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# DASAMAUZA CASE REPORT



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Supported by :Nilamani Mahapatra

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# HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

In the 1960s, the Mamu-Bhanaja revenue forest and Maa Maninaag reserve forest was almost entirely eroded. It resulted from years of monarchical abuse, followed by colonial abuse and criminal abuse; the victims were the vulnerable forest communities and the precious forested landscapes.

The topsoil of the hill was severely degraded, with regular topsoil relocation and increasing runoff saturation. The forest biodiversity was critically low, flora and fauna were disappearing. The perennial streams had dried up, and soil erosion caused the demolition of houses as well as the dismantling of agricultural land. What once looked like fields of green had turned grey and brown; the forests were at the brink of extinction.

Consequently, the decreasing natural resources would often lead to timber and MFP theft from surrounding villages. There was increased competition among the forest-dependent communities to collect minor forest produces and fuelwood. Soon after, even fuelwood became scarce- depleting the communities of their livelihood resources, food security, and income. Many marginalized families were slipping into severe poverty, conflict, and poor quality of life.

At this time, forest protection and conservation were becoming more prevalent in the surrounding forested villages of Nayagarh. Janardana Barala of Gaonbonilo village first initiated the idea of forest protection and management among his friends. At this time, the youth club of Gaonbonilkilo village integrated forest protection and management in their governance. Still, the neighboring towns regularly stole timber and NTFP from the forests, growing to be a menace and obstacle in the process of protection. At this point, through meetings, with the intent of conflict resolution, joint protection came up as a solution against conflict and competition for forest resources.

The idea was to include the villages involved in the theft of forest resources and make them the protectors and conservators of these assets. As far-fetched as it sounds, self-governed villages have often approached this method to overcome the tragedy of commons and establish functional systems.



# HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

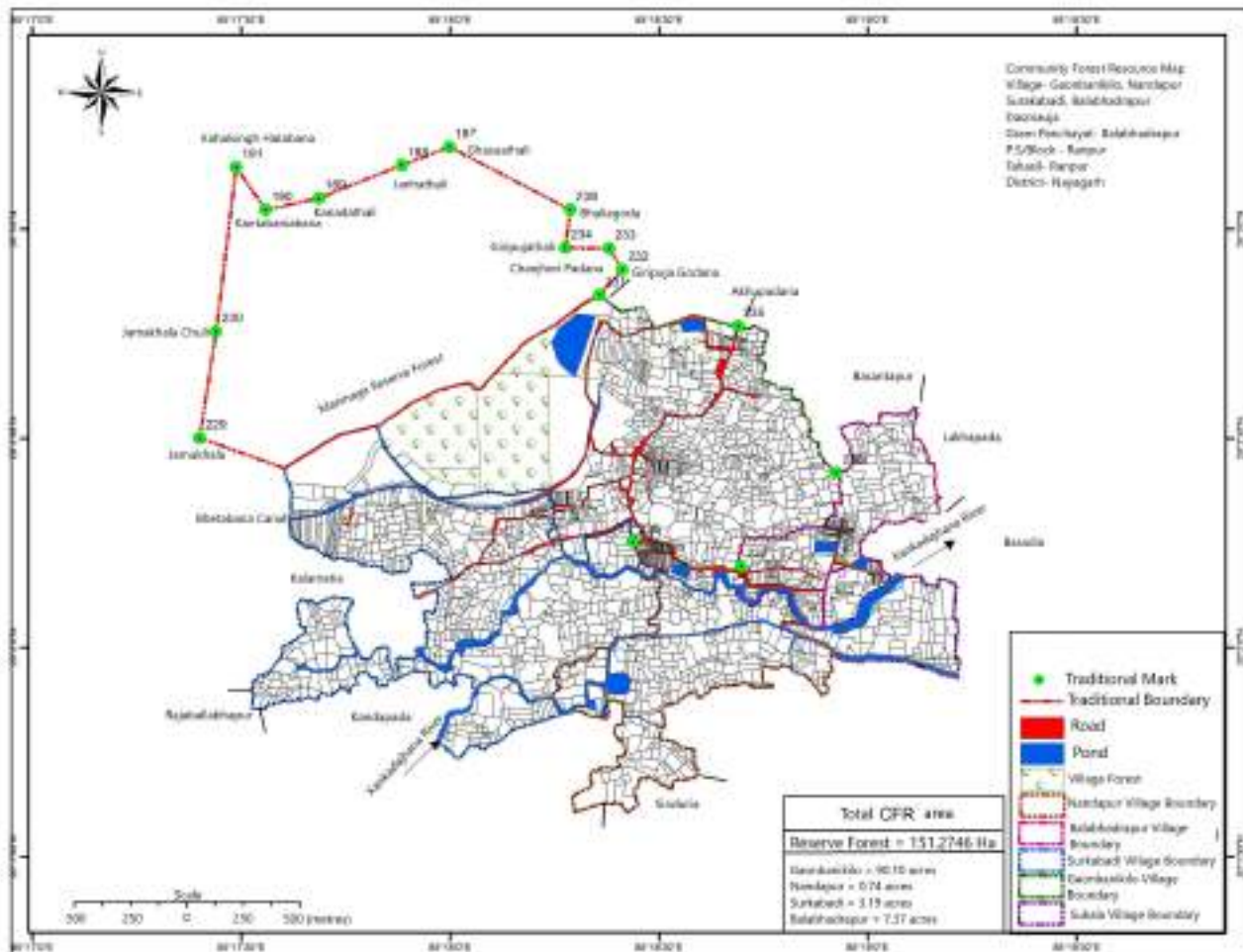
Then in 1985, through proactive mobilization, spreading of awareness, and public visibility, nine other villages joined the committee for protection and management of the forests. Those nine villages are Sriharipur, Jagannathpur, Nuanandapur, Surukabadi, Duburigada, Nandapur, Bhagabanpur, Balabhadrapur and Baghamari.

Over 30 years, the forest and its communities have changed a lot. The dependent communities are well aware of the importance of forest resources and their representation of their well-being. With the increased connection of the community with its forest, the forests have been nurtured to grow, the hills have become greener, and the trees hold the soil protecting it from erosion. The user groups dependent on fuelwood have bounded the collection activities to only two days. The forests have prospered and so have the people. The coming together of ten villages has also empowered people, given them more robust and louder voices, resolved conflict through meetings, and added to the cultural integration of the villages.

The joint body of 'Anchalika Janakalyan Committee' of Dasamauza got registered as a committee in 2004 and has continually integrated newer protection, conservation, and governance methods, taking inspiration from various other such committees in Ranpur. They have constantly collaborated with 'Maa Mani Naag Jungle Suraksha Parishad, Ranpur' and 'Vasundhara' to be updated and informed about the block level and state-level legal and political changes dynamics.



# GEOGRAPHICAL AREA



## Resource Map of Geographical Area

Maninag Reserve Forest

Mamu Bhanuja Revenue Forest

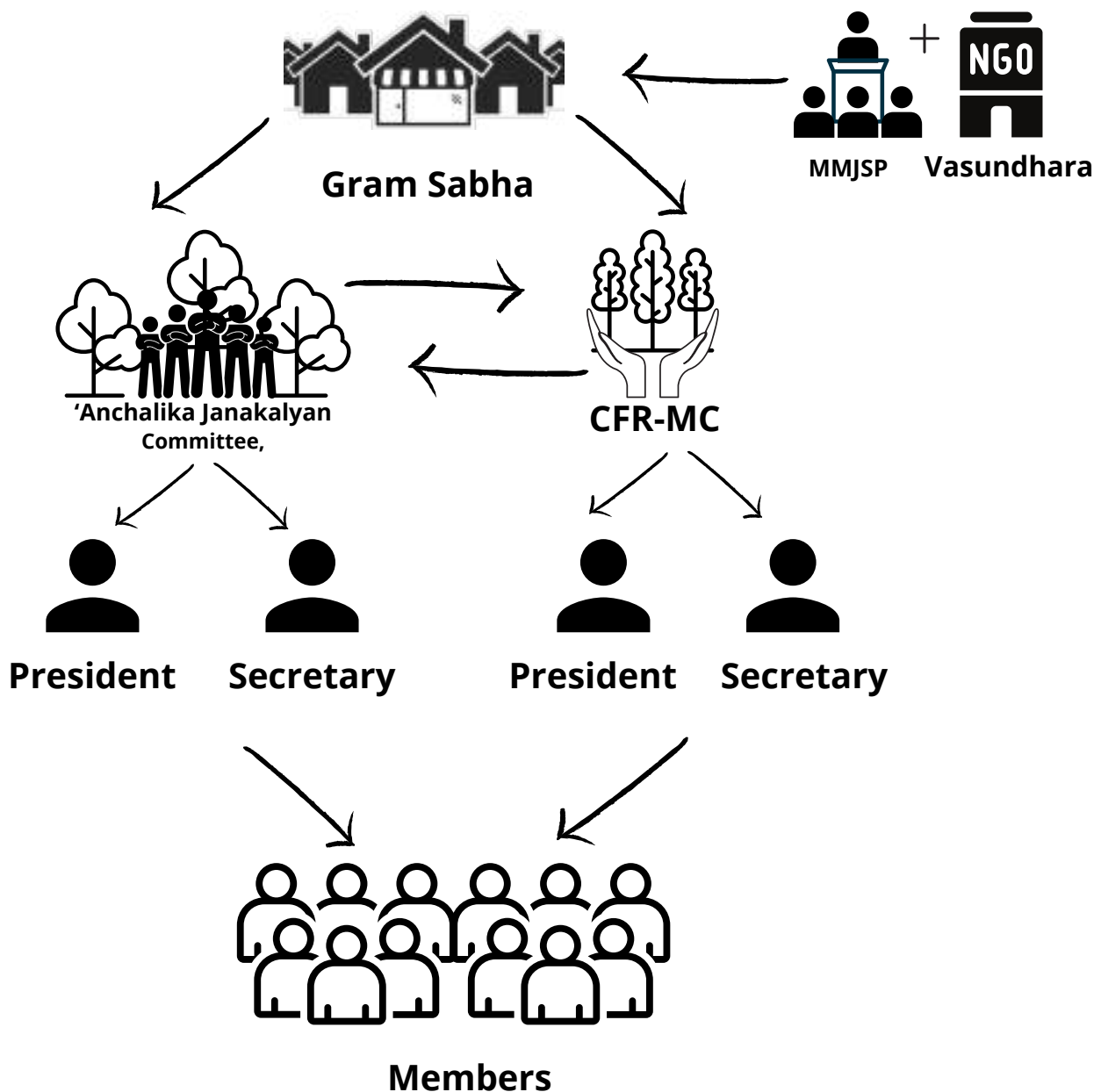
This Resource map shows various areas of importance along and around the Dasamauja Villages. It consists of two forests- Maninag Reserve Forests and Mamu Bhanuja Revenue Forests.

# INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE

## Institutional Structure

The Committee primarily is constituted with a self-governance approach, taking up particular activities adhered to forest protection and conservation. They work closely with the gram sabhas but restrict themselves from any political conflicts. Their primary objective is apparent, including integrating best practices for forest management and protection for their forests. The committee also works in close quarters with the CFR-MC, with common members amongst both.

They have managed to get four villages and six hamlets together to form the Dasamauza. They have included first user groups of the forests (the SC villages) and raised special provisions for their accessibility. They work closely with MMJSP, who extend support in case of conflicts and facilitate forest conservation and management among forest-dependent villages in the Ranpur Block.



# INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE

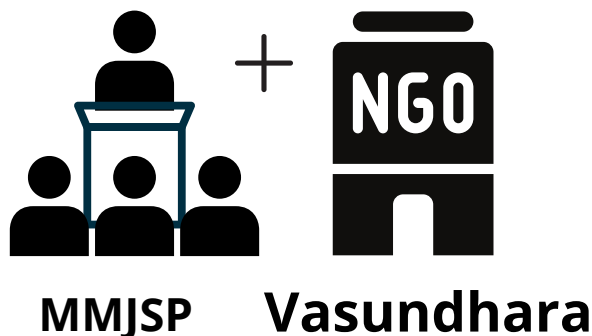
## Conflict Management

The conflict Management mechanism systems of this committee have been adaptive and innovative. Initially, more villages were included in the forest protection committee to regulate, control, and protect the interests. Every village depended on the forests and regarded them as their land can sustainably use and conserve the forests.

Initially, they followed the 'Palli' system for guarding the forests throughout the day and night to restrict stealing of NTFP and illegal timber felling of the trees in the forest. Later on, due to the involvement of 10 villages, the 'palli' system was challenging to follow, which led to hiring a night watcher with the committee fund to ensure the proper keeping of the forests.

External Conflict: Any external conflict with outsider villages that aren't protecting these forests is solved by discussions and meetings with the respective gram sabhas. In cases of NTFP stealing or illegal tree felling, the committee takes fines- respective to the seriousness of the crime. This happens through discussion with gram sabhas of respective villages and further escalation by written and verbal apologies from the offender.

Internal Conflict: The committee only deals with internal conflicts adhering to rules/regulations for forest protection or conservation. Suppose there is any conflict about the forest. In that case, anyone can ask for a committee discussion (which can be scheduled on the earliest meeting date or in an immediate fashion dependent on the emergency of the situation). If the conflict cannot resolve the committee, collaborate with the different gram sabhas, and if not resolved, the issue is escalated to MMJSP / OLC.





# INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE

## Frequency of Meeting

Regular member meetings are held on Sundays every week. This meeting is held in the Gaobanikilo school grounds or Ma Maninag Temple grounds. That adds up to 4 days a month and 52 days a year. Except for that, there is also an annual general body meeting on the day of Raja Sankranti, where all the ten villages participate. There is a grand function and various eating and drinking arrangements.

The annual event has both functional and cultural significance for the villagers. At this yearly meeting, the rules and regulations of the committee are reviewed, all types of people participate and put forth ongoing issues that they have faced in using and protecting the forest resources. Suppose there are any rules to be modified or any new additions to be made. In that case, the decision is taken democratically through various communities, members, older people, and women.

- DasaMauza Committee meets every sunday
- Gaobanikilo School/ Ma Maninag temple



**RAJA SANKRANTI**

- Annual Village Meeting



## Selection Procedure

Gram sabhas mainly select the members of the committee from amongst its influential individuals and through self volunteers. Once someone self-nominates themselves, the name is floated around in the Gram Sabhas and the Dasmauza committee to determine the individual's fitness to be the committee. The criteria informally include a person actively interested in giving their time to protect and manage the forests.

Even though this procedure has various issues- like biased selection or lack of motivation amongst the marginalized population, the committee has adhered to this due to the ease and efficiency of the process.



# INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE

## Fund Utilisation

The committee only collects funds for the hiring of the forest watchers all year round. They contain a fund of Rs 15 per household for around 450 families spread across 10 villages. The monthly salary of the forest watcher is Rs 6000.

During the COVID pandemic, funds were collected door to door by volunteers from each village for the committee so that the forest could be continued to be protected, adhering to the COVID guidelines. The fund utilization and its accounts are discussed in the Annual meeting in which all 4 villages and 6 hamlets are present.

If any fund is left, it is used in the committee's maintenance, upkeep, and other cultural activities.

## Gender and Social Equity

The Gender equity of the committee is unfortunately poor, with the committee consisting of no women members. The committee on asked about the reason for it said that the CFR-MC of the four villages that are to be distributed their community forest resource rights has 30% women, according to the best practices and intervention of Vasundhara. The Dasmuausa works closely with the CFR-MC and thus more than often includes women participants in taking any major decision about the forest protection or conservation practices. Nevertheless, this committee has been stable, and therefore little effort has been taken to increase women's participation. Given that the committee is formed by most agrarian communities and is a secondary user of forests, their management systems are inclined towards forest soil conservation, increasing forest cover, and amplifying water resources. The few villages (surkabadi and Hatibari) are the first users of the forest and heavily depend on it for sustenance. These villages are privy to various special provisions for their benefit.

The committee does have various representatives from among the scheduled caste villages. According to the committee members, this is extremely vital for the committees' functionality, as most first user groups of the forest resources are people from the scheduled tribes and castes. There are more forest-dependent communities from among them, and thus the regulation and conservation activities largely depend on their sustainable use.

# INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE

## Commitee List

V.Sl.	Village	Sl.No	Name	Designation	Sub cast	Cast	Gender
01	Gaonbanikilo	01	Ladukishor Behera	Member	Milkman	OBC	M
		02	Prafulla kumar Barada	"	Khandayat	Gen	M
		03	Kamaleswar Dalei	"	"	Gen	M
		04	Prafulla kumar Khilar	"	Milkman	OBC	M
		05	Prahallad Behera	"	Milkman	OBC	M
02	Jagarnathapur	06	Jagarnath Jena	"	Khandayat	Gen	M
		07	Laxmidhar Pradhan	"	"	Gen	M
03	Shriharipur	08	Sankarsana Swain	"	"	Gen	M
		09	Ramesh Chandra Swain	"	"	Gen	M
04	Nua Nandapur	10	Fakira mohan Muduli	"	Kumbhara	OBC	M
		11	Suresh Chandra Muduli	"	"	OBC	M
		12	Ramesh Chandra Mahapatra	"	"	OBC	M
05	Surkabadi	13	Prafulla kumar Naik	"	SC	SC	M
		14	Tofan Naik	"	SC	SC	M
06	Duburigada	15	Kailash Chandra Muduli	"	Kumbhara	OBC	M
		16	Nabakumar Sahoo	"	Khandayat	OBC	M
		17	Bhimasen Muduli	"	Kumbhara	OBC	M
07	Nandapur	18	Paramananda Sahoo	President	Khandayat	Gen	M
		19	Khetrabasi Malik	Secretary	"	Gen	M
		20	Giridhari Malik	Member	"	Gen	M
		21	Laxmidhara Jena	"	"	Gen	M
08	Balabhadrapur	22	Pabitra mohan Sahoo	"	"	Gen	M
		23	Niranjan Pradhan	"	"	Gen	M
		24	Kedareswara Jena	"	"	Gen	M
09	Bhagabanpur	25	Chandraskhara Satapathi	"	Brahmana	Gen	M
10	Baghamari	26	Netramani Jena	"	Khandayat	Gen	M
		27	Debaraja Jena	"	"	Gen	M

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- Revenue village - Gaonbanikilo (Hamlets - Jagarnathapur, Shriharipur & Nua Nandapur)
- Revenue village -Surkabadi (Hamlet- Duburigada)
- Revenue village -Nandapur
- Revenue village -Balabhadrapur (Hamlet- Bhagabanpur) - All 9 Mauza - GP - Balabhadrapur.
- Baghamari a hamlet village of Sukala revenue village of Kandapada GP. Included Dasamauja.
- Block -Tahasil,RI - PS -F.Range - F.Section - Via - Ranpur, District - Nayagarh - Odisha ( India ).

# MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION

## Afforestation/Reforestation

- In areas outside the forest that have had the worst impacts of soil erosion, afforestation projects have been taken up.
- In the afforestation procedure, the committee has planted **Eucalyptus trees** in wastelands. This project is limited to wastelands.- AFFORESTATION
- The Dalit communities plant native trees that are good sources of MFP inside the forest to protect these populations and use them for need-based consumption.- REFORESTATION

## Farming Systems

- Most of the villages in the Dasamauza are agrarian, thus their major income comes from agriculture
- Previously soil erosion due to eroding hilltops was a major cause for hampering agriculture. This was a major driver for the committee to initiate forest conservation and protection so that soil erosion could be minimized
- Currently, non-forested lands are used as agricultural areas.
- Water for irrigation is provided by mini- reservoirs ( Bhagabati Reservoir Dam, Duburigarh Reservoir Dam, Jamukhola Dam) that have been built to conserve water, keep perennial streams functional, and ensure sustainable use of water for irrigation.
- Farming systems have increased tree covers, conserved soil, water and provided a steady source of income while decreasing the effects of climate change.

## Forest Protection

- Earlier followed the thengapalli system, but due to the cluster protection and management procedures, thengapalli became very unregulated. Thus Forest Watchers were hired from among the community for protection.
- 1 watcher is hired for all 7 days and a 2nd one is hired for working only on weekends. The payment is Rs 6000/month for 1st watcher and Rs 300/day for the second watcher.
- Rs 15- Rs 20 is collected from each household (450 households) for the payment of the salaries.

# MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION

## Management of Community allotted Protected Areas

- The committee has allocated 40% of the Ma-Maninag reserve forest for public use. 60% is conserved and used only in case of an emergency.
- The Revenue Forest is only used in case any deaths have occurred in the community. Fuelwood (both live and dry shrubs ) for funeral pyres are availed from it.
- The forest-dependent communities without pakka houses are also approved to take Salia bamboo from the Ma Maninag Forest, only for house construction or repair. (selling of bamboo is not allowed)

## Management of Wildlife

- Ban on hunting, poaching, or killing of any wild animals inside the forests.
- If animals like Monkeys or elephants enter farmlands and cause damage, they are chased by the communities making loud noises, forming groups, chanting, and banging their utensils.
- If any person is found to have harmed any wildlife, they are heavily fined, and the police are intimidated.
- Watchers also monitor the forest for hunters and poachers coming from outside the Dasamauza.
- Communities co-live with animals like peacocks, rabbits, hare, wild fowls, and deers.

## Water Source Management

- Bhagabati Reservoir Dam on Kundakhaistream used for irrigation in Banikilo, Sriharipur, and Jagannathpur
- Duburigarh Reservoir Dam water used for Surkabadi, Duburigarh, Nandapur and Nuanandapur.
- Jamukhola Dam on the Jamu Nala Stream for Kalamatia, Nuanandapur, Duburigarh and Gaonbanikilo.
- Equitable Water resource management has led to decreased conflicts within and outside the Dasa Mauza.
- Bhagabati water a project built with Mamu-bhanaja and Kundakhai streams has resolved drinking water needs for the animals of nearby forest and live-stocks of said villages which were at risk 30 years ago.

# MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION

## Climate Change Impacts

- Sustainable use of water has reversed the impact of climate change on their water systems which had dried up 40 years ago.
- With the regrowth of the forests through protection, conservation, and afforestation, soil erosion has been minimized and agricultural fields have good quality
- Forest Fire frequency is almost negligible, the thick forest vegetation of forests have summers cooler and monsoons more consistent (important for agriculture)
- Wildlife that was disappearing has substantial forest cover, drinking water, and food sources in the forest. Sightings of deers, hare, peacock, wild fowls, wild boars,
- MFP production has also increased due to the increase in tree cover and need-based consumption.

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- Communities co-live with animals like peacocks, rabbits, hare, wild fowls, and snakes.

## Dynamic Management Processes

- Integration of Forest Watchers
- Collaboration with formed CFR-MC
- Change in the rules of NTFP and fuelwood collection according to the growth of the forest.
- Development of farming systems and Eucalyptus plantations on wastelands
- Development of Reservoir Project for sustainable use of water
- Maintenance of Funds of the committee
- Adherence to the rules and regulations of COVID-19 to minimize spreading
- Collection of funds during the pandemic in a door-to-door approach instead of large meetings.
- Inclusion of villages in the joint committee and collectively approaching forest protection and conservation
- The total ban on any wildlife harm, hunting, and poaching

# MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION

## Rules and Regulations

Watcher:

1st watcher : 7 days, Rs 6000 per month

Maninag Reserve Forest

2nd watcher : 2 days, Rs 300/day

Mamu Bhanuja Revenue Forest

## Fuelwood

### From Maninag Reserve Forest

- Fuelwood is allowed to be collected on Saturday/Sunday before 12 noon.
- allowed for only one day
- only one bundle per person
- Only dry and dead branches, twigs, and leaves are allowed
- No outsiders are allowed for the collection of fuelwood.
- People monitored at entry and exit points by the two watchers

### From Mamu Bhanuja Revenue Forest

- Firewood for funeral pyres in case of deaths within the Dasamauza villages.
- Both live and dead shrubs are allowed in this case

## Other Timber:

### From Maninag Reserve Forest

- Dead branches, twigs, and leaves can be collected for house construction with special permission from the committee.
- The household applying for the collection of house construction equipment or agricultural equipment is assessed (i.e., if they have a kaccha house if they have some issues with their agricultural equipment, and if it is only for personal use)
- No outsiders are allowed for this
- People monitored by the watchers

### Bamboo: Konta Bamboo

- *Konta Bamboo* forests in the protected part of the forests are not allowed to be used for any purpose and have been conserved for the last 10 years.
- This is because, 10 years ago, a forest fire had taken down most of the Konta Bamboo trees, decreasing their population significantly.
- After conservation and management for 10 years, a new generation of Konta Bamboo trees has come along.

# MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION

## Other Dry and Dead Timber:

### Bamboo- Salia Bamboo

- *Salia Bamboo* can be availed from the nonprotected area of the Maninag Reserve Forest for house construction purposes with prior permission.
- For one month before Raja Sankranti, people with kaccha houses are allowed to collect salia bamboo for reconstructing or repairing their houses
- 1 household can only take 20 pieces of salia bamboo.
- The use of bamboo has decreased with the increase in pakka houses
- The Domo Sahi Dalits (drum beater community) of Basudia and Brajaballa have special provisions for collecting salia bamboo all year round on Saturdays/Sundays.
- In the case of common villages functions, people can get bamboo poles, dry branches on Saturday/Sunday with prior permission from the committee. This can be done exclusively for common functions only.

## Non Timber Forest Produce (NTFP)

### Leaf Type NTFP:

- All villages (including hamlets) can avail of leaf type of NTFP all year round as per their requirement.
- Outsiders (from villages outside of Dasamauza) cannot avail of any leaf type NTFP from the forest.

### NutType NTFP:

- All villages (including hamlets) can avail of Nut type of NTFP all year round as per their requirement.
- Outsiders (from villages outside of Dasamauza) cannot avail of any Nut type NTFP from the forest.
- SC families and other vulnerable communities usually sell Nut-type NTFP.

### Tuber Type NTFP:

- All villages (including hamlets) can avail of Tuber type of NTFP all year round as per their requirement. (mostly for food)
- Outsiders (from villages outside of Dasamauza) cannot avail of any Tuber type NTFP from the forest.



# MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION

## Medicinal Plants

- Villagers are allowed to collect all medicinal plants as per their need
- Outside villages are also allowed to collect medicinal plants and herbs as per their need. But this is only allowed for personal use and not commercial purposes.
- Quantities monitored by forest watchers for outside villagers.

## Data:

### NTFP:

- Kendu leaf (*Diospyros melanoxylon*)
- Siali leaf (*Bauhinia vahlii*)
- Baheda leaf (*Terminalia bellirica*)
- Neem leaf (*Azadirachta indica*)
- Bel Leaf and Fruit ((*Aegle marmelos*)
- Khajur Leaf (*Phoenix sp*)
- Amla Fruit (*Phyllanthus emblica*)
- Harida Nuts (*Terminalia chebula*)
- Oronga Fruit
- Bhui Khajeri Nut (*Prosopis juliflora*)
- Anku Nut
- Khir Koli -berry (*Ziziphus spina-christi*)
- Tullo Seed (*Madhuca longifolia* )
- Chara Seed
- Bhalia Nut ((*Moghania macrophylla*)
- Bhaincha Koli (*Phyllanthus acidus*)
- Jamun Koli (*Syzygium cumini*)
- Tunga Tuber (*Dioscoreaceae* family)
- Korba Tuber (*Dioscoreaceae* family)
- Pijuli fruit (*Psidium guajava*)
- Wildlife
- Peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*)
- Monkey (*Semnopithecus sp*)
- Jungle Fowl (*Gallus sp*)
- Wild Boars (*Sus scrofa sp*)
- Sloth Bears (*Melursus sp*)
- Hare (*Lepus sp*)
- Rabbits (*Lepus sp*)
- Gurandi- Mouse Deer(*Moschiola meminna*)
- Elephant (*Elephas maximus indicus*)
- Sambar (*Rusa unicolor*)
- Python (*Pythonidae sp*)
- Cobra (*Ophiophagus hannah*)
- Kolorapaturia - Spotted leopard (*Panthera pardus*)
- Clouded Leopard ( *Neofelis sp*)
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## **Key Message**

The key objective of this documentation process was to access and understand the various layers of climate action taken by communities at the grassroots levels, who interact and co-depend on natural resources for their survival. These communities are, in a way, a microcosm of the human population around the world, who also share a relationship with natural resources around them. The depletion of these resources and the degradation of the environment are having significant impacts on a global scale.

These communities are vulnerable to climate degradation and climate change because their dependence on natural resources is more direct than in the urban populations of the world. Nevertheless, global policies and strategies target communities that co-live with nature instead of adopting strategies that center these communities as leaders of climate action and go forward with real nature-based solutions instead of only focussing on increasing carbon sinks.

We are trying to focus on various institutional and thematic management mechanisms adopted by communities and how these strategies have been dynamic and adaptive to multiple environmental and human conflicts that have risen at the local level. Documentation of best practices can thus, help us understand their strategies, formulate and implement climate action policies better, help make these processes more inclusive and focus on tangible solutions for real problems.

## **Way Forward**

With several titles lined up to be distributed in Nayagarh, CFR and CR rights recognition has seen a new light. Good governance, management frameworks, and sustainable silvicultural operations have been a part of the process for these communities. Still, most of it has stayed verbal instead of well-formulated and defined in various languages. This has created multiple information silos and even conflicts amongst the government agencies and the communities. Vasundhara has advocated for the rights-based approach for almost three decades now. At present when it has been established in well researched literature that this approach can be the best alternative to the current global strategies, we intend to facilitate and support communities to claim their rights, govern and their lands, manage their resources and take ownership of what they have been denied for centuries. Participation and engagement of communities inside formal processes, with well-formulated management frameworks and robust institutional mechanisms can bring their efforts to light and help recognize the benefits of community-led forest management.

This will take time as a part of a developmental process where there is a need to increase equitable social and gender participation in communities and increase primary stakeholder engagement at the policy level.