

ROLE OF COMMUNITY BASED FOREST MANAGEMENT TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE PROBLEM: A CASE OF NEPALESE COMMUNITY FORESTRY

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Abstract- Forests have central roles in climate change. The conservation of forests sequesters the carbon from the atmosphere and also regulates the carbon cycle. However, knowingly and unknowingly the world's forests were deforested and degraded annually at the rate of 0.18% and emitted the carbon to the atmosphere. The IPCC reports claimed that the deforestation and forest degradation accounts 1/5th of total carbon emission, which is second position after fossil fuels. Since 1.6 billion people depend on varying degrees on forest for their daily livelihood, not all deforestation are undesirable. Therefore, to conserve the forests and find the livelihoods opportunities for forest surrounding people is prerequisites to address the climate change problems especially in developing countries, and also a growing concern to the forestry sector researchers, planners and policy makers. The study examines the role of community based forest management in carbon mitigation and adaption taking the examples of Nepal's community forestry program. In the program, the government hands over a part of national forests to the local communities with sole forest management authorities. However, the government itself retained the ownership rights of forestland. Local communities organized through a local institution called Community Forest User Group (CFUG) managed the forests. They also formed an operational plan with technical prescriptions and a constitution with forest management rules and regulations. The implementation results showed that the CFGUs are not only found effective to organize the local people and construct a local institution to forest conservation and management activities, but also they are able to collect a community fund from the sale of forest products and carried out various community development activities. These development activities have decisive roles to improve the livelihood of forest surrounding people and eventually to address the climate change problems.

Keywords- Climate change, Community forestry, Local institution, Nepal