century, when the Britishers came to India and conquered Odisha. The forest administration during the pre-independence period can be divided into two phases: the evolution phase and institutionalisation phase based on the policy decisions and legal provisions taken by the various princely state rulers, and the British Government.

The Evolution Phase

The evolution of forest governance and administration is closely connected to the emergence of the different rulers in the princely states in Odisha. During the princely

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[3] India witnessed the early era of participatory forest management through the framing of different acts and rules in order to manage the forest resources in a sustainable manner by ensuring the participation of communities.

rule, the rulers of the different states also gradually entered into forest administration and tried to control the forest resources. Data show that in 1894, the King of Mayurbhanj created forest administration for his state. Similarly, the other princely states also created forest administration which laid the foundation for the reorganisation of the forest administration in the state. This was based on the attempt to take control over the forests. In some princely states such as Mayurbhanj, railway line was constructed to transport forest products; the states of Mayurbhanj and Bolangir-Patna had their full-fledged forest department which framed its own administrative pattern. It is believed that their forest administrative pattern was more or less similar to the British Government's administrative pattern.

Though some researchers have pointed out that this period was an early phase of the depletion of forest resources, and justified the creation of forest administration by the kings, the actual motive was to control the forest resources for commercial use. As already mentioned, the princely states had their own forest administration pattern and categories of forests such as *khesra* forests or *sadharan* forests, which were demarcated but managed by the people. However, the administrative control rested with the kings or their administrative representative who controlled the forests presuming that these are property of the state.

The Institutionalisation Phase

This phase was largely managed by the British rulers who were also interested in controlling the forest resources for commercial purposes. Thus, the evolution of forest administration which was started by the kings in the different princely states, took another step and this led to the formation of a full-fledged Forest Department.

In 1883-84, when Odisha was part of the Bengal Presidency, there was a forest division called the Orissa Division amongst the ten forest divisions under the conservator of forests with its headquarters at Darjeeling (Patnaik and Brahmachari, 1996). However, the monopoly of the government over the forest resources started only after the creation of Odisha as a separate state in 1936, which led to a strong forest bureaucracy in the state. In this context, the Indian Forest Act of 1882 contributed further towards this process. The administrative congregation of the forests and field-level units were started to emerge as a response to the provisions of this act and certain forest blocks were declared as Reserve Forest.

The expansion of the forest administration is closely associated with the political history of Odisha. On 1st April 1891, a new province of Bihar and Odisha was created which led to the further reorganisation of the forest administration with the tune of the state administration. The new state has seven forest divisions including three in Odisha-Puri,

Angul and Sambalpur (Patnaik and Brahmachari, 1996). Gradually the reorganisation process continued with the creation of the new forest administrative units such as Divisions and lower levels. Redesigning the boundary lines of the forests through demarcation for settlement and reservation was the main focus of the management strategy (Rout,n.d).

The creation of Odisha on 1st April 1936 was a land mark in the history of forest governance and administration because the new state witnessed the formation of a Forest Department under a conservator of forest with its headquarters at Angul. This initiative provided further reorganisation of forest administration with a centralised pattern under a rigid bureaucratic structure. With the merger of Ganjam District in Odisha, the number of administrative units gradually expanded and by the time of independence (1947), Odisha had nine forest divisions with 3,615.6 sq km of RF, 541.3 sq km demarcated PFs, and 3,286.7 sq km reserved land, making a total of 7443.6 sq km forest area (RCDC, 1996, Rout, n.d).

The nature of forest administration during these periods was highly centralised and bureaucratically oriented, though in some cases there was the existence of the self-initiated forest management system which has its own governance framework and still continues in different parts of the state. This period was an early phase of expanding the state's legitimacy over the forests through the administrative units created for the management of forests. This period was also witnessed a gradual shift of the community rights and ownership to the state ownership, which gave birth to new state-managed institutions that is the forest administrative units.

3.4.2. Evolution of Forest Governance and Decentralisation during Post-Independence Period

Post-Independence period forest administration in Odisha has many dimensions, which reflect the journey of forest governance and administration in the state from evolution to devolution. This phase adopted the policy of decentralisation in the state forest governance, realising the rapid depletion of the forest resources and conceding the fact that forest bureaucracy cannot handle the managerial complexities single handedly. The post-independence era of forest governance started as a rigid centralised process and gradually evolved into a participatory and decentralised pattern of administrative system. This phase can be divided into four parts: framing legal provisions, administrative reorganisation, devolution of functions and community conservation and empowerment process. These four aspects played a crucial role with regard to turning the forest administration into a decentralised administrative system.

3.4.2.1. Framing of Legal Provisions for Governance and Administration

Legalising the forests through framing different acts, rules and government orders was a crucial component of the state forest administration, though some of the provisions

were state-centric rather than pro-people in nature. The framing of the rules, acts and different legal provisions through the state legislative bodies was an important component of forest governance during the different periods in Odisha; immediately after independence, the State Government further concentrated on the process of administrative reorganisation in the form of framing different legal provisions or following the directives of the Central Government. Table 3.7 provides the different legal provisions and administrative decisions, and their implications on the devolution of authority and power, community participation and institutional arrangements.

Table- 3.7: Evolution of Forest Governance and the Process of Decentralisation in Odisha

Year	Governance/Administrative Decisions (Legal Frameworks)	Implications and Focus on Decentralisation
1947	The Orissa Preservation of Private Forest Act	The nature of this act was towards centralising the forest administrative system by controlling the forest resources enjoyed by the land lords in the state. The whole idea was to bring the scattered forest administration under one umbrella.
1948	The Merger of Princely States in Odisha	25 princely states came under the state of Odisha in 1948 followed by the state of Mayurbhanj that was merged in 1949. This decision enhanced the physical boundary of the forest administration paving the way for the creation of 22 territorial forest zones and two research and working plan divisions. The administrative control came to the Chief Conservator of Forest. Further with the merger of the princely states the total forest area increased from 7,443.6 sq km to 65,677.76 sq km by 1959.
1952	First National Forest Policy	The first forest policy of Independent India was introduced in 1952. The policy suggested that the different states should frame and reframe the legal provisions related to forests. The policy was focused more on strengthening forest administration through a rigid bureaucratic framework.

<div align="right">Contd...</div>

1954	The Indian Forest (Orissa Amendment) Act	This act extended the provisions of the Indian Forest Act of 1927 to the state of Odisha. With the passage of this act, both the categories of A and B declared as Reserved Forests and Village Forests (*Khesra Jungle*) became Protected Forests. Such decisions were also not in favour of the people as the village-jungle was their means of livelihoods subsistence.
1957	Zamindari Forests come under the Forest Department as per Orissa Preservation of Private Forest Act(1947)	19,891.2 sq km of forests came under the Forest Department from the *zamindars* (land lords) which were under the pattern of *Anchal Sasan*. This was the result of the 1947 Act. The head quarters of the Forest Department also shifted from Angul to Cuttack, the new capital of Odisha.
1957	Appointment of Forest Enquiry Committee	Considering the fact that the state's forests management came into one administrative system though the divergence in the management continued as it was linked with the people's customs, traditional and cultural practices, the state had formed committees to examine the increasing concern of the people with regard to the access to different forest products and lands. The committee recommended for a uniform forest act for the state. However, many of the recommendations were believed to be against the livelihoods of the people and centralised in nature.
1958	The legal rights of Gram Jungle (Village Forests) came under the Forest Department.	The village forest which was also known as the *kshera-jungle* also came under the control of the Forest Department in 1958. This resulted in the loss of the tenurial rights of the people over the forests and made the forest administration a centralised organisation.
1972	The Orissa Forest Act	This Act was passed to make the forest administration stronger with respect to control over the forest resources. However, it is evident that this did not provide any tenurial security to the people who depend on the forests. This Act redefined the Forest Categories; dividing

		them into three parts and rights were provided to the state government to declare any land as Reserved Forest. However, under the subject of village forest, some provisions were made for the management of such forests by the community. The act also suggested the formation of the village forest protection committee and provided power to the Forest Department on controlling cutting, sawing, conversion and removal of trees
1973	Nationalisation of Kendu Leaf	This initiative was a part of the attempt to control forest products after reorganising administration and taking control over the forest lands. This act was enacted to control the production of *kendu* leaves through nationalisation of this item. The forest administration from this year onwards created a new wing called the *kendu* leaf wing under the Forest Department.
1985	The Odisha Village Forest Rules	This rule was the first attempt to devolve the power of forest management to the local people and local level organisations or committees (VFC). This act was a part of the decentralisation process, notwithstanding the fact that authoritative powers were retained by the Forest Administration, which was quoted as follows "the government shall issue necessary instructions from time to time in the rights and constitution and management of village forests".
1988	The National Forest Policy	The 2nd National Forest Policy during the post-independence period provided a decentralised and participatory approach to the management of forest resources. With regard to the administration of the Forest Department, the policy suggested that the "government should enhance the professional competency of the foresters and scientists keeping in view the nature of their Work". Further, qualified and motivated staff must be

		retained and encouraged. With regard to the finances of the forests, the policy viewed that forest should not be viewed as the source of revenue and there should be substantial investment by the state and central government. These statements confirmed the aspect of decentralisation that was laid down through this provision.
1990	Joint Forest Management Resolution	The JFM Resolution of 1990 was a step towards democratisation of forests in India. This initiative in 1988 further enlarged and came into existence in 1990. This resolution also paved the way for the devolution of authority to the local- level of institutions for effective management of the forest resources, which is an important component of decentralised forest governance. Local governments were also included in the management process emphasising the need for a decentralised management system.
2002	The Orissa NTFP Rule	This was an important aspect of decentralising the NTFP management by involving multiple actors and institutions such as primary collectors, and the PRIs into the system. This ended the long-standing centralised pattern of NTFP management in Odisha.
2008	The FRA Act of 2006	The Forest Rights Act, 2006 came into force in Odisha in 2008, which is a progressive legislation to protect the community rights and livelihoods on forest. The process of implementation is based on a well-designed governance model such as the Village-Intermediary-District (VLC-SDLC-DLC), which has made the forest governance system participatory. The issue of decision making through participatory approach has been given focus.
2011	The JFM Resolution	The earlier JFM Resolution was amended and certain components were changed to make the

		decntralisation process pro-people. The structure and function of the VSS has been changed, grouping them under two categories- the Vana *Surakshya Samities*(VSSs) and Eco-Development Committees(EDCs).
2013	Deregulation of Kendu Leaf Collection and Trade	The Forest Department in the recent year has started to provide the powers of collection and trading of *Kendu* Leaf to the local institutions such as the PRIs and this initiative was made in two tribal districts in Odisha, Nawrangpur and Koraput(partly). This initiative also aims to strengthen the process of decentralisation and fulfill the livelihood needs of the tribal people.

Source: Compilation of different policy related documents and Government Orders in Odisha

Apart from the above legal provisions and administrative decisions, the Government of Odisha has also changed the administrative pattern of the Forest Department by enhancing the number of field units which has been highlighted in Table 3.8.

3.4.2.2.Emergence of Decentralisation and Devolution of Authority

The emergence of decentralisation as an instrument of forest management is a part of the policy reforms process based on the rapid depletion of forest resources and the failure of the forest bureaucracy to manage the forest resources effectively. The issue of decentralisation of forest governance emerged as a reactionary policy process and it is evident from Table-3.7 that till 1970, the issue of decentralisation did not figure in the policy papers. However, the most significant aspect of forest governance is that the entire process of decentralisation was confined to the management of forest conservation and related issues without devolving powers to the lower-level units and local institutions to implement such rules as per their traditional conservation mechanism and local wisdom. The Odisha Village Forest Rules of 1985 was a significant attempt to devolve the powers to the local level institutions, particularly the village level organisations and the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) for the effective management of the forests. However, the rule was framed in such a way that the system was controlled by the forest bureaucrats. This was particularly because of their long-standing legacy with the British administration and strong feeling that the forests are the property of the Forest Department.

However, the 1988 forest policy was a progressive initiative as the policy suggested some measures to make the forest administration decentralised and pro-people. The

1988 policy emerged at the national level after a strong demand from the activists and CSOs for recognising the customary rights of the forest dwellers particularly the STs, over the forests. However, there was a strong reaction after the enactment of the Forest Conservation Act in 1980, which was a drastic measure that completely undermines the rights of the people over the forest resources. Several provisions of the 1980 Act were amended in 1988 in the context of the implementation of the National Forest Policy, 1988.

The Government of Odisha also prepared a Vision Document[4] for the Odisha Forest Sector, summarising the key principles, major forest elements such as improved forest and condition, enhanced forest coverage, and improved livelihoods, which also reflects the emphasis on decentralisation of the forest governance system.

Figure-3.1: Forest Governance and Key Influencing Factors in Odisha
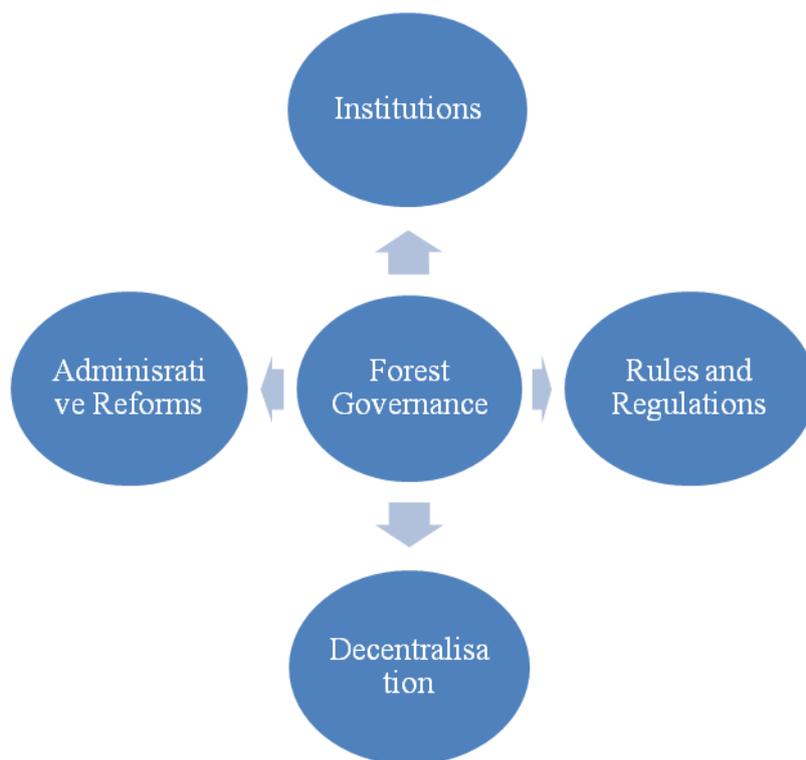
Source: Based on the Evolution of Forest Governance in Odisha

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4 Odisha Forest Sector-Elements of a Vision, 2005(draft)

The current pattern of forest governance and the decentralisation process in Odisha is more or less guided by the 1988 policy, though the Forest Conservation Act of 1980 still guides the forest administration process with regard to acquisition of the forest land for different projects. The emergence of the PFM approach, and progressive legislations such as the FRA have also had positive impacts on the decentralisation process, though the ground reality shows that decentralisation has been turned into departmentalisation because of the over-reaching attitude of the forest administration in the functioning of the community based groups and institutions.

3.4.2.3. Institutional Arrangements and Administrative Reforms

Forest governance in the case of Odisha, as in the other parts of the globe, is believed to be guided by the three approaches of management such as pluralistic, managerial and communitarian (Mohanty and Sahoo; 2012). The evolution of the neo-political order, formal and informal institutions, and the neo-liberal economic regime has significantly affected the strides of the forest governance in the state. Presently, the emergence of the issue of rights has motivated the state's administrative apparatus to embark on the path of decentralisation, either covertly or overtly which also helps improve the forest governance regime in the state. The institutional arrangements have also witnessed a change over the period of time with the evolution of decentralised forest governance and policies.

Institutional Arrangements

Forest governance in Odisha was more or less based on the colonial approach, which gradually reached a new phase with the emergence of multiple institutional frameworks. The initiative to manage forest resources through an institutional framework through formulating appropriate policies is gradually being shaped, and has now reached a new stage. Appropriate institutional arrangements to manage the forest resources in the state have been gradually redesigned in the context of political, economic and ecological aspects of forest management.

The current management mechanism of the state's forest resources lies with the state's Forest Department, which was created during the pre-independence period. During the colonial period, the state was under different administrative regions (Bengal, Madras, and Central Province), which contributed to a peculiar type of heterogeneous forest administrative system in the state. When the State of Odisha was created on 1st April 1936, attempts were made to remove the anomalies by bringing the forest administration under a homogeneous administrative framework. Soon after independence, reorganisation of the state's Forest Department began, and gradually evolved during the different periods of time.

The present state of the forest administration in Odisha reveals that there are three administrative wings; territorial or forest, wild-life and *kendu* leaf under the Odisha Forest Department (OFD). The following diagram depicts the administrative hierarchy of the OFD.

Figure-3.2: Administrative Hierarchy of Odisha Forest Department
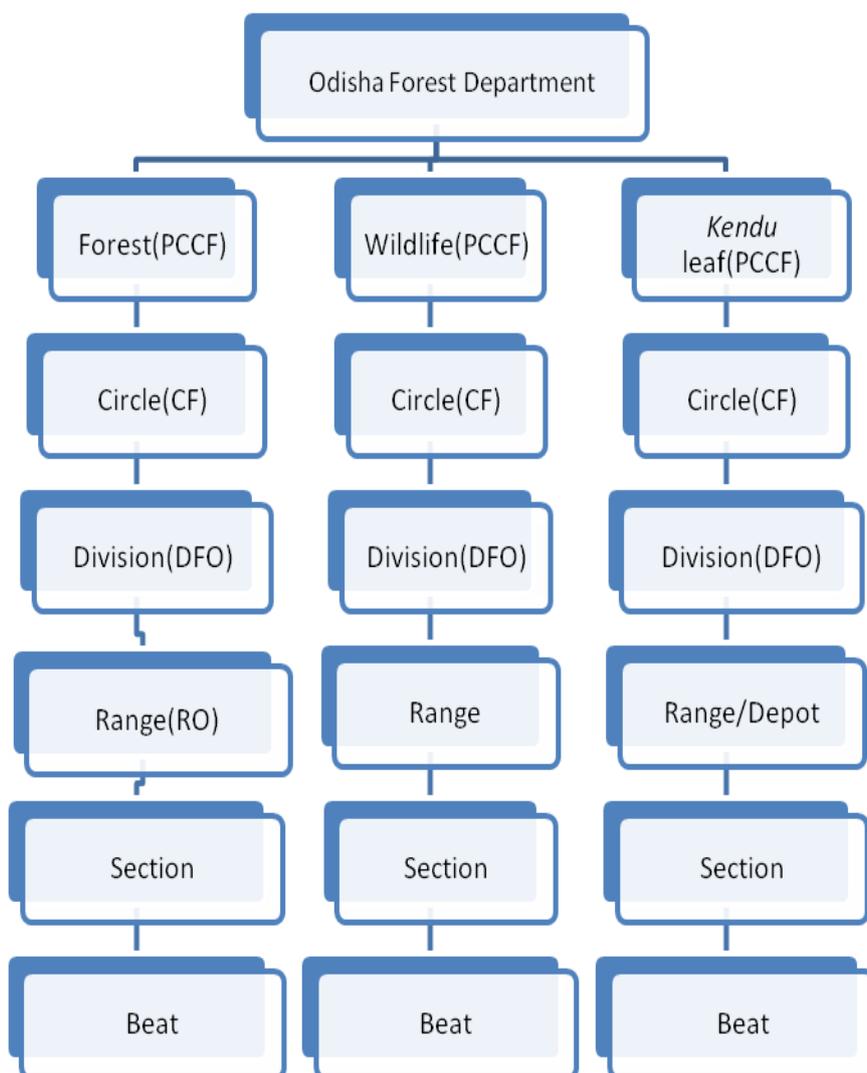
Under the each wing, there are circles, divisions, ranges, sections and beat offices, which are headed by a designated authority. Table-3.8 provides the status of the administrative set-up of the OFD.

Table-3.8: Administrative Set-Up of Odisha Forest Department

Wings	Odisha Forest Department(excluding the world food program)						
	Circle	No.	Division	No.	Range	Section	Beat
Forest	Forest	8	Forest	37	221	816	3147
			Working Plan	8			
	Development	1	Silviculture	2			
			FRS	1			
Wildlife	2		13		60	185	527
Kendu Leaf	3		19		165	663	0
Total	14		80		446	1664	3674

Source: Odisha Forest Status Report, 2003-2004, PCCF, Odisha, Arayana Bhawan, Bhubaneswar.

As per the Odisha Forest Status Report, 2003-2004, the OFD has three major wings, i.e. forest, wildlife and *kendu* leaf, under which there are 14 circles (forest-9, wildlife-2 and *kendu* leaf-3), 80 divisions, 446 ranges, 1664 sections, and 3764 beat offices. The number of administrative units of the Forest Department was enhanced significantly, considering the nature of its work. Such administrative reorganisation process also been carried out in order to ensure work efficiency.

Emergence of the Informal Institutions

According to Madhu Sarin (1996: 168-73) there are three categories of institutions that are involved in managing the forests in India. First are those which emerged out of local initiatives, such as the many committees in Odisha and Bihar, which are managed by the village youth clubs or village elders, in many cases, for protecting the village forest land, as well as the reserve forest. The second category is the institutions promoted by the Forest Department, especially in the states, with large donor-funded forestry projects such as Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. Finally, there are committees initiated by NGOs, which have been undertaking forest protection in addition to their other functions. In the case of Odisha, both the community-based forest-management system, which is otherwise known as CFM, and the Forest Department initiated JFM, which is involved in the management of forests. Under this initiative, thousands of hectares of forest land are being managed through the state-society partnership approach.

Community Forest Management (CFM) and Institutions

Community Forest Management (CFM) is a "situation that intimately involves local people in a forest activity which embraces a spectrum of situations ranging from woodlots in the areas short of wood and other forest products for local needs to the growing of trees at formal level" (The Forest Trust, n.d).Odisha has the traditional practice of a self-

initiated forest management system, which can be observed in the different parts of the state. The process, which is a part of the traditional system, still continues and has become a vibrant method for managing thousands of hectares of forest lands without support from the Forest Department.

In Odisha, over 8000 villages (Vasundhara, 2005) are actively protecting and managing state appropriated lands in their vicinity. There are 12,000 CFM groups who have been managing 8,50,000 ha forests in the state which is 40% of the total forest area.(Odisha Jungle Manch,2012) These groups, under the banner of VSS, have formed their own management system, devised a self-management mechanism, and through the process of collaboration among the different groups, have formed district and state-level federations for such purpose. Such democratic and autonomous institutions have become a guiding force for others, especially for the forest bureaucracy, for managing forests effectively. Nonetheless, adequate policies to manage the CFMs in the state have fallen under the line of "structure-actor problematic", (tested several times by the policy theorists in the fores sector) thereby disallowing the state to frame appropriate policies towards these self-initiated forest management groups. Even though there is a huge claim about their success in managing forest resources, their presence has been rarely mentioned in different policy debates, particularly legislative debates. Data collected from the State Legislative Assembly on forest policy debates reveals that the presence of CFM was never mentioned in such discussions despite their huge success in the forest conservation and contribution to the policy process as Non-State Actors.

Joint Forest Management (JFM) and Institutions

Joint Forest Management (JFM), which emerged in the state through the JFM Resolution of 1990[5], and further amended in 1993 and 2012, was based on the principle of community participation in the arena of forest management. Observing the consequences of rapid forest depletion, and the vociferous opposition from the community and civil society groups with regard to rights over forest resources, the JFM policy came as a derivative to address those concerns. Despite severe criticism over the principle of "jointness" (Sundar, 2000, Nelson and Right, 1995:6), the provisions of the resolution are being implemented in the state since 1990.

JFM in Odisha has supported the management of the vast forest land, and as per data, nearly 9377 (PCCF, 2005) VSS groups have been formed for managing the 817,788 hectares of forest land in the state.

Table-3.9 reveals that out of the 1,698,065 households involved in JFM, 40% belong to the STs and 15% belong to SCs. The forest areas covered through JFM is 14% of the

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[5] JFM Resolution, Government of Odisha, 1990.

total forest land in the state. The JFM programme in Odisha has also received special fiscal assistance under the Revised Long-term Action Plan (RLTAP) in undivided KBK districts and the National Afforestation Programme (NAP). During the Tenth Five Year Plan period, a sum of Rs.606.58 million was sanctioned by the Government of India for forest rehabilitation under which 1140 VSS groups were included. Further, under the RLTAP, about 3712 VSS were involved in forest rehabilitation in the KBK districts.

Table: 3.9: Summary of JFM in Odisha (till 2005)

Number of VSS Groups Formed	9,377 VSSs(March 2005)
Number of VSS Member Families	1,698,065 households (March, 2005), 40% of the VSS members belong to Scheduled Tribes and 15% are Scheduled Castes.
Total JFM Areas	8,17,788 ha. approximately 14% of total forestland in Odisha (March,2005)
An average VSS	Approximately 181 member families and with 87 ha as its JFM area

Source: (i), PCCF Odisha Office and DFOs, (ii), Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), 2005

3.4.2.4. Decentralised Forest Governance and Community Participation

Participation has been viewed as an important aspect of decentralisation and an instrument for effective, accountable and peoples' oriented governance system. Since the last few decades, the issue of participation has emerged as an instrument of good governance, as peoples' participation, along with accountability and transparency is often mentioned with a strong view to make decentralised forest governance effective and pro-people. Participation with respect to decision making processes (meetings), management of the forests and sharing of benefits has become an important subset of decentralised forest governance in Odisha. Particularly, the era PFM, which was implemented in 1990 as per the JFM Resolution, and evolved in 1985 as per the Odisha Village Forest Rule, has made a strong presence in the current forest governance process.

In Odisha, community participation is not a new phenomenon. The process of CFM and mechanism of participation was observed in 1950, and is still continuing in certain parts of the state. The community conservation process within a well-designed village-level management framework such as the Village Forest Committee or Village Forest Protection Committee are the backbone of the community-level forest management process and decision-making systems. Such issues have been highlighted by the researchers (Patnaik and Brahmachari, 1996) in different studies. These studies summarise that "with response to the depletion of forest resources, some villages had undertaken active measures for protection and conservation of forests way back in the 1940s-50s". However,

with the gradual shift of the forest administration through the different phases starting from British India to Independent India, community participation has been trapped under the state-framed rules and regulations.

However, participation as a mechanism was introduced in 1988 onwards with the passage of the National Forest Policy which summarised that "community participation needs to be promoted for the restoration of the ecological balance and sustainable management of the forests". Further, the policy also stressed upon the participation of people, particularly women, and their groups in the management of forests". This motivated many states including Odisha towards the JFM resolution in 1990, and promoting joint-management mechanism in the forests. Further, the theory of network in forest resource management is also seen as an important component for promoting participation. The formation of the village-level forest protection committees, apex- level committees and federations has brought together the dispersed community for forest conservation and management.

Box, 3.4: Odisha Jungle Manch-A Forum for Promoting Community Participation in Forest Governance

The issue of participation in the decision making bodies and management processes in forest governance in Odisha has been shaped through the emergence of the forest protection groups and federations. Particularly in the case of Odisha, the CFM process has been taken forward by the emergence of informal and self-initiated forest management groups. Further, the formation of district and state level federations has also strengthened the participation process and contributed to the governance of forest management in the state.

In this regard, the formation of the Odisha Jungle Manch, a state-level federation of the 12,000 community management groups and 24 District Forest Federations, is a milestone in the process of PFM. The federation came into existence in 1993. Since its establishment, the forum has contributed immensely to the policy process and implementation of the different forest policies and programmes in the state. The forum through the approach of participatory management, has become able to protect and conserve 8, 50,000 ha of forests in the state which is 40% of the total forest coverage. Such contribution has enhanced people's participation in the forest governance process and decision making forums.

Source: Newsletter, Odisha Jungle Manch

However, the recent issue of participation has also created a conflicting situation in several places with regard to delivery of functions and sharing of resources. During our visit to field and interaction with the JFM committee members in the districts of Koraput and Sundargarh, the VSS Members described how the dominance on the forest

administration has diluted the process of participation despite a progressive policy such as the JFM.

3.5. Can Decentralised Forest Governance Address the Issue of Livelihoods? Findings from the Field

Forest governance in Odisha has gone through different phases, and as a result the issue of decentralisation has emerged. Starting as a highly bureaucratic and rigid administrative unit in the British Government, the process of governance and the decntralisation policies introduced certain changes in the decision-making process of the forest department. This is believed to be partly influenced by the demand for rights and justice by the people, particularly by the forest fringe communities and the progressive civil society groups. However, whether or not the decentralisation policies and process have strengthened the livelihood system or not is a matter of further study, since there are divergent views among policy researchers on this particular issue. The critics of forest decentralisation argue that the so-called devolution policies as propagated by the government are increasingly "decreasing space for exercising democratic control over forest management decisions, adversely affecting livelihoods" (Sarin, 2003).

However, our interaction with the different people, civil society organisations and the Forest Department officials shows that appropriate policy reforms with focus on decentralisation can change the functioning of the institutions, either formal or informal, and such institutional changes can affect the livelihoods of the people in a positive way. In the context of the implementation of the NTFP rule, the FRA, and the JFM, the livelihoods of the forest dependent communities have seen a positive change, though the issues such as equity, participation, and transparency have hindered the process of decentralisation and affected the livelihoods system.

3.6. Summary of Findings

To sum up, forest governance in the state is closely linked with the political history of Odisha and is guided by the different policies. Therefore, in the case of Odisha, policy process has a positive effect on the functioning of the forest administration and improving the governance system.

Rapid depletion of forest resources in the state during the 80s is a key factor for the changing of the functioning of the forest governance and formulation and implementation of the different pro-people policies. It is observed that the era of community participation through the process of decentralisation was initiated during 1980 in the context of massive destruction of forests.

The early stage of the post-80 policy reforms was based on the reactionary approach to address the forest destruction issues, which gradually turned into pro-active policy

measures. However, these policies were framed to test the model of decentralisation in the forest governance system.

Forest administration in the last few years seems to be closer to the people, particularly towards the different forest protection groups and their apex institutions (federations), which also created a participatory atmosphere for the state's forest policy environment. During our discussion with the forest officials in Sundargarh District of Odisha, the DFO expressed that "the forest administration at the ground level wants to be closer to the people" so that the pro-poor policies such as the JFM and FRA can be implemented effectively.

The policy of the State Government with regard to the management of NTFPs has changed since 2002, and is believed to have provided more livelihood security to the poor tribals. However, from the field observation and discussions with key stakeholders it was observed that issues such as minimum price for NTFPs, marketing potential, and the role of the local governments with regard to the management of NTFPs, have been preventing the primary collectors from receiving the actual value of the NTFPs.

The implementation of different forest policies in the case of Odisha also reveals the dominance of forest bureaucracy in the process of decentralisation and decision making. This is particularly visible in the case of the implementation of the JFM, in several parts of the state.

The success of the self-initiated forest conservation mechanism has not been figured out properly and no policy process has recognised the presence of these groups, despite their initiative to make the forest administration pro-people and promote participatory approach in forest management.

Hence, forest administration should not follow the process of decentralisation per se; rather they must follow it in letter and spirit. Particularly, effective forest governance at the field level can provide effective and pro-people administrative system.

Chapter-4
DECENTRALISED FOREST GOVERNANCE, POLICIES AND LIVELIHOODS: THE CASE OF ODISHA

4.1. Introduction

The livelihood issues in the forest sector in Odisha have become a matter of concern for the policy makers, planners, and policy researchers, as it is viewed that forest policies framed and reframed in the state are far away from the aspirations of the forest dependent communities. Further, the forest administration in the state since the days of independence has continuously ignored the livelihood needs of the people living in the forest-fringe areas. However, the recent regime of forest governance and policy process has seen some positive changes, which encouraged many researchers to explore such changes and understand the underlined processes and effects. Similarly, the policy process in the forest governance system in Odisha has also changed and decentralisation has become an instrument to bring reform measures in the forest administration. The emergence of PFM has also contributed significantly to the decentralisation process and livelihoods of the dependent communities. Considering these changes, this chapter makes a humble attempt to understand the nature of the different forest policies, particularly the different legal provisions and their association with the livelihoods of the forest-fringe communities. This chapter has also captured some ground-level facts in order to examine the implications of the different forest policies.

In this chapter, our focus is to understand the process of the forest policies in Odisha and how such policies have evolved during the different periods. With regard to the effects of these policies on the livelihoods of the forest dwellers, we have also tried to understand the current forest-based livelihoods programmes being implemented by the forest and other line departments in the different forest regions in the state. While in the previous chapter, we have focused on the decentralised forest governance system and whether decentralisation can address the livelihood need of the forest dwellers, in this chapter we have tried to focus on the policies which deals with the livelihoods and the context and background of the evolution of such policies.

4.2. The Indian Context

Forest Policy in the Indian context has a close relationship with the political history of India. Since independence, the Government of India has framed different forest policies, Acts, Rules and Government Orders to manage the forest resources. Particularly two major forest policies such as the Forest Policy of 1952 and the Forest Policy of 1988 were framed for effective forest governance, and the management of forest resources to restore ecological balance and promote the PFM mechanism. Table-4.1 discusses the salient features of the two forest policies framed in India and the processes, contexts and Livelihood issues focused by these two policies.

Table- 4.1: Forest Policies in India-A Critical Analysis between 1952 and 1988 Policies

Policy and Year	Context and Major Focus	Aspects of Livelihoods
National Forest Policy,1952	The first Indian Forest Policy was framed on 12th May, 1952 to manage the forest resources through a government-framed administrative structure. While framing this policy, there was a declaration that the forest policy should be based on national interest. Many people believe that this was an extension of British Policy. The Policy was framed mainly combining two objectives which are the two sides of a same coin such as to prevent cutting trees and to increase government revenue from forests. Through this policy, the traditional pattern of forest bureaucracy and state dominating attitude over the forest resources were reflected.	This policy was more or less focused on the forest revenue and economic plantation. The most dissenting fact is that the policy intended to bring all the forest resources under the government's control rather than affecting community conservation. The interests of the tribals were overlooked and national interest such as destruction of forest for major projects was given priority. Lands used by the forest dwellers were treated as illegal and these people were termed as "encroachers". Therefore, this policy was against the livelihood needs of the people.
National Forest Policy, 1988	The National Forest Policy of 1988 was a reaction to the rapid depletion of forest resources in India, the increasing concern for the livelihoods of the forest	This forest policy was focused on participatory forest management which is considerd as a means to bridge the livelihood needs of the forest dwellers, though the real

dwellers, and an admission of the failure of the National Forest Policy of 1952. This policy for the first time tried to combine conservation and livelihoods while focusing on the participation of people in the conservation and management of forest resources. This policy unlike the 1952 policy conceded that forest is not a source of revenue.

motive was to enhance the forest cover through enhancing community involvement in forest management. This policy also partly admitted that NTFP is a major source of livelihoods and the production should increase in order to fulfill the needs of the forest dwellers. The rights of the tribals with regard to access to the forests should be fully protected. Though all these provisions were made to improve the livelihoods, the so-called Joint Forest Management and policy related to this approach is currently more biased towards conservation and plantation rather than on livelihoods.

Source: Compilation of the two forest policies in India

Apart from these two forest policies, the Government of India also made several legal provisions which are the reflections of the policies of the government towards forest management. Further, the approach papers of the various five-year plans also pronounced the policies of the government towards the management of forests. However, the forest policy and policy-making process began to witness a new dimension since the year 1980, when a discussion was initiated among the policy makers and practitioners' circle, particularly by the non-state actors, regarding effective forest policy process. Such development came when the draft forest bill of 1980 was circulated among these people for their views. Then onwards, the policy process in forests opened a new dimension and as a result, the National Forest Policy emerged as a pro-poor policy.

Box-4.1: The Draft Forest Bill 1980 and Debates on Policy Making Process

On the basis of the recommendations of the National Commission on Agriculture (NCA), regarding the necessity of a new all-India forest act, the Government of India in 1980 framed and circulated the draft forest bill, which received widespread criticism not only regarding the contentious subjects but also the manner in which policies and legal provisions in the forestry sector in the country are being prepared and implemented. Therefore, this debate raised the question of policy process in the Indian forestry sector and encouraged many

NGOs and activists to raise their voice about the forest policy process and raised demands about the wider consultation with different stakeholders while making policies for the forests. This is perhaps the first time after independence; that there was a debate on the relevance of the rational-policy approach, which gradually turned the forest policy process into a political process. This development also forced the Government of India to re-examine the existing forest policies and suggest suitable measures for a new forest policy, which came in 1988 as the National Forest Policy.

Source: Compilation of different Forest Policy Related Developments in India

In the recent policy making process, forests appear to be the major focus of the non-state actors and this was evident when the FRA emerged in the policy-making process and, after a long debate on the various aspects of this act, the bill was finally enacted in 2006. FRA has now become a major policy provision to address the livelihood needs of the forest-fringe communities.

4.3: The Odisha Context

The forest policies in Odisha have witnessed several changes since the independence and the current policy frameworks are guided by two major approaches such as conservation and management. While in the conservation approach, community participation and regeneration have been given paramount importance, under the management approach two sub-sets such as formal-conventional management and informal-customary management are given importance. So in the current age of forest governance and policy process, Odisha has witnessed a paradigm shift and this strategic policy shift is a response towards the widespread failure of the governments to arrest deforestation, control illegal activities, or generate the desired equity of benefits under the system of state forest ownership and control.

In the case of forests in Odisha, while such resources are seen as the fundamental components of life for millions of rural inhabitants, the different governments have generally been viewed forests as a source of revenue (Webb, 2007). This has resulted in the deprivation of customary rights, which are claimed to be a part of policy reforms in the form of centralisation by enacting different legislations in order to retain the ultimate rights over forests and forest lands. De Haan (2006) argues that the institutions determining forest access are far from traditional. According to N.C.Saxena, under colonial authority, firm control over forests was established with revenue generation as the key objective, which still influences in the form of formal instructions for officers (De Haan cited in Saxena, 1993:7). However, since the last two decades, the forest policy process in the state has witnessed a significant change. This is a part of the ongoing policy

reforms that have given birth to new institutions for managing such resources.

Starting from the colonial era to the current regime, the forest policies of the state have evolved through different stages, and witnessed certain changes as far as policy process and implementations are concerned. Such changes have not only happened in Odisha, but all over the world and this can be considered as an outcome of the pro-poor policy reforms. The emerging significance of the social capital theory and its successful integration in formulating and implementing policies, particularly in the area of natural resource management, has given birth to participatory policy process by synergising the state-society relationship. This has helped in the formulation of pro-poor policies in the case of forest management, which is reflected in the case of PFM in Odisha (Sangita, 2008).

Hobly (2007) cites that the aim of the pro-poor policy is to improve the assets and capabilities of the poor. Pro-poor policies can influence the livelihood system of millions of poor people, which can be claimed as a success of the policy reforms. De Hann (2006) observed that the well -being of the people in the forest areas through livelihood opportunities and access to markets is greatly influenced by public policies and institutions and how these have evolved over time.

4.3.1. Major Forest Policies and Legal Provisions in Odisha

The evolution of forest policies in Odisha can be broadly categorised into five phases, based on their nature and extent towards ensuring livelihoods for the dependent communities. These are (i) the early phase or the phase of evolution. (ii) the phase of expanding state's legitimacy, (iii) the phase of revenue maximisation through controlling resources and exploiting forest commons, (iv) the phase of institutionalisation and community participation, and (v) the phase of recognising the rights and livelihoods of the forest commons. The process of bringing such policies is based on concomitant socio-political scenario, economic situation, and the issues of rights and livelihoods of the forest-dependent communities. The legal framework of such policies are based on "retaining maximum interests of state", while the political framework was based on "providing livelihoods security" for the forest-dependent communities which is a key contestation factor in the policy process.

Following is the description of each phase of the evolution of the forest policies.

Early phase or phase of evolution

It is argued that the forest policy process in the case of Odisha is linked with certain historical contexts-either deprivation of rights over resources or the emerging needs of community conservation, based on the policies of colonial regime. During the colonial

regime, the forest policies in the state were guided by the colonial policies of revenue exploitation and maximisation of revenue. During these periods, though there was no explicit forest policy, forest governance was guided by a number of legal provisions, which were aimed at restricting the community's access to forest resources.

In 1883-84, when Odisha was part of the Bengal Presidency, there was a forest division called the Orissa Division amongst the 10 forest divisions in the United Province of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, under one conservator of forest with headquarters at Darjeeling (Patnaik and Brahmachari, 1996). For the first time, restriction was imposed on the forest-dwelling communities on free access to forest resources, which were part of their sustenance livelihoods. In 1878, the Indian Forest Act was enforced by the British Government, which classified forest as reserve, protected, and village forestS. Guha (1983) argues that while there was considerable debate within the colonial bureaucracy itself (on the 1878 Forest Act),in the end it was decided to treat the customary use of the forest by the Indian villagers as based on "privilege", and not on "right'. During the period from 1865 to 1927, in order to legitimate state's control over forest resources, a series of legal provisions were made.

Forest Policies during the Post-Independence Period
Prior to independence, by and large, all the forests in Odisha were managed under the Indian Forest Act (IFA) 1927, except those in the districts of Ganjam, Koraput and a small part of Phulbani, where the Madras Forest Act was in place to govern the forest resources. This situation continued till 1972, when a new act was introduced to govern the forests in Odisha. The post-independence forest policy in the state was also historically linked with the colonial forest policy which initially curtailed the traditionally-held rights of the forest communities progressively through the policy process, but later (1985 onwards) it emphasised on the interests of such communities. Particularly since 1988 onwards, the Odisha Forest Policy and legal frameworks witnessed relatively pro-people policy measures such as the JFM Resolution, Orissa Minor Forest Produce Administration Rule, the FRA and the recently-revised JFM Resolution in 2011.

Phase of Expanding State's Legitimacy (1947-1972)
During this phase, from the year 1947 till the enactment of the Odisha Forest Act in 1972, the state's dominance over the forest resources continued and was a major part of the policy process. Particularly the nature of the Odisha Forest Act of 1972 was more or less a reflection of the colonial legacy on the Indian Forest Policy, where there was no place for the forest dwellers with regard to their livelihoods. The whole process was based on fulfilling two core objectives, such as, to strengthening the state's legitimacy over the forest resources presuming such resources to be state's property; and expanding

the wings of street-level forest bureaucracy to establish claim over such legitimacy. The rationalist approach of the forest policy came in the form of the National Forest Policy in 1952 and played a major role in controlling forest resources all over India, including Odisha. During this phase, a series of legal provisions were made including the Orissa Forest Act in 1972, which is argued to be a blue-print of the Indian Forest Act of 1927. As a part of its policy measures, the State Government took another foray to strengthen the forest administration in Odisha, with a tacit effort to lay the foundation for revenue maximisation by taking complete control over the forest resources, and subjugating the customary rights of the forest-dependent communities.

Prior to 1972, two types of the forest legislations were implemented in the state; one was the Madras Forest Act-1882 which was in force in the District of Ganjam, Koraput, and some areas of Kondhamal District, while the remaining part of the state was under the purview of the Indian Forest Act, 1927. This dualism prevailed due to the fact, as mentioned earlier, that Odisha before 1936 was under different provinces such as Bengal, Bihar, Madras, and the Central Province. However, the forest enquiry committee constituted in 1959 suggested for a common legal framework, which came into effect in 1972 as the Orissa Forest Act, 1972. Rout (n.d) summarises that "the policy of commercialisation, which was at the centre of the forest policy during the British Raj, was reinforced, intensified and extended even after independence. The legal successor to the colonialstate, the political and economic elites of the modern Independent India, continued to rely on the earlier colonial legal framework, thus reinforcing the rights of the state to exclusive control over forest protection and management. The most significant aspect of this period was the large absence of the non-state actors (NGOs, activists groups, forest protection groups) and thus all the policy decisions were unilateral and pro-government. Dominance of the forest bureaucracy and lack of vision among the political classes had made the entire process rational. Of course, there was division among the political classes over certain policy decisions, particularly the decision over the classification of forests, the NTFPs, particularly *Kendu* leaves, the bureaucratic elite took advantage of this situation and managed to put their ideas on the power corridors.

Box-4.2:Forest Products and the Policies of National Interest

The forest policy debates during the period from 1947 to 1972 paved the way for the formulation of a number of legal provisions to control the forest resources for revenue maximisation. After controlling the forest land and redesigning the physical boundaries through the different policies, the State Government aspired to control the forest products under the pretext of national interest. The first Indian Forest Policy which also mentioned

revenue exploitation as an objective added fuel to such initiatives influencing the policy decisions. After controlling the forest lands through a number of legal provisions, the policy makers next attempted to control the forest products through the trade monopolistic legal provisions. The formation of the Odisha Forest Development Corporation Ltd., leasing of bamboo forests to the industrial houses, providing the *kendu* leaves collection rights to the private contractors and further the nationalisation of the *kendu* leaves were based on the intention of the state to control the trade of the forest products considering the fact that forest products are the potential source of revenue maximisation. Such trade monopoly rights over the forest products were framed on the basis of the policy of "national interest".

Source: Analysis of the different forest policies

Phase of Revenue Maximisation through Controlling Resources and Exploiting Forest Commons (1972-1988)

During this phase, the crucial component of the forest policy process was based on a pre-decided notion that forest-dwelling communities are the main contributors to deforestation and they should be controlled by some state-driven laws. As a part of this process, policies of conservation and control emerged as major decisions in the state, which were not only confined to territorial control but went beyond the boundaries. During this period, the omnipotent Wildlife Protection Act and Forest Conservation Act (1980) came as an offshoot of the forest policy in Odisha, restricting the rights of the forest dwellers both on forest lands and NTFP. Livelihood issues of the forest commons were largely ignored, as the whole policy was intended to collect revenue from the forest products. The booming of non-tax forest revenue began from the year 1971 and continued till 1991 in the case of major forest products including timber, bamboo, and kendu leaves (Table-3.6) because of different forest policies which emerged during this period.

However, 1980 onwards, the policy process witnessed two important discourses such as populist discourse and conservation discourse. The populist discourse was based on the demand over rights on forest resources and equal share over the forest products, while the pro-conservationists started to raise the issue of rapid depletion of forest resources, wild animals and diversion of forest lands for the mega-projects in the state. Of course the year 1980 was also significant in Odisha's political history, because of the new government that came into power; it was a one-party led stable government which continued till 1985 and further till 1989(second term). However, the hypothesis that "political stability may lead to policy stability", was proved to be wrong in some cases as most of the policies received huge criticism because of the anti-people policies, except

for the Orissa Village Forest Rule of 1985. The policy failure in the forest sector also led to the emergence of different environmental movements such as the National Test Range Centre Movement of Baliapal(1985), Gandhamardan Bauxite Movement(1985) and Save Chilika Movement (*Chilika Banchao Andolan*) (1991). Even at the national level, environment movements such as Silent Vally Movement (1978), *Narmada Bachao Andolan* (1980) and Appiko Movement (1983) in Western Ghats in Karnataka, also greatly influenced the forest policy process across the country, including Odisha. This scenario led to the formulation of pro-poor policies such as the JFM Resolutions (1988 and 1990) in the state.

However, the forest policy after 1985 took a new dimension and tended to be pro-people in nature because of the serious concerns raised by the activists, NGOs, and environmentalists in the state. This also led to the development of a participatory forest policy and forest management programme which came through the National Forest Policy in 1988 and Joint Forest Management Resolutions in 1988, 1990 and subsequently in 2011.

Box.4.3.Kendu Leaves, Policies and Livelihoods in Odisha: How Policy Emerged?

The *kendu* leaf policies in the state till the 1973 were based on intense factional politics and politics of the forest bureaucrats that wanted to control the kendu leaves production in the name of national interest. However, the policy was mainly an outcome of reaction against the *kendu* leaves traders, who enjoyed monopoly rights over the resource after obtaining license from the Forest Department. The license system was also based on "rent-seeking policies" in which the forest officials and the politicians were involved. Further, the increasing factional politics coupled with influence of the forest bureaucrats to control the *kendu* leaves trade led to the nationalisation of this product in 1973 in the state.

Phase of Institutionalisation and Community Participation (1988-2006)
The participatory forest management era emerged as a part of the policy reforms in Odisha with an objective to ensure community participation in forest management. The emphasis on community participation emerged both from the problem stream as well as the policy stream. In the problem stream, there was a huge demand from the forest-dependent communities and civil society groups, coupled with shrinking forest resources. On the other hand, from the policy stream, the government was interested to maintain green cover, as a part of its commitment to green politics. The National Forest Policy came into light in 1988 as a part of the policy process, which stressed on the need for community-based conservation as a strategy for sustainable management of forest resources. The policy was based on protection, management, and conservation of forest

resources. Institutional orders also witnessed significant change with the emergence of formal and informal organisations such as the Forest Protection Committees (FPCs) under CFM and the *Van Samrakshyana Samities* (VSSs) under the JFM. The self-initiated community forest groups which were in existence since a long time spread their wings during this period. The JFM resolution, which was implemented in 1990, also initiated the PFM process in the state. Besides, the institutionalisation of these formal and informal self-governing institutions took place gradually, and in the current scenario of forest management these institutions have been playing a crucial role in managing thousands of hectares of forest lands.

Box-4.4: NTFP Policies and their Implications on Livelihoods

The NTFPs contribute immensely to the livelihoods of the forest dwellers, particularly the adivasies in Odisha. NTFPs also play a crucial role in the rural livelihoods in Odisha, supporting both household consumption requirement as well as employment and income during lean periods. Prior to March 2000, the state's NTFP policy was regulatory and revenue oriented. However, due to the strong criticism against the policy from a cross section of the society, the state made changes to it in march 2000. The new policy deregulates trades, handing over procurement rights of 68 items to the Gram Sabha. Further, it abolished the state price fixation committee and empowered the district-level authority (collector), and the Panchayat Samities to fix the prices of NTFPs in consultation with different stakeholders.

The state also nationalised important commodities such as bamboo, *kendu* leaves, and sal seeds and for the rest of NTFPs it gave the collection and trading powers to the local level of governments. However, policies of managing the NTFPs in Odisha have seen many ups and downs because of the different discourses associated with the process. Despite this, the contribution of NTFPs to the livelihoods has produced significant changes. In the tribal areas, the women groups (SHGs) are engaged in the collection and selling of the NTFPs, after obtaining license from the local panchayats.

Source: Field data

Phase of Strengthening the Livelihoods of Forest Commons (2006 onwards)
Another policy shift took place in 2006, as a part of the policy initiative for strengthening the community management regime in forest governance. The earlier policies, particularly the policy resolutions which were framed during different periods of time, only provided the rights to the forest-dwelling communities over forest resources and NTFPs, while the forest lands were under the control of the Forest Department. However, the demand over forest lands gained momentum from the year 1990, because of the increasing people's

movements along with the political commitment given by the various governments to provide land rights to the tribal people. This led to a nationwide-campaign under banner of a network known as "campaign for survival and dignity" and after a prolong agitation and several debates, the FRA finally emerged in 1996. As per the provision in this act, the Government of Odisha started the process of implementation in 1998. It is argued that the Forest Rights Act is the culmination of a protracted struggle by the forest-dependent communities to gain legal rights and recognition (Dash, 2010). The act provided rights over the forest lands to the tribals and has become a major source of livelihoods for the tribal people. In the case of Odisha, the government also took some pro-active measures, while converging the FRA beneficiaries with the different schemes and programmes such as MGNREGA, IAY, Horticulture Mission Programme, etc. However, the process of implementation in Odisha has raised eyebrows, though the Government's Report claims that Odisha is a lead state in the process of implementation. The actual problem lies with the process of community claim, and now the government has started to lay more emphasis on this process.

4.4. Livelihood Issues in Forest Policies

The emphasis on addressing the issues of livelihoods through formulating and implementing pro-poor policies is also reflected in the context of the implementation of the different forest-based livelihood programmes. Providing alternative livelihood options emerged as a strategy for the Government of Odisha, and this has been reflected in the implementation of some livelihood based programmes in the forest regions in the state.

High incidence of poverty is a common phenomenon in Odisha's forest regions. Empirical evidences show that (Hann, 2006) the regions with maximum forest cover in the state are characterised by high degree of poverty, hunger and malnutrition. Poverty can be defined as a pronounced deprivation of well-being related to lack of material income or consumption, low levels of education and health, vulnerability and exposure to risk, lack of opportunity to be heard, and powerlessness(World Bank,2001:15).

Monopoly of the State over the forest and other natural resources is a major factor of prevalence of poverty in the forest regions. According to Chhatrapati Singh, the basic reason for rural poverty "-is the privatisation of common property resources in a non-equitable manner…".It is argued that state monopoly over common property does not constitute privatisation. This would be true if state ownership made the resources commonly available to many people, including of course those who are already utilising the resources. However, this is not how things are: the state monopolises resources so that it can make these available to specific private industries. The state therefore, becomes

a medium through which the process of privatisation is facilitated (Singh1986). Apart from this, NTFPs has also contributed a lot towards the livelihoods of the forest dwellers and since the last few years, the state's monopoly over such resources continues, which is another factor leading to the prevalence of poverty in the forest regions.

The forest-dependent people have been grouped under different categories on the basis of their subsistence of livelihoods; these people live within the forests and their livelihood system is associated with the forests to varying degrees and kinds. There are people who are traditional shifting cultivators, while others are hunters, food gatherers, pastorals etc. who usually depend upon forests for the subsistence of livelihoods. In Odisha, about 5298 km2 of forest land is estimated to be under active shifting cultivation by the tribals (Vasundhara, 2005).These lands are being cultivated by the tribals since time immemorial and due to faulty policy of the government, these lands now have been declared as 'forest land'. Eviction of tribal people from the forest land has made these people as landless. According to Madhu Sarin (2005), rapid application of conservation laws and superimposition of these laws over tribal areas has been becoming a source of negation between the tribals and forest management. This is in violation of the constitutional provisions of safeguarding tribal cultures, livelihoods, and resource rights.

The livelihoods of forest-dependent communities are directly and indirectly influenced in a number of ways. In the case of Odisha, government policies on forest lands and NTFPs coupled with lack of alternative sources of income, have been affecting the livelihoods of the forest-dependent communities. Furthermore, in the case of forestry sector, no major efforts have been made to provide alternative livelihoods to the forest-dependent communities. The forest development projects in the state are mainly based on regeneration of degraded forest land in the name of afforestation through initiating JFM, which is not very supportive of the tribal people. Table 4.2 depicts the major forest development projects in the state, which are under the implementation with an objective to restore the livelihoods of the tribal people.

4.4.1.Forest based Livelihoods Programmes in Odisha

The Government of Odisha has taken a number of steps to improve the livelihoods of the forest dwellers as part of the implementation of the policies as well as different programmes. With regard to the forest land based livelihood programmes, plantation has been given priority and it has been observed that, fruit-bearing trees are in the agenda of these programmes instead of the so-called economic plantations. Under the NTFP, in some districts kendu leaves collection has been deregularised. The procurement price of the green *kendu* leaves has also been enhanced from 29 paise to 35 paise per

Kerry (i.e. a bundle comprising 20 leaves) during 2010-11 and the wages of the seasonal staff has also been enhanced by 40%. (Odisha Legislative Assembly, 2012)

Table 4.2. provides the status of the ongoing forest-based livelihood programmes in Odisha.

Table-4.2: Major Livelihood-based Forest Development Projects of Government in Odisha

Project	Project Area	Forest Area(Size) Covered under the Project
Revised Long-term Action Plan(RLTAP)	KBK areas(Koraput, Rayagada, Malkangiri, Nowrangpur, Kalahandi, Nuapara, Bolangir and Sonepur Districts)	13,130 ha
National Afforestation Programme(NAP)	27 forestry divisions	10,946 ha
Economic Plantation	22 non-KBK areas	349 ha
Odisha Tribal Empowerment and Livelihood Programme (OTELP assisted by IFAD, WFP and DFID)	Koraput,Rayagada,Malkangiri, Nawrangpur,Kalahandi, Gajapati and Kandhamal Districts	16,500 ha (target in 3 years)

Source; JBIC, Odisha Forestry Sector Development Project, Odisha

In addition to the above mentioned programmes, development programmes such as the National Food for Work Programme (NFFWP) and the Western Odisha Rural Livelihood Project (WORLP) supported by DFID are also being carried out in the forest regions of the state. The recently-implemented Forest Rights Act in the state since 2008 has become a major source for restoring the livelihoods of the forest-dependent communities particularly the STs. Implementation of the FRA and linking its beneficiaries with different schemes and programmes is believed to have strengthened their livelihoods system.

The Government of Odisha with the support of the Japan Bank for International Co-operation (JBIC) has launched an intensive livelihood promotion programme called "the Odisha Forestry Sector Development Project in 11 territorial divisions, one wild-life division for bio-diversity conservation and two wild life divisions for coastal belt plantation. The objectives of the programme are "to restore degraded forests and to

improve the income level of the villagers by promoting sustainable forest management including plantation through joint forest management and community/tribal development, thereby improving ecology and alleviating poverty". For the effective implementation of this programme, the Odisha Forestry Sector Development Society[6] has been formed as an autonomous organisation under the Ministry of Forest and Environment.

4.5. Evidences from the Field: Based on the secondary data and interaction with key persons and institutions of Odisha, the following trends of the forest policies in the current political scenario and livelihoods situation of the forest dwellers were observed:

● Livelihood issues have emerged as the key policy interventions in the case of forest sector development programmes in the state. Such development has emerged because of the focus given by the State Government on pro-livelihood policies.

● The emerging social capital in the forest sector such as forest management groups and institutions has further strengthened the policy process in the state. Close interactions of these groups with the state administrative machineries strengthened the policy process in the state forest sector.

● Different CSOs are also actively involved in the policy process, and their involvement and close interaction with the State Government on policy matters has enhanced over the period of time. This is a key positive indicator in the state's forest policy process.

● Forest administration in the last few years seems to be closer to the people, particularly towards the different forest protection groups and their apex institutions (federations), which also created an atmosphere for participatory forest policy environment. During our discussion with forest officials at Sundargarh, the DFO expressed that "the forest administration at the ground level wants to be closer to the people" so that the pro-poor policies like the JFM and FRA can be implemented effectively.

● During our interactions, some of the key stakeholders opined that, the state has no forest policy at all and whatever policies are being implemented in the state, are linked with the national forest polices. Hence, the state should frame its own forest policy without looking into the directives from the centre. These policies should consider the livelihood interests of the forest dwellers, which should not be diluted during the process of implementation.

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[6] Forest and Environment Department Resolution, 14th June, 2006.

● The livelihood conditions of the forest dwellers have improved because of the implementation of FRA in the state. The Government of Odisha, since the implementation of this act has been able to provide land titles to as many as 3,25,449 (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, GoI, 2014) forest dwelling households in the tribal regions of the state.

● FRA beneficiaries are being linked with different development programmes and schemes such as farm ponds and land development programmes under MGNREGA, housing through the IAY and *mo kudia* (my hut), plantation of fruit-bearing trees under MGNREGA and Horticulture Mission Programme, OTELP, and RLTAP, which have helped to strengthen the livelihoods of the tribal people.

● The policy of the State Government related to the management of NTFPs has been changed since 2002, which is believed to have provided more livelihood security to the poor tribals. However, from the field observation and discussions with key stakeholders, it is revealed that issues such as minimum price for NTFPs, marketing potential, and role of local governments with regard to the management of NTFPs have been preventing the primary collectors from getting the actual value of the NTFPs.

● With regard to the NTFPs vis-à-vis livelihood issues, it is observed that NTFP policies have helped to create neo-exploiter groups in the tribal areas which ultimately affected the livelihood interests of the tribals. This situation has urged for a review of the existing legal provisions related to NTFPs.

● Implementation of the Odisha Forestry Sector Development Project (OFSDP), Odisha Tribal Empowerment and Livelihood Project (OTELP), and other livelihood development programmes through JFM has created hope among the forest dwellers, particularly the tribals with regard to strengthening the livelihood system. However, these programmes have been viewed differently by the CSOs in the state because of contestation between CFM and JFM.

● The livelihood promotion programmes implemented in the forest regions are criticised heavily by the CSOs in the state, which opined that these programmes are being guided by the donors such as the World Bank and JBIC which are interested in restoring their monopoly in the forest sector reforms.

● The gap between the different implementing departments, overlapping laws, and the coordination gap between the departments at the different levels have created a road block in the implementation of the livelihood based forest policies; particularly in the context of FRA and OTELP, where it is more visible.

● Since the passage of the National Forest Policy in 1988, the Government of Odisha has introduced a plethora of Rules, Acts, Government Orders, and Resolutions (such as the JFM resolutions of 1990,1993,1994,1996,2005,2008 and 2011) with regard to enhancing the livelihood securities of the forest-fringe communities. However, the effects of such policies on addressing the livelihoods needs are scant.

● It is also believed by the forest policy researchers in the state that several livelihood issues of the forest dependent communities have not been taken into consideration while formulating forest policies in the state.

● Despite the huge success of the self-initiated community based forest management (CFM) programme in Odisha with regard to addressing the livelihood issues of the forest- fringe communities, the recently framed JFM Resolution of 2011 is completely silent about the presence of these groups and their contributions to the livelihoods of the people.

4.6. Summary:

To sum up, forest policy process starting from the pre-independence period to the current period has gone through the different phases and this process is greatly influenced by the prevailing governance pattern, institutional set-up, and economic situation of the state. The policy process in the forest sector which began during the pre-independence era recognised the traditional rights and livelihoods of the forest dwellers over forests as Rights and Privileges (1894), Rights and Concessions (1952), Concessions (1988) and Rights (2006). Such changes have happened because of the significant changes in the policy process, participation of the people in the policy process and the emergence of the multi-level and multi-faceted institutions and their involvement in the forest policy process. However, forest policy cannot be regarded as a big success in Odisha, as the formal forest administrative structure continues to control the whole gamut of the policy process and the implementation mechanism in some way or the other. Since the state has a strong concentration of tribal population and majority of the tribal people live in and around the forest regions, only an effective forest policy based on better access to forest resources will protect the livelihood interests of these communities.

Chapter-5
POLITICS IN FOREST POLICY: THE CASE OF ODISHA

5.1. Introduction

Politics in forest policy process have received considerable attention because of the nature of the decision-making processes and the involvement of the multiple actors in such processes. In this chapter, we attempt to highlight the nature and consequences of the political decision making processes in the forest policy of Odisha and the involvement of the different actors within these processes. The whole chapter is divided into two main sections-pre-independence period and post-independence period. Further, in order to understand the nature of politics in the state forest policy process, we highlight the crucial policy decisions taken at the Legislative, Executive, and Party levels and the involvement of the government, political parties, legislatures, NGOs, forest groups and federations, and international organisations in such decision making processes. We further try to understand these processes through the application of the political discourse model or political and discursive model, through which we attempt to understand the discourses of the different actors and institutions with regard to policy process and politics.

Politics, which has defined in the policy literature as the process of decision making, cooperation, conflict and negotiation, has become the subject of discussion within the policy analysis frameworks. According to Leftwich (2007), politics can be conceptualised as consisting of all the activities of cooperation, conflict and negotiation involved in decisions regarding the use, production and distribution of resources, whether these activities are formal or informal, public or private, or a mixture of both. Policy process in formulating policy (participatory policy or interactive policy) can be seen as more political in nature as it creates scope for actors to interact and bargains in different important stages of policy process. Actors can be individual, pursuing their own material interests, or they can be collective (interest groups). According to Sangitha (2008) in a closed politics, policy making (the manner in which policy deliberated, formulated and implemented) is likely to be centralised, secretive and non-responsive, while in democratic politics, policy making is likely to be decentralised, dispersed, consultative and responsive.

The increasing involvement of the non-state actors in the forest policy process has made the process complex and argumentative. Such process needs to be capture and researchers suggest that through the discursive method, it is possible to capture the whole process of the debate, discussion, arguments and governmentality, which are the key to understand the politics in forest policies. It is argued that the policy outcomes of the forest governance system can be considered as the result of pressure emanating either from the political party or non-state actors. However, the non-state actors become increasingly proactive at the super national level because governments are assumed to remain unresponsive to the demands of the local population (Peterson, 1992, Dudely and Richardson,1999). Hence, in this context, understanding the discourses of the state and non-state actors in the forest policy making is quite significant. Blaike and Muldavin (2004) summarise that "political and discursive method are much more complex; which focus on the fact that not only the bureaucrats and politicians have leverage in the policy making process, but also the media, industrialists ,trade unions, social movements ,and many others". The important aspect of understanding forest politics is not based on why some policy decisions were made but why some decisions were not made and why certain decisions are made over others. Considering these points, the present chapter has unraveled the politics of forest policies in Odisha. The chapter tries to link the politics with policy decisions while examining the discoursers of actors and their influence over the policy decisions and institutional arrangements.

5.2. Evolution of Forest Politics in Odisha

Evolution of forest politics in Odisha is closely linked with the policy process as it is witnessed in the case of Odisha "forest politics such as political decision making, lobby, bargaining, collaboration and conflicts are the very much part of the policy making processes". Based on the analysis of historical data, it is believed that, the forest politics prior to independence was colonial-centric as all the policy matters were part of the British Government. The forest policy process was begun as a top-down process during the colonial rule. The processes of decision making was based on the colonial government's wisdom to frame and reframe rules, regulations, and restrictions and providing concessions to the people for accessing forest products. The typical english pattern of decision making approach was reflected in the policy process, which can be considered as politics of control rather than of cooperation.

Forest policy and politics have been very much part of the political history, existing even in ancient Odisha. Even prior to the British Government's invasion of Odisha, there existed forest administration and politics in the different provincial states. These politics

played an important role in the forest administration when the kings of the different erstwhile princely states took control of forests and declared them as state's property. These rulers used forests as hunting and game reserve, and the politics started when they realised the commercial viability of the resource. The pattern of revenue administration and emergence of the land-lords, contributed significantly to the political decision-making in the forest administration. Land revenue administration was based on state-specific rules and regulations and forest revenue gradually emerged as a part of the land revenue administration. Some rulers gave permission to the land lords (*Zamindars)* to use forest for timber extraction and imposed revenue tax over the activity. This scenario gradually gave way to policy making and it is believed that the ministers were played a major role in policy making, and in most cases the kings were less aware about the policy process. Further in some villages, there were village heads, who played a crucial role in forest politics such as decisions on user rights, permissions and concessions.

The emergence of British rule in the state created a new era in forest politics. This period was a transition phase in the forest policy decision making and politics. The British conquered Odisha in 1803, after witnessing severe rebellions in the different parts in the state. However, after conquering Odisha, the administration set-up was based on two types of administrative patterns *Garjat* (Princely-Odisha) and *Mughal-bandi* (British-Odisha). These two administrative patterns also became the key determinant factors in the decision-making processes in forest policies. The emergence of political factors such as politics of appeasement and politics of dominance over the forest policy process in Odisha began not only with the expansion of the British territory, but also under the local rulers before the British Administration. This provided a golden opportunity to the British rulers to take control over the forest recourses, with a well framed divide and rule policy. The control of the revenue administration in the state was part of the British Government decision making process and topped the policy agenda, as they were fully aware of the political situation of the state. As a first step in revenue administration, the politics of control started to dominate the policy-making process in forests.

One significant aspect of the forest politics during the British period was that political interest overrode populist interest, which created havoc among the forest dwellers. Apart from the economic factors, political factors also played a key role in the formulation of the different policies. The British Government was fully aware that a good economy may lead to good politics, and they first started to control the revenue of the forests in order to control the political system and administration. Three important discourses were prevailed in decision making such as commercial discourse, administrative discourse

and expansionist discourse. The scant presence of the non-state actors and focus of the Indian political classes on freedom struggle were created enough opportunity for the British Government to frame their own rules and regulations, ignoring the genuine need of the people.

5.3. Forest Politics during Pre-Independence Era (1936-1947)

5.3.1.Evolution of Forest Politics

This period witnessed the evolution of forest politics in a newly formed state, which came into existence on 1st April, 1936. The politics in forest policy process also witnessed a paradigm shift, as the neo-political classes emerged in the state with the creation of a separate state and elections for the State Legislative Assembly. This period was quite significant for the forest administration from the administrative and governance point of view. The major political development was the formation of Odisha as a separate province with its provincial assembly at Cuttack. This period strengthen to the State Legislature to corner the British Government in each administrative matter among which forest had a prominent position. With the shift in administrative matters from the three different states; Bengal, Bihar and Madras, it was politically-advantageous for the local legislators (MLAs) to highlight the defects in forest administration, while raising their voice in the State Legislative Assembly. However, the enactment of a number of legal provisions, particularly the Indian Forest Act in 1927, the forest administration was bureaucratically powered by the British Officers and politically dominated by the British Government.

5.3.2. Forest Politics and Odisha Legislative Assembly (1937-1945)

The forest policy debates and discussion formed a significant part of the legislative debates, which took place from 1937 to 1945.On the basis of the provisions under the Government of India Act, 1935, elections to the provincial assemblies were held and accordingly the newly constituted a 60 member Odisha Assembly was formed in 1937. The first session of the Legislative Assembly was held on 28th July 1937. This session witnessed debates over the forest policy and functioning of the forest department. The second legislative assembly was constituted in 1945 and continued till 1952. However, no record was found on the different forest policy debates though there were some important decisions such as the merger of the princely states through which the forest areas of these states were brought under the control of the administration of the Government of Odisha.

Table; 5.1: Odisha Legislative Assembly and Forest Debates from 1937 to 1945

Assembly	Date of Constitution	Date of Dissolution	Forest Issues Discussed
1st pre-independent assembly	3rd February 1937	14th September 1945	Three major issues related to forests were discussed which led to the formation of a forest enquiry committee. One was based on "defect in forest administration, the second was regarding the problem of people of Sambalpur and the third was regarding the legal status of protected forests.
2nd pre-independent assembly	18th April, 1946	20th February, 1952	Not available.

Source: Odisha Legislative Assembly, Odisha

During this period, the legislative assembly witnessed a series of discussions on the forest governance and policies, which was the first of its kind in the Legislative Assembly on forests. Table 5.1 lists the points discussed during this period; issues such as defects in forest administration, problems of people living in forest areas and the legal provisions and their implications were discussed.

5.3.3. Politics of Grievance and Committees

The important aspect of the forest politics during this period was "good politics for bad policies" in which the local legislatures tried to corner the British Government through submitting representations and forcing them to form committees. With regard to this, one representation came from the people of Sambalpur through the local MLA Mr. (late) Prahalad Rai Lath[7], in which a complaint was raised against the manner in which

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[7]Resolution No 6/99 from Mr Prahalad Rai Lath, MLA Sambalpur regarding the constitution of a committee to enquire into the conditions and grievances of the people of the villages adjoining the different forest areas of the District of Sambalpur.

the forest acts are being implemented and the government was expanding the forest area by declaring it as reserved forest. Further, the people of Khurda also submitted a memorandum to the government citing their problems and the issue was raised in the floor of the Legislative Assembly. Based on this, a committee was formed consisting of three members out of which two were MLAs (Pandit Godabarish Mishra and Mr. Prananath Patnaik) and the third,Mr. O.A.Dodsworth (was DFO,Puri) who was appointed as the Secretary of the committee. The committee visited the different areas in Khurda to understand the situation of the people of Khurda in Puri District with regard to the problems faced by them as a result of the declaration of the nearby forests as reserved forests. Box 5.1. shows the preamble and main objectives of the forest enquiry committee.

Box. 5.1. Preamble and Objectives of Forest Enquiry Committee, 1938

The first forest inquiry committee which was constituted in 1938 under the presidentship of Pandit Godabarish Mishra along with two members had visited different areas in the Khurda Forest Sub-Division under the Puri Forest Division. The preamble of the committee states that "during the session of the Legislative Assembly held in Cuttack in 1937, some members of the Odisha Assembly raised certain objections in regard to the defects in the forest administration in the Khurda sub-division and the connected grievances of the people. The Government therefore considered it necessary to appoint a small committee to enquire into the matter and suggest remedies. Accordingly a committee of three persons was appointed with powers to make a through and searching enquiry into the defects in forest administration in Khurda and into the grievances of the people in connection therewith and suggest suitable remedies".

Source; Government of Orissa, LSG Department,1937

The above discussion shows the nature and extent of the discourses involved within the forest policy process during the pre-independence period. This has highlighted political awareness and active involvement of the legislatures and political parties in the forest policy debates and how they tried to influence the decision making and policy implementations, despite the presence of the British Government and a rigid bureaucratic pattern of forest administration.

5.4. Forest Politics during Post-Independence Era (1947 to 2012)

5.4.1. Evolution
The forest politics during the post-independence period evolved as an important sub-set of the political system and party politics in Odisha. However, the emergence of a particular

forest policy had its root in political factors and regime politics. After Independence, the provincial Government took over the reins of administration and gradually tried to control the resources including the forest; the politics of governmentalism was a key motivating factor for exercising control over the forest resources. The evolution of the politics in policy process was also based on the divergent political ideologies and differences of opinion. After the merger of the princely states in Odisha, the rulers of those areas felt a vacuum in their political career because of the uprising of the political leadership in the then *moughal bandi* (British-ruled) areas. Such a scenario also led to serious factional politics in the state, which also affected the forest policy process. The merger of the princely states in 1948 faced stiff opposition by the rulers of those areas, because of the fear of the loss of the huge natural resources including forests. However, the early phase of forest politics was confined to the political circles and remained bureaucracy-centric.

During the initial phase, particularly till 1959, the politics of governmentalism also prevailed over the forest policy decision making processes. During this phase, a number of attempts were made to enhance the geographical boundaries of the forest administration; in fact, the reorganisation politics continued since 1949.

5.4.2. Forest Politics and Different Governments
The forest politics of Odisha has witnessed different policies by the different governments and their pro-people as well as anti-people stands. The forest policies were also guided by these governments, based on their party affiliations, programmes, agendas, and commitment to the people.

The first elected government during the post-independence period came to power in 1952 and Mr Nabakrushna Choudhury took over as the Chief Minister on 20th February, 1952. During this year a forest policy statement at the national level emerged, which was known as the National Forest Policy, 1952. This period also witnessed the extension of the provisions of the Indian Forest Act, 1927 in the state. Further, the government tried to control the forest resources occupied by the *Zamindars* under the different princely states. This provision emerged in the form of the Orissa preservation of the Private Forest Act, 1947. However, the politics in the forest policy witnessed a sharp division between the political leaders belonging to the congress party, particularly those who were from the coastal areas and the erstwhile kings and *zamindars* who after the merger joined politics. The major politics were over the *kendu* leaves trade due to the lease and proximity of the traders with the politicians of the erstwhile princely states. The *kendu* leaf collection rights were given to the traders without an open auction and for the first time the government under N.K.Choudhury introduced the open bidding process, which

proved to be a financial benefit to the state exchequer. However, the decision only widened the division among the political leaders (Routray,1986).

When Dr. Harekurshna Mahatab became the Chief Minister in 1956, the division become wider; and the prevalence of bureaucratic politics continued in the policy decisions. In 1957, the kings of the erstwhile princely states formed a regional party called the Ganatantra Parishad, under the leadership of Shri R.N.Singhdeo, the former king of the Balangir-Patna. This gave birth to another regional political party in the state and formally paved the way for coalition politics in the state. However, the *kendu* leaves politics continued and when DR. Mahatab (H.K.Mahatab) became Chief Minister, he changed certain norms in the auction process, inviting the era of corruption in *kendu* leaf politics.

In the 1957 elections, the Congress Party received a simple majority again while the Ganatantra Parishad, also emerged as an alternative political force in the state securing 51 out of 140 assembly seats. The congress party formed the government, but due to a thin majority, it could not sustain; so the Ganatantra Parishad led coalition formed the government in 1959. During this period, a forest enquiry committee was formed to review the forest administration, as there was a dual-administrative system was in place. However, most of the recommendations of the committee were against the forest-fringe communities, as the government was interested in completing the process of reorganisation of the forests by deciding the physical boundaries and strengthening the forest bureaucracy. The village forests, which were under the control of the *zamindars* while the villagers enjoyed the tenurial rights, now came under the control of the forest department. The forest politics also witnessed a sharp division between the ruling and opposition, which actually affected the state forest policy process. With regard to corruption in kendu leaves bidding process, a commission of enquiry was formed (Sarjoo Prasad Commission of Inquiry, 1971) to find the link between politicians and kendu leaves contractors/ traders, when Mahatab was the Chief Minister of Odisha. The commission in its report had given negative remarks questioning the auction process and nexus between politicians and the kendu leaves traders.

In 1961, the election for the Legislative Assembly was held in which the congress party came to power under the leadership of Mr. Biju Patnaik. The focus of this government was on industrialization. As a result of this, mega industries such as Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. at Sunabeda in Koraput and Paradip Port were established. This period also witnessed an early phase of the anti-environmental movements in Odisha, which became a mass movement in 1980. The Balimela hydro-electricity project was shaped during this period; likewise this phase saw the formation of the Orissa Forest Corporation Ltd. and justify

such decision, the then Governor of Odisha, while addressing to the State Legislative Assembly on 15th February, 1963, mentioned that "formation of the forest corporation will save the adivasis from exploitation by intermediaries". (Odisha Legislative Assembly, 1963).

One significant aspect of Odisha's political history was political instability which started in the 1970s and continued till the 1980s because of the growing internal squabbling within all the major political parties, frequent president rules, defections and anti-defections. This scenario also more or less affected the forest policies in the state. The forest enquiry committee formed in 1957 had suggested a uniform forest policy across the state, which only came into enforcement in 1972 in the form of the Odisha Forest Conservation Act. Further, during this period major industrial and irrigation projects were started, as a part of the second phase of industrialisation and green revolution.

The elections to the fourth legislative assembly were held in 1967 and the government was formed under the leadership of Mr. Rajendra Narayan Singhdeo as the Chief Minister of Odisha. For the first time, a regional party came to power when the entire country was dominated by the congress party. This period witnessed a new phase in the *Kendu* leaf politics in the state. Further, the initiative of construction of another mega dam on River Brahmani at Rengali led to another phase of anti-dam movements after the Hirakud movement. Also, during this period, the forest bureaucracy became quite powerful to which the prevailing political instability also contributed.

The election for the Fifth Legislative Assembly was held on 5th March 1971 and a newly formed state government was in place on 3rd April, 1971 under the Chief Ministership of Mr. Biswanath Das. However, there was crisis within the government and a second government took over under the leadership of Ms. Nandini Satpathy in 1972 and continued till 1973. This government took two significant policy decisions based on their calculated political losses and benefits. However, the decision for the nationalisation of the *kendu* leaves emerged from the "politics of donation" and "politics of bribe". Summarising the politics of *kendu* leaves Nationlisation, Nilamani Routray(1986), an ex-Chief Minister mentioned that "neither public interest, nor the state revenue was a matter of the nationalisation of the *kendu* leaves". The fact of the matter was that the kendu leaves contractors had denied funds to the Congress Party, which forced the Chief Minister to introduce the Nationalisation Policy.

In the 1974 assembly elections, the Congress Party came to power and continued till 1977; during this period, the forest politics in the state were completely under the control of the forest bureaucrats. However, the concern of the people towards the loss of forest

cover because of mega projects and dominance of the government led towards a mass movement which actually materialised in 1980. This period also witnessed a new phase of *kendu* leaf politics that is, distribution of kendu leaf grants to the different regions in the state and provisions for the *kendu* leaf workers. The former created intense factional politics in the state and gradually became an agenda for the political parties during elections, which still continues. Further, during this period (1974-1976) two wild life sanctuaries were established in the state; Bhitarkanika(1975) and Satkosia(1976) as per the Wildlife Protection Act.

Box 5.2, Distribution of Kendu Leaf Grant: Policies and Politics

The politics of the distribution of the *Kendu* Leaf Grant Fund emerged since the day of the nationalisation of *kendu* leaves in Odisha and in this context, the Government of Odisha framed a resolution in 1986 (No XVIII,11341 dated.21.06.1986) and amended it in 2002 to ensure fair distribution of the amount received from the Forest Department each year as per the Orissa Kendu Leaves Control of Trade Act. The resolution (No XVIII KL-28/2002 24820/GP) of the Panchayati Raj Department dated 16th December, 2002 states "90% of the amount available under the KL grant may be distributed among Gram Panchayats, Panchayat Samities and Zilla Parishads of KL growing areas at the ratio of 72:10:8 respectively" and "10% of the amount may be retained at the level of government. for distribution for socially relevant purposes and activities". However, the distribution of KL Grant Fund has become a prominent issue in the politics of Odisha. Political leaders, particularly the elected representatives from the KL growing areas have raised the issue of allocation of KL Grant Funds to the different divisions in the state in the floor of the legislative assembly and tried to take political mileage out of this issue. Even the issue of KL Grant Fund distribution was raised by the different political leaders during the Assembly and Parliament elections in the state.

In 1977, another non-Congress government came to power with a thumping majority. However, while there was no significant change in the forest administration and policy process during this period, the politics of *kendu* leaf turned into politics of competition to provide wages and other benefits to the primary collectors and these politics till form a major aspect of the *kendu* leaf politics in Odisha. On the other hand, the most notable feature of this government was the establishment of three sanctuaries in the span of two years such as Hadgarh (1978), Nandankanan(1979), and Similipal(1979).

The year 1980 was quite significant in the history of forest policies and politics since during this period forest policy, politics and issues of livelihoods took a new turn. On 9th June, 1980, a new Congress led government came to power under the leadership of

Mr. J.B. Patnaik. This year also witnessed a debate on the forest policy process at the national and state level in the context of a new forest bill. However, the government of Odisha, took some drastic policy measures to control the forest resources in the name of national interest. Further the politics of "public interest" also emerged as an important component of forest politics in the matters of the acquisition of forest lands for industrial and mining purpose. This period also witnessed the formation of an Elephant Reserve in Chandaka (20 km from Bhubaneswar) and expansion of the wild life wing by strengthening the manpower (Patnaik, 2013). In 1981, the Government of Odisha established two more sanctuaries at Baisipalli (in Nayagarh District) and Kotagarh (in Kandhamal District). Furthermore, in 1984 two more sanctuaries were established in Odisha in Puri and Balasore Districts.

During this period, the era of commercial plantations began and as a result, the plantation programme was given focus with the support of SIDA under the Joint Forest Management Programme. However, this period also witnessed the second phase of environmental movements. Mass movements such as Baliapal movement against National Test Range, and BALCO Bauxite Mining Movement, started in 1985, which perhaps forced to the government to bring the Orissa Village Forest Rule and later on the JFM Resolution and plantations through JFM with the support of SIDA.

In the 1985 State Assembly Election, the Congress Party again came to power and Mr. J.B Patnaik started his second innings as the Chief Minister of Odisha. However, despite intense political fighting within the Congress Party, and anti-government wave because of the issue of corruption and mis-governance, certain policy decisions were taken in the matter of forests. Such developments can be considered as the new era in the forest policies and politics in Odisha.

In the policy part, the Orissa Village Forest Rule of 1985 was a historic decision. However, the politics of environment and development continued to influence the state forest politics. Realising the public anger against the BALCO Mining Project and Baliapal NTR Project, the government of Odisha temporarily cancelled such projects, though they never declared this openly. Such movement also resulted in the defeat of the Congress Party in 1989 Lok Sabha elections and the 1990 assembly election. However, the politics of greening Odisha continued with a massive plantation project supported by the SIDA. The state government further established two more sanctuaries in the districts of Sambalpur and Ganjam at Debrigarh (currently in Bargarh District) and Lakhari (currently in Gajapati District). In 1987, another two sanctuaries were established in the State, one at Badrama in Sambalpur and the other at Nalbana in the Chilika Lake. During this

period, keeping the politics of environment in mind, the government took certain proactive measures through executive and legislative procedures; namely the formation of a separate House Committee in Odisha Legislative Assembly to keep a watch on the environmental issues affecting the state.

In the 1990 assembly elections, the Janata Dal came to power and Mr. Biju Patnaik, became the Chief Minister of Odisha. In his first term as Chief Minister in 1961, Biju Patnaik took the initiative for the establishment of some mega projects such as Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. (HAL) in Koraput and in his second term also he emphasised on the same initiative. The major promise was the formation of a second steel plant in Odisha, as during that time there was only one steel plant at Rourkela. Accordingly, he preferred Kalinga-Nagar as a right place for the industrial hub, and invited MNCs such as MESCO STEEL to set-up a steel plant and other industries. Following to this development, Kalinga Nagar gradually flourished witnessing the establishment of a number of industries. This development latter on turned in to a mass movement and 12 people died in 2005, agitating against the Tata Steel Plant. Apart from the politics of industrialisation, this period also witnessed some pro-people policy measures such as the JFM Resolution and focus on participatory forest management and financial benefit for the *kendu* leaves workers. However, the politics of environment emerged in the state when the Government of Odisha approved the TATA Projects in Chilika in early 1990 for prawn culture. The government later faced trouble also because of the TATA Steel Project at Gopalpur in Ganjam District in Odisha. Facing severe opposition from the environmental activists, the government was forced to cancel the project at Chilika.

The 1995 assembly elections helped the Congress Party to regain power and Mr. J.B. Patnaik again became the Chief Minister of Odisha. The politics of Green Odisha through JFM under the Externally Aided Projects (EAPs) took another step along with the massive industrialisation and mining. However, the politics of JFM witnessed fresh resolutions and the amendment of certain provisions. During this period, the politics of environment continued with massive agitations against TATA Steel Project at Gopalpur and the Utkal Alumina Project of Kashipur in Rayagada District.

In the tenth assembly election, a new regional party called the Biju Janata Dal(BJD) led coalition government came to power with the support of the BJP. The emergence of a new regional political party and another experiment of coalition government after the 1970s started in the state. This period witnessed policy change with respect to NTFP as in 2002, the Government of Odisha vested the power of the collection and management of the NTFPs to the local governments (*Panchayats*). The government's focus on industrial

progress continued with the emergence of the neo-liberal politics and the neo-liberal policy which invited mega MNCs such as Vedanta Alumina Ltd, Bhusan Power and Steel, and HINDALCO of Aditya Birla Group. The state government promised to provide them with land and water for setting-up mega steel and power plants. This resulted in another phase of mass movements in Odisha, which continued from 1995 in the case of Kalinga Nagar and other places. Bauxite Mining in Niyamgiri, and Coal and Iron Mining in Sundargarh, Jharsuguda and Keonjhar added fuel to such movements.

In the 2004 assembly election, the BJD-BJP coalition government again came to power and this period was also the beginning of the FRA enactment phase. Further, the Government of Odisha also implemented a series of development projects in the forest regions and for the forest-fringe communities such as OFSDP, OTELP etc. The JFM Resolution was also modified. However, the people's anger against massive industrialisation and mining continued and in the case of Niyamgiri it was a big jolt for the government.

In the 2009 Assembly election, the BJD fought alone and got huge majority and formed government in the state for the third time. This phase also witnessed the politics of FRA apart from the development politics based on industrialisation. The process of implementation of FRA received high priority and turned forest politics to FRA politics. The announcement by the government regarding deregularising the *kendu* leaves was an attempt to capture the sympathy of the tribal people. However, due to the absence of an appropriate mechanism at the Gram Panchayat level to control the KL procurement and trading, the so-called deregularisation led to multiple problems including distress selling which may increase further in the coming days.

5.4.3. State Legislative Assembly and Politics in Forest Policy Debates

The State Legislative Assembly since its formation in 1937 has become a major forum for debating and discussing the forest policy related issues, though it has been observed that the debate always dominated by the majority ruling class despite its significance. Particularly the post-independence legislative debates on forest policies were based on two important discourses such including the discourse of the ruling party and that of the opposition parties. Through the process of general debate, Governors' address, question hour discussion, call attention and adjournment motion, the legislative assembly in deferent period has witnessed the intense debate and discussions on forest policies and politics associated with such policies during different periods.

Box:5.3 provides some important discussions held in the Legislative Assembly since 2000.

Box: 5.3: Forest Politics and Debate in Legislative Assembly

The State Assembly witnessed discussions on issues associated with the forest sector, through which the policy and politics of the government has been reflected. In 1963, justifying the *Commercialisation of the Forest Products* and the formation of the Odisha Forest Development Corporation, the government described it as a pro-tribal policy and mentiond that this initiative will help the tribal people from exploitation. Similarly, discussion over the nationalisation on kendu leaves was also justified on the same ground.

The recent legislative debates have witnessed three major discourses; the implementation of various forest development projects through the support of the Externally Aided Project (EAPs), the success of JFM and the physical achievement and success of the FRA.

In 2004 (30th June, 2004) addressing to the State Assembly, the Governor of Odisha mentioned that "the state government intends to implement Externally Aided Projects in various sectors including forest and environments". This statement confirms the focus of the government on the implementation of forest-related development projects. Further, in his speech, there was also a highlight on "*Forest Livelihoods*" in which it was summarised that "the government will continue to focus its effort to protect and increase forest wealth of the state through people's participation as well as to provide livelihood support to forest-fringe dwellers". In the state about 7,000 VSSs have been formed while bringing 668594 ha. of forests under their protection". Similarly, regarding the welfare of the KL workers, he mentioned that "a welfare scheme has been launched to provide financial assistance to *kendu* leaf workers in the event of sickness and death".

During the session of 28th February, 2005, the Governor of Odisha(Mr. Rameshwar Thakur) in his speech highlighted the following issues with regard to forests " as forests play a major role in providing *livelihood* support to forest fringe dwellers, including those belonging to very vulnerable sections of society; my government has focused on programmes to provide livelihood support, increase forest wealth of the state, and to promote environmental awareness among the people. With the people's participation through the JFM Scheme, the state forest cover has increased considerably. There are 7,358 VSSs involved in JFM for forest protection, conservation, and development over 8,039 sq km of degraded forests.

With regard to *NTFP*, he mentioned that as many as 68 minor products have been delicensed by the department of forest and environment and the powers to grant registration have been delegated to the Gram Panchayats. There was also a mention about the plantation programme under the *Compensatory afforestation Programme* in 6,622 ha and other plantations in 24,605 ha. With regard to KL, it was mentioned that KL trade generates wage employment for more than 150 lakh man days every year. As a welfare measure, my government has enhanced the purchase price offered to primary collectors of KL from 21 paise to 21.5 paise for 20 leaves.

During the 16th session of the 13th Legislative Assembly in 2009, the Governor of state in his address highlighted that "the priority of the Government is to secure the rights of the STs over forests and land". Further the speech focused on the ambitious afforestation programme and other forest development programmes. As a result, forest cover has increased in the state by 2,100 ha. as per the Forest Assessment Report of the government of India. The Joint Forest Management Programme has been promoted through VSSs and forest development agencies. About 10,218 sq km.of forest area has been brought under the fold of JFM and is being protected and managed through VSS. A Forestry Sector Development Programme is also being implemented in selected districts.

In his address to the Odisha Legislative Assembly on 8th March, 2010, the honorable Governor (M.C. Bhandre) mentioned that "due to *extensive afforestation* measures taken by the government and the involvement of the people in forest protection and regeneration, there is an increase of 100 sq. km. of forest cover in Odisha as per the State Forests Report 2007 published by the Forest Survey of India. Further, he mentioned that during 2009-10, about 91,003 ha have been covered under various *afforestation programmes* and the target is to cover about 2.50 lakh ha during 2010-11. Conservation of medicinal plants was also another focus of the programme. Furthermore, the *Livelihood* of the coastal community was focused through the Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Plan.

During the session in 2011 (6th Session of the 14th Assembly), the Governor of Odisha in the annual address to the State Legislative Assembly mentioned that "the Government has implemented various *afforestation programmes* like National Afforestation Programme, Mangrove Action Plan, RLTAP in KBK Districts, Economic Plantation, Plantation under Bamboo Mission, Industrial Plantation as well as Compensatory Afforestation.

During the Session of 2012, the Governor of Odisha in his speech mentioned that "*massive plantation* activities have been taken up under the various schemes such as National Afforestation Programme, Mangrove Action Plan, RLTAP in KBK Districts, Economic Plantation, Plantation under Bamboo Mission, Industriaial plantation, Compensatory Afforestation, etc. A total area of 2 lakh ha. of degraded forest has been covered under afforestation. The *VSS* are assisting the forest administration for the protection of forests.

Further with regard to KL, the Governor summarised that "the government has increased purchase price of *kendu* leaves for the 2012 crop and decided to provide insurance coverage for all kind of leaf pluckers benefiting about 8 lakh people".

Source: Odisha Legislative Assembly, Speeches of the Governors (2004-1012)

5.4.4. Forest Politics and Political Parties

Elections and Forest Politics- Major Trends and Shifts: In the recent political development, it has been observed that political parties have considered the forest issues as an important part in their agenda. Particularly, the election manifestos of the different political parties show that they have focused on the forest related issues. The increasing demand from the people over rights on forest resources and the increasing trend in voters' awareness have motivated the political parties to place forest related issues in their agenda/election manifestos. The last two general elections also witnessed such trends and we have given herewith the points included by the major political parties in the state on forest-related issues.

The Indian National Congress: The Indian National Congress as the grand old political party in the country has acknowledged the problems of the forest fringe communities and placed such issues in the manifestos during different periods of time. A systematic analysis of the party's manifestos from 1998 onwards shows that, forest politics include the issues of livelihoods and problems of the Scheduled Tribes presuming that these people are the forest-dwellers and their livelihoods system based on forest products should be protected. In the 2004 parliament elections, the Congress Party in its manifesto mentioned that "the State Government will be urged to make legislations for conferring ownership rights in respect of minor forest produce on adivasis particularly who work in forests. The party manifesto further narrates that "the Forest Conservation Act, 1980 has prevented a wholesale loss of forests". At the same time, concerns have been raised in its implementation rigidities which have been depriving the tribal communities from the benefits of economic growth. These concerns have to be recognised and addressed in an ecologically sustainable manner." This silver lining statement emphasises the party's admission of the livelihood problems of the forest-fringe communities. However in the case of Odisha, the State Congress Manifesto (2004 and 2009) does not provide much emphasis on the forest related issues.

The manifesto of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) led by the Indian National Congress, laid focus on the rights of the tribals on forests which reads as follows; "eviction of the tribal communities and other forest-dwelling communities from forest areas will be discontinued". However, the ground realities are different as Dreze (2005) mentions that "recent reports suggest that forced evictions continue in many places with unrelenting brutality". This shows that a political party like the Congress has added this promise only with an objective of capturing of votes in 2004. However, in the 2009 manifesto, the UPA had committed for the effective implementation of the FRA in the different states

Further, under the heading of "Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes" it was mentioned that the UPA administration will take all measures to reconcile the objectives of economic growth and environmental conservation, particularly as far as tribal communities dependent on forests are concerned".

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP): The BJP did not consider the forest or environment as a separate issue in the 2004 and 2009 elections. Under the heading of "Development of SC, ST and Backward Class" the party had stated to formulate laws to assert the rights of the STs on the forest. However, there was no concrete and point-by-point description about what kind of laws they want to formulate after coming to power. Particularly, there was no mention about the formulation and implementation of the Forest Rights (Recognition) Act-2006.

The Biju Janata Dal(BJD): The BJD which is the ruling party in the state since 2000, has also left no stone unturned to place forest-related issues in the manifesto. The last three assembly elections, during 2000, 2004 and 2009 have witnessed huge victory of the party, and the vote base of the party in the tribal pockets is significantly enhanced over the period of time. With regard to forest policies, the party has always selected a middle path, which is based on pro-land and forest based development model and pro-industrialisation approach.

The BJD has kept a separate chapter under the heading "Environment, Forest, Wildlife and Animal Husbandry". It is not clear why they wanted to include the animal husbandry under the environment, forest and wildlife though previously it was under agriculture. Progress in the joint forest management programme by Forest Protection Committees and Forest Development Councils and the success of afforestation programme are described as the success of the government in the manifesto. The manifesto of the BJD also mentioned the problems of the KL workers and highlighted how the BJD Government has enhanced the bundle price of the *kendu* leaves from 21.5 paise to 40 paise. The party in its manifesto also mentioned several populist measures to be taken for the KL workers such as provisions of lanterns and slippers.

5.5. Forest Politics and Non-State Actors in Odisha

Involvement of non-state actors in the policy process has been described by John Peterson (2003) as hybrid arrangement, involving a range of different actors, including some representing the private or non-governmental organisations. The Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) under different names such as NGOs, CBOs, and Federations, have been playing a significant role in shaping the forest policies and influencing the policy decisions in India. In the case of India, it is observed that the increasing involvement

of the CSOs in the forest policy matters has turned the policy process into a political process. In the case of Odisha, on the other hand, it is argued that the failure of the rationalist approach coupled with the increasing public pressure on rights over forest resources have encouraged the non-state actors in forest politics. In 2002, a strategic shift also came under the functioning of NGOs from service delivery to rights to service. This also resulted in the emergence of the community based approach in the forest policy process.

Box.5.4. Forest Policies and the Politics of Double Standard

In the case of Odisha, the forest policy process falls several times under the line of the politics of double standards and this is quite visible in the case of formulation and implementation of progressive policies such as the JFM and FRA. Starting from the pre-independence to the current period, the political class of the state always tried to play a dual role, talking differently on important policy decisions.

Even some legal provisions narrate several contradictory statements. For example, in the case of JFM, the government has always maintained its commitment to provide livelihood security but in actual practice, there is a huge implementation gap which is never mentioned in any government report. Furthermore, even the opposition political parties have been maintaining uneasy silence on the issues of bad-implementation of good-policies such as the JFM and FRA. In the case of JFM, the government has always emphasised on plantation as a major programme without focusing on the livelihood issues of the forest-fringe communities.

Furthermore, in the case of Odisha, the emergence of different networks in the forest management system also affected the forest politics in the state. Particularly, the emergence of the different forest protection committees and federations has been influenced by the policy decisions and contributing policy level changes which are significant aspects of the forest politics in the state.

In a study conducted by the JBIC on the PFM networks in three Indian states Borgoyary(2006) mentions that community-based forest networks have played an important role in influencing the policy change process. According to the report, networks provided a platform for the policy makers, field practitioners, and local communities, are come together to share and exchange information. The author mentions that this platform therefore managed to reduce the gap between evidence and policy. Furthermore, it is said that the process of consultation between the policy makers and other stakeholders, facilitated by these networks, has overtime helped to some extent in reducing the earlier conflicts between them, enabling the policy making process to be more transparent and participatory.

5.6. Forest Politics during the Neo-Liberal Era (1991 onwards)

The emergence of the economic reforms era also had a huge influence on the policy matters of the different developing and transitional countries. Arts (n.d) summarises that "the neo-liberalist discourse can be characterised as a meta-discourse, because it influences a range of other discourses. Particularly in the case of forest policy and politics, the neo-liberalist discourses have become highly influential and this is particularly visible at the international level. Three important factors guide the neo-liberal discourses in forests such as the increasing role of market, the enhanced role of private sector and, voluntary legally non-binding regulations. (Humphreys,2009 cited in Arts, n.d).

The increasing role of the international organisations such as the World Bank, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has influenced the policy decisions of developing and transitional countries in several ways. These organisations in the name of "Aid Support" and "Policy Reforms Support" occupied a safe seat in the policy matters including forest policies in these countries. Such scenario has been conceptualised by the policy researchers as the era of policy reforms support, as it has invited many international agencies to provide technical and financial support under the banner of "Structural Adjustment Programme(SAP). The SAP aims to adapt, evolve and create new structures as well as changes in administrative practices and patterns of social engagement. However, in the case of Odisha, the issue of policy reforms support by the international agencies such as IFAD, DFID, SIDA and JBIC has not been debated much, despite the emergence of their influence since 1980. There is still a particular section of people who believe that these agencies are influencing the policy decisions of the state, particularly in the case of forest policies. Forest Policy Researchers have given less attention to understanding the influence of such organisations, notwithstanding the fact that there is such a strong realisation among the NGOs and progressive forest conservation groups that the state forest policy process has been lost sight because of the influence of these groups.

In order to bring about economic development, the state government during early 2000 launched a massive programme of industrialisation. In 2005, the state government signed as many as 43 Memoranda of Understanding with various corporate bodies for setting up their industrial units with an investment of Rs 1, 60,000 crores. Further, in the forest sector, the influence of EAPs has taken a strong position which also forced the state to redesign its forest policies to the tune of international donors. Many researchers believe that the concept of EAP is the main reason for the emergence of the MNCs in the forest sector and these are largely influencing the policy process and policy decisions. Further, withdrawal of the international donors from the service sector has also forced many

NGOs in the state to take the help of corporate funding for the implementation of the service delivery programmes. This has also motivated the MNCs to strengthen their position in the policy matters.

5.7. Can Politics Make Forest Policy Process Effective?

Odisha provides a mixed result in the case of politics of forests which are based neither on populist approach nor on the national interest approach. However, the emergence of the multiple actors has influenced the politics in forest policy and has helped correct many wrong policy decisions. This statement is not enough to arrive at a conclusion, despite the fact that politics has a significant positive influence on the policy decisions. However, weak implementation process and bureaucratic apathy has resulted in the failure of policy decisions, despite their good objective.

In the case of Odisha, it is a fact that good policies are implemented badly, despite the involvement of the multiple actors in the policy process and implementation programmes. Further, the increasing influence of the international agencies in the matters of the forest policy decision cannot be considered as an outcome of the pro-poor policy process because the real result of the neo-liberal forest policy is not able to provide a positive impact on the livelihoods of the forest-fringe communities. However, the increasing involvement of the multiple actors in the forest policy process has rendered the process open and transparent despite the actual effects of such policies on the target groups.

5.8. Summary and Conclusion:

Politics in the forest policies in the current political scenario have provided the following trends as observed from the above discussions. Further, based on the secondary data and in-depth interview with the different stakeholders in the state regarding the forest policies and politics, we have reached the following conclusions;

● Politics in the forest policy process has a strong link with the political process and political development and in the case of Odisha it is observed that the politics in forest policy have emerged from the pre-independence era.

● The post-independence forest policy process in Odisha has intensified factional politics and such politics are also affected by political stability in the state witnessing rise and fall of different governments and political parties.

● Policy debates in the State Legislative Assembly have only reflected the success of the government programmes without highlighting the failure. However, in all the cases the government has only tried to justify its action and inaction.

● The year 1980 can be marked a new era in the forest politics with the growing discussions on factors such as peoples' participation, indigenous rights and practices, bottom-up approach, community-based resource management etc, which provided fresh impetus to the forest politics in Odisha. The decade long debate on poverty and environmental degradation also influenced politics in the forest policy process and forced the forest policy actors to relook into these issues.

● Politics in the forest policy have created two main policy actors; the state government and the CSOs (particularly the forums and networks controlled and managed by the NGOs) in the state. The community based forest management organisations in the current policy process and politics are playing a proactive role.

● The emergence of the neo-liberal policy era has to some extent also controlled the forest policy politics in the state. Particularly, the massive acquisition of the forest lands for the purpose of mining and industrial hubs can be considered as a part of the successful politics of the international organisations and multi-national companies.

● The current forest politics regime is more or less controlled by the international agencies because of the government's focus on Externally Aided Projects in forest sector. The presence of NGOs/CSOs in some cases brings collaboration and in some other cases creates a conflicting situation.

Chapter-6
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

6.1. Summary

This study has provided some interesting trends with regard to the forest policy process and politics in Odisha. Particularly with respect to the current political scenario and economic situation in Odisha, the study has provided a detailed and systematic analysis of the forest policy discourses. Odisha, which is located in the Eastern part of India, has a long history of management of forest resources in different forms and different practices. The forest governance and policies in Odisha are believed to be a part of colonial forest policy, which evolved over a period of time. The forest policies in Odisha are viewed as an integral part of the national forest policies, despite the presence of state specific legal and institutional provisions to manage the forest resources. Starting from the Colonial era, the forest policy process has paved the way for the emergence of the neo-political order and has opened the era of collaboration as well as contestation between the state and non-state actors in the state's forest policy process.

Policy as a political process has received enormous attention from the different corners. The debate over issues related to forest policies, governance, and administration in the formal policy making bodies such as the State Legislative Assembly has also provided a systematic trend while unraveling the issues of livelihoods in the state. However, the policy process and legislative debates over the issue of forest governance and livelihoods have created a void with regard to ensuring the livelihoods of the forest dependent communities, despite the enactment of some path-breaking legal provisions. Nonetheless, the issues of livelihoods have drawn significant attention since the 1990s when the Participatory Forest Management regime emerged, and in 2002 when the NTFP Rule was enacted. It further flourished in 2006 when the Forest Rights Act was implemented in the state. The emergence of the non-state actors in the forest policy and politics can be considered as a positive development in the state forest policy process.

Background, Rationale and Theoretical Frameworks

The forest policy process and the decentralisation debate have motivated many scholars to explore two fundamental issues such as "decentralisation for what?" and "who will mediate the space between the decentralisation and outcome of the process of decentralisation?" Hypothesising these two fundamental and complex issues, researchers have focused on the issue of livelihoods and the role of institutions, while arguing that "institutions are panacea" that can mediate the space between the decentarlisation and the outcomes, particularly the effects of decentralisation on livelihoods of the forest dependent communities. There is a significant relationship among decentralisation, forest managing institutions and livelihoods. The most fundamental aspect of decentralisation is that it is expected to improve governance (Litvack et.al.1998; Francies and James 2003) which would have a positive impact on livelihoods. Further, increased focus of the government agencies, donors, planners and policy researchers on poverty of the forest dependent communities has also widened the scope to understand the interconnection between forest governance and livelihood. This has resulted in the search for the "specific path" by which decentralisation affects livelihoods, which has also motivated many scholars to go deeper into this aspect.

The policy process in forests has been attained prominence because of the increasing demand for access to and control over the forest resources by the people as well as the emergence of formal and informal institutions. Further, continuous human development issues such as poverty and illiteracy among the forest dependent communities also questioned the management mechanism of forest resources and the functioning of the forest governing institutions.

According to Larson and Ribot (2007:189) forest based marginalised communities still live in a disabling environment of policy and practice that overrides some of the positive effects of increased participation and ownership. Continuous debate on forest and forest related issues by the progressive civil society groups, academia and media has also led to the redesigning of the forest policy framework. As a result and because of the emerging political complexities, dynamism in government regimes, and above all the emergence of the state and non-state actors as well as institutions which control the forest governance affairs, in India forest policies since the last few years witnessed a paradigm shift. Such policy changes have affected the political process in the policy-making regime. It is assumed that politics in the forest policy process have led to a new direction because of the changing political orders and emergence of the state and non-state actors. Decentralised forest governance has emerged as an outcome of the policy reforms in the Indian forest sector, which is believed to have replaced the hither to colonial approach.

In Odisha, which is bestowed with rich natural resources and has become a hub of the different forest fringe communities, it is observed that the forests since time immemorial have been playing a significant role in the matters of the subsistence of livelihoods. The tribal people in the state usually depend upon forests for the sustenance of their livelihoods; and the state has the highest concentration of forest dependent communities. However, the state's position in the formulation and implementation of the pro-poor policies gives a dissenting picture. High degree of poverty in the forest regions and less access to the basic minimum facilities for the people of these regions reflects the state's failure in the formulation and implementation of forest policies. Further, the pattern of the policy formulation process in the state's forest sector which has been routed through the colonial policies of commission and omission is still controlling to the state's forest policy environment.

Forest governance in Odisha is believed to have coincided with the emergence of the neo socio-political orders, emerging economic and ecological concerns, institutional arrangements and behaviour of the actors; it has evolved over a period of time in the tune of decentralisation. Most forest policies in the state have their roots in the omissions or commissions of the colonial rule. The urge to expand regime legitimacy and control forest resources for commercial reasons was the reason behind the colonial rulers framing and reframing of the forest policies. Taking advantage of the forest dwellers, the colonial power often tried to stringent their claws over the forest resources in the state as well. During the post-independence period, the state government vigorously inherited the colonial legacy of forest policies which still fuels tensions between the state and the forest dwellers with regard to the issues of rights to access and control over the forest resources, despite the implementation of different pro-poor policies.

Literature Review and Research Gaps
The literature review shows that a number of studies is available in the stream of forest policy studies and their link with different aspects of forest governance and livelihoods. Researchers have also used different methods and models to understand the various dimensions of the forest policies. However, these literatures are more biased towards the effect rather than the process while the critical analysis from process to effect is quite missing.

With regard to understanding the forest policy process and politics through the discursive theory, literature shows that studies have been carried out in different countries, particularly in the developing and transitional countries, though such type of study was not carried out in the case of Odisha, where despite the availability of a number of forest policy studies, the politics of policy process has not been covered thoroughly.

The relationship between policy and livelihoods is quite complex and in this context, while some researchers have argued that effective policy (policy making ,policy implementation, and policy change) can strengthen the livelihoods of the forest dwellers, others have criticised the different policies describing them as disturbing factors for the livelihoods. Hence, this debate calls for a fresh investigation on the contribution of policy process on the livelihoods of the forest dwellers. In this context, it is essential to understand the livelihood-turn of the forest policies in Odisha.

Based on the above mentioned research gaps, the proposed study is designed to examine the forest policies in the state, as a process along with the politics involved within such process. Further the study also intended to focus on the issues of livelihood, and the functioning of the forest governance and different institutions.

Objectives of the Study and Methodology: In order to focus on getting more insights, the following specific objectives were derived for the study;

1. To understand the nature and evolution of decentralised forest governance in Odisha during the different periods starting from the post-independence era to the post-FRA implementation era.

2. To examine the evolution of the different forest policies and legal frameworks associated with such policies in the context of forest governance in Odisha.

3. To understand the legal and political context in which the livelihood issues emerged within the forest policy process, while focusing on the pro-livelihood forest policies such as the Participatory Forest Management (PFM) and the Forest Rights Act (FRA).

4. To explore the nature of forest politics in Odisha with respect to decision making, involvement of different actors and institutions, and how the different factors of politics such as conflict, negotiation, collaboration, and governmentalism have influenced the forest policy process in the state.

Based on the above objectives, the present study was carried out with the help of a set of research methods such as the analysis of secondary data and interview with key stakeholders. As a part of this process secondary data were collected from the state's Forest Department, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, State Archives of Odisha, Library of Odisha Legislative Assembly, Public Libraries, Libraries of different NGOs such as the Vasundhara and Regional Centre for Development Cooperation (RCDC), and the Divisional Forest Office of Sundargarh and Koraput. Apart from this, data were also collected through in-depth discussions with Forest Department Officials, NGO functionaries; people from

academic institutions, media and knowledgeable persons, in addition to literature review of different aspects of forest governance, policy process, poverty in forest regions of Odisha, and issues of livelihoods keeping in view the objectives of the study. Further, data were also collected from different news papers to explore the forest policy related developments and legislative debates on forest issues.

Analytical Framework and Narratives

The various studies on decentralised forest governance, livelihoods, policies and politics in Odisha have used different models to understand and analyse the different aspects. On the aspects of decentralised forest governance and policy, researchers have used the"policy evolutions and historical analysis model" (governance-historical evolution-policy), in order to understand the evolution of policies and issues of livelihoods. With regard to understanding the policy effects on livelihoods, researchers have used the "five capital model", while for understanding the effects of governance on development; researchers have used the governance-institution-development model, which has also been used by the political scientists as the governance-to-development model. Likewise, for understanding the effects of the European Union and international agencies on agricultural policies of Ireland, Lenschow (2006) used the polity (institutions)-politics(decision making)-policy(rules) model.

However, based on the scope of the present study and considering the nature of data as well as research gaps, we have used the framework of the Politics-Policy-Governance Model in the context of forests, viewing that governance in forests is an outcome of policy process and policy decisions can be influenced by the politics.

6.2. Findings

The study resulted in the following findings, which are based on the analysis of different aspects of politics in forest policies and issues of governance in the state forest sector in Odisha. The findings are also based on interactions with the field-level activists and policy implementers.

Forest Governance is an Outcome of Decentralisation: Forests governance in Odisha, after passing through different stages of evolution and devolution and recognising community rights over forest resources, has reached in the stage of decentralisation. The issue of governance, starting from the British era to the present period has gradually followed the path of decentralisation and resulted in bringing institutional arrangements in a systematic order for controlling the vast forest resources of the state. However, the effects of departmentalisation still continue to control the forest governance system in the state.

Evolution of Decentralisation became Focused since 1980: Forest governance and the decision making process have changed significantly since 1980, despite the disarrayed political scenario and intense factional politics. These changes have also influenced the governance process, livelihood systems, and the institutional set-up of the forests in the state. However, forest governance in the state still needs further policy reforms with regard to the effective management and ensuring greater involvement of the communities and their institutions. Policies regarding the JFM and CFM need special attention particularly with regard to democratic decisions in the management mechanism and benefit sharing.

Forest Policies are Guided by the National Level Policy Process: The forest policies in the state such as Acts, Rules and Government Orders which were enacted during different periods of time in the state are more or less guided by the national-level forest policy process apart from the few legal frameworks which were framed by the state. This has questioned the state's inability to make its own rules and hence, it is recommended that the state government should frame its own legal provisions considering the livelihood interests of the forest dwellers rather than following the guidelines of the Central Government.

Forest Politics have Influenced the Policy Process: Politics at the formal and informal level, Government and Legislative level, at the level of the body politics as well as the real politic, have influenced the forest policy decision-making process. This is evident in the case of the nationalisation of kendu leaf, JFM Resolution, NTFP Rules, etc. The politics of the distribution of the KL grants has created typical factional politics, widening the regional feelings in the state.

Livelihoods Issues are Emerged as the Key Component of Decision Making: Livelihood issues are given focus at the policy-making and implementation level. The legislative debates also reveal the focus of the government on forest livelihoods. Particularly livelihood issues of the forest dependent communities based on forest development and livelihood programmes such as the JFM, OFSDP, FRA, OTELP and WORLP have received paramount importance from the state government. However, the actual benefits of these programmes have raised questions among the policy researchers, planners and implementers because of the huge gap in the policy making and implementation process.

Rationalist Forest Policy Process has Affected Decision Making: The forest policy process in the state is linked to the traditional approach of policy making based on rationalist ideas and bureaucratic bend of mind, except for a few policies like the JFM Resolution of 1993 and the FRA of 2006. However, the successful political mobilisation and the

emergence of social capital as part of democratic governance has flourished in the arena of participatory policy process.

Not-State Actors are Playing a Crucial Role: The emergence of community protection groups and their federations, competitive political parties, CSOs etc has influenced the state forest policy process, which has given a new dimension to the policy environment in the state. This has also opened the era of participatory policy process and has created scope for the multiple actors to involve in the policy making bodies and decision making processes.

Institutional Set-Up has Witnessed Change: The process of Decentralisation has witnessed significant changes in the structure and function of the forest governing institutions. Informal institutions have also emerged as influential bodies in making policy decisions. Particularly the role of NGOs, forest groups and federations, and forest based networks are becoming crucial with regard to the policy making and implementation. However, the institutional arrangement has created a vertical split between the government-promoted and community-promoted groups which has been affecting the policy implementation process.

Livelihood Issues are Given Focus: Livelihood issues in the context of the Odisha Forest Sector have received widespread importance because of the continuous issues of poverty and hunger in the forest regions of state. However, despite the implementation of the much discussed pro-poor policies like the JFM and FRA, no significant change has been observed.

Neo-Liberal Framework has Influenced Policy Decisions: The forest policy and decision making processes are also guided by the neo-liberal economic framework. The implementation of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in the state, coupled with rapid industrialisation has invited the MNCs to the policy process, which is also believed to have affected the pro-poor forest policy process in the state.

6.3. Conclusion

Forest politics have a significant influence on the policy process and in the case of Odisha is has been found that forest politics discourses are greatly influenced by the multiple actors and institutions. The discursive politics which evolved among the political classes during the pre-independence period have witnessed a significant change. The forest policy process has now created space for the different actors, particularly the non-state actors to put forward their views in the policy-making and implementation processes. The policy process has influenced the process of the forest governance at the different

levels and this influence has also helped in strengthening the forest-governing institutions and livelihoods of the forest fringe communities.

However, the policy process in the forest sector should focus on the involvement of the non-state actors in a sustained way. The voice of the traditional self-governing institutions should be heard and policy making and implementation should be done accordingly. Legislative debate on forest policies and implementation should also highlight why certain policies are not able to reach at the desired communities, instead of highlighting the success of such policies. Likewise, corporate lobby in the formulation and implementation of the forest policies should be managed effectively and the state should not follow the agenda of the corporate bodies in the process.

Policy implementation issues also need better attention. The current pattern of forest policy implementation in the state needs fresh review considering the livelihood interest of the forest dependent communities. The view of the forest protection groups should be taken seriously in the policy process and overlapping of the implementation of different pro-poor policies should be avoided. As the policy process in a democratic set up needs the involvement of multiple actors particularly the vibrant CSOs and community based organizations, their involvement and views should not be taken as a 'disabling' factor in the policy environment. Finally, the State Legislative Assembly should play a pro-active role through highlighting the deficiencies in the functioning of the forest administration in the state.

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About the Author

Mr. Bishnu Prasad Mohapatra is a Research Scholar (Ph.D) at Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS) in Hyderabad. He is an ICSSR Institutional Doctoral Fellow and his research interests include Decentralisation, Democracy, Governance, Local Governments, Policy Studies, Forest Governance and Livelihoods and Tribal Governance and Development. He was also the recipient of the RULNR Visiting Fellowship at Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS), Hyderabad during 2012-2013. Prior to joining in the RULNR, he worked in different development organisations in Odisha and Jharkhand. He has completed M.Phil in Political Science from Berhampur University in Odisha.

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