Collaborative management of the 'protected' forests of Bangladesh
- Space for participation of the people

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Abstract: Participation in Bangladesh's 'protected' forest management has been sought as a corrective to state's failure to manage, conserve the country's limited forest resources. 'Participation' is sought to achieve goals of conservation and livelihood. This is a significant shift from the radical pro-environment policy environment that locked forests away in 'protected areas', albeit largely 'on paper', from a significant human population whose interests are in conflict with those of the state, to a less radical ground where local inhabitants are 'included' in the 'conservation' of forest resources. While claims of successful 'participation' of local and non-local stakeholders in the newly imposed, 'replicable', management arrangements are surfacing, an understanding of the claimed participation becomes more relevant than ever. This essay argues that the claimed level and nature of 'participation' of the impoverished inhabitants of these protected forests is only a 'construction' that is gaining coin within the state – donor – development – academic landscape. The institutional arrangement put forward neither calls for meaningful participation nor take into account needs of a significant human population that is ever-increasingly dependent on the forest resources that are attempted to be 'protected'.

Glossary of Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
BNP	Bhawal National Park
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tracts
CWS	Chunati Wildlife Sanctuary
MoE	Ministry of Environment
DoF	Ministry of Finance
FSP	Forestry Sector Project, ADB
FD	Forest Department
IPAC	Integrated Protected Area Co-management Project
KNP	Kaptai National Park
LNP	Lawachara National park
MACH	Management of Aquatic Ecosystems through Community Husbandry
NGO	Non-government Organization
NSP	Nishorgo Support Project, USAID
NP	Nishorgo Progam, Forest Department
NFP	National Forest Policy (1994)
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Products
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PA	Protected Area
PWS	Pablakhali Wildlife Sanctuary
RKWS	Rema-Kalenga Wildlife Sanctuary
RUG	Resource Users' Group – village based groups resource users
RMO	Resource Management Organization
SNP	Satchari National Park
TGR	Teknaf Game Reserves
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

'This much is clear: participation, a loose term to describe a wide variety of practices that aim for more inclusive development, does not automatically include those who were previously left out of such processes. It is only as inclusive as those who are driving the process choose it to be. - (Guijt & Shah, 1998)

The story of community participation in state owned forest management is relatively new in Bangladesh, as compared to similar developments in neighboring India, Nepal or elsewhere. The first attempts of such inclusion involved delegation of management responsibilities (i.e., developing, protecting and managing forests, plantations in and around 'protected' areas) to local individuals and user groups in exchange for minor subsistence extraction rights mostly limited to fuel-wood and other non-timber forest products collection and minor financial share of final timber sales. The 'Social Forestry' model included benefit sharing agreements (BSAs) through which productive forest generation, re-generation and management responsibilities and provisions for incentives in return have been established between participants and land owning agencies (e.g. the forest department or the Roads and Highways Department) (Muhammed, Koike, Sajjaduzzaman, & Sophanarith, 2005).

More significant 'partnerships' have recently been formalized through the Nishorgo Support Projects and the follow up Integrated Protected Area Co-management program (IPAC, ongoing campaign to scale up structures introduced through the Nishorgo Support Project and MACH). Both of these, as well as the Forestry Sector Project (FSP), Sustainable Environment Management Program (SEMP), IUCN Bangladesh's Initiative in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), donor driven management interventions have been seen by many, mainly development practitioners, donors and the state, as 'successful' attempts in *including* local users in forest conservation and forest management in general. It is generally agreed that these interventions have had significant impact on mainstreaming 'co-management' to improved 'protection' of the forest (International Resources Group, 2004). Attempts to 'include' local resource users forest management, e.g. MACH, have partially succeeded in formalizing 'inclusion' of local 'participants' in forest management. For example, 'co-management' institutions including members from civil society, local government, residents, resource user groups and the state have recently been recognized by the state (Co-management Council and Committee, resource management organizations,

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forest user groups and federations, etcetera) (Bangladesh Gazette No. pabama/parisha 4/nishorgo-64/part-4/112 dated August 10 2006[1]). The 'co-management' institutions are 'idealized' to be responsible for overall management of the PA's conservation, regeneration, patrolling responsibilities in exchange for financial benefits to those 'actively'[2] participating in carrying out these responsibilities. The formalization of the 'co-management' institution is seen by many as indicative of successful 'participation'. The 'success' of these initiatives have been translated as the opportunity to move from a project-based approach towards legally institutionalized popular participation, rather than selective inclusion of local resource users in overall management. As a result, the Integrated Protected Area Co-management project is currently scaling up 'co-management' institutions across the country. In an ideal world these developments have the potential to establish the necessary institutional infrastructure—empowered representative local authorities—for scaling up these popular-participation efforts in forests across the country.
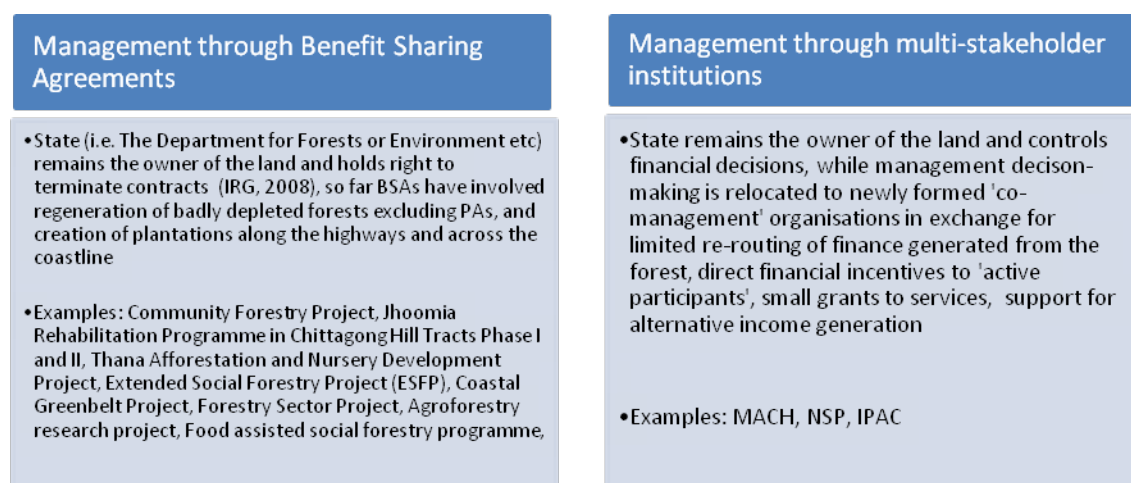
Management through Benefit Sharing Agreements	Management through multi-stakeholder institutions
• State (i.e. The Department for Forests or Environment etc) remains the owner of the land and holds right to terminate contracts (IRG, 2008), so far BSAs have involved regeneration of badly depleted forests excluding PAs, and creation of plantations along the highways and across the coastline • Examples: Community Forestry Project, Jhoomia Rehabilitation Programme in Chittagong Hill Tracts Phase I and II, Thana Afforestation and Nursery Development Project, Extended Social Forestry Project (ESFP), Coastal Greenbelt Project, Forestry Sector Project, Agroforestry research project, Food assisted social forestry programme,	• State remains the owner of the land and controls financial decisions, while management decison-making is relocated to newly formed 'co-management' organisations in exchange for limited re-routing of finance generated from the forest, direct financial incentives to 'active participants', small grants to services, support for alternative income generation • Examples: MACH, NSP, IPAC

Figure 1: Two models of local 'participation' in Forest Management in Bangladesh

Improvements in reduced local dependence on forest products, forest protection and livelihood have been claimed by many. Khan *et al.* (2004) reviewed a number of early 'social forestry' project impacts and observed positive contributions of 'participation' to livelihood, governance and institutional capacity

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[1] downloadable at http://www.usaid.gov/bd/files/GovernmentOrderForNishorgoCoManagement.pdf

[2] Non-member forest dependents, inhabitants often do not receive any benefit, except for long-term benefits that may evolve from improved environmental services that are hoped to be achieved. Although there is provision for assistance grants to the extremely poor, they can hardly affect livelihood conditions.

building. Biswas & Choudhury (2007) claims successes of BSAs in conservation; he cites FAO data to report that the total forest area of Bangladesh has been increasing at a rate of 1.3% per year (FAO 2005 cited in Biswas & Choudhury, 2007)[3]. Significant gains in forest regeneration and local incentive shares from the BSAs under the generic term 'Social Forestry' have been reported by Muhammed, Koike, Sajjaduzzaman, & Sophanarith (2005). Khan et al (2008) in their study of the performance of the CMCs claimed significant improvements in livelihood, capacity development, conservation and community 'empowerment´. Shubhani (2008), Shewli (2008) and Hoque (2008) also reports impressive results in women's empowerment, livelihood and reduced subsistence extraction by local women.

But it is always important to examine the broader institutional context of which such successes are part. Besides, a growing body of review literature provides ground for questioning the nature and scope of this participation. First, any review of the processes that led to the inceptions of the 'co-management' intervention in Bangladesh's PA management reveals that the local people were not involved in the planning, designing, implementation or evaluation of this 'co-management' arrangements. Similarly, a brief glance at the two tier 'co-management' institutions reveals that 'local participation' is disproportionately limited and is clearly unable to influence decision making. Hossain et al (year unknown) analysed quantitative data to document lack of local participation and disproportionate influence and authority of the Forest Department in the Social Forestry Project. This lack of participation in decision making, implementation and evaluation has also been pointed at by Muhammed et al (2005) who also identify a lack of legitimacy and security of the rights assigned through various PBSAs. At a policy level, co-management suffers from an overarching issue of all-together non-recognition by existing laws, that have been read to forbid investment by anyone other than the government (such as communities, NGOs, and private groups) on reserve forest lands, including protected areas (International Resources Group, 2008; Hossain M. , 2008).

These ramifications and overt 'planner-centred' nature of 'token' participation leaves one to question what agendas the current 'co-management' mainstreaming may potentially achieve and what impact they may have on the conservation, livelihood and governance of the forest areas of Bangladesh.

Objectives of this study:

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[3] This data is in conflict with the same provided by Muhammed, Koike, & Haque(2008) and Muhammed et al (2005) who report that by 2002, forest resource cover had increased by only 1%, or about 0.14% year.

As an important common pool resource, forests are affected by various policy, processes and institutions that shape the sustainable use and management of forest resources to meet diverse goals (Ostrom, 1999; Varughese & Ostrom, 2001). In Bangladesh new institutions are being crafted to include and eventually 'empower' local communities in forest 'conservation': an agenda increasingly put forward by donors and the state. It is anticipated that 'local participation' in management will effectively 'protect' the forests from the threats posed by the community, which they are members of, as well as external agents such as illegal loggers. While no change in property rights from the state to the community has yet been proposed or meaningful 'devolution' with accompanying incentives has taken place, community participation is sought to enhance management efficiency. The introduction of the co-management institutions[4] together with the policy changes have crucial bearings on management of forest resources and distribution of the benefits flowing, livelihood security of local resource users, communities as well as the future of developments around forest management in Bangladesh. The ongoing changes also challenge existing land right patterns and tenure security, affect existing power relations, informal institutions as well as creating conflicts over power and benefit distribution.

An understanding of the perceptions and agendas of those driving the ongoing 'scaling up' of 'co-management' efforts and contrasting these with the agendas and perceptions of the local resource users can inform what is to be expected of the ongoing 'co-management' efforts.

Research Questions:

It thus becomes important to make a number of enquiries relating to the ongoing 'institutionalization' of 'participation' in Bangladesh's forest resource management. This thesis has the following specific points of departure:

Why is participation in Bangladesh's forest management now conceived as an appropriate measure?
Whose participation is sought through the ongoing structural changes relating to protected forest area management?
What is the nature and extent of the participation sought?

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[4] The Nishorgo Co-management institution, currently being replicated through the IPAC projects bringing more forests into 'co-management', is a three-tier structure comprised of a Protected area conservation Council, Protected Area Conservation Co-management Committee and Forest User Groups (Chowdhury R. M., 2008)

Whose agenda does this participation serve?

Does this 'co-management' involve adequate devolution of management authorities to equate with the responsibilities assigned? Or is this participation 'empowering' in the sense that local resource users and participants have sufficient control over management decision making, so as to effectively engage long term participation?

What agendas do the local resource users have?

What agendas do the actual 'participants' have?

To address these questions, the thesis analyses the state-donor-NGO perspectives on participation in Bangladesh's forest resource management. This understanding is then used to trace how these perceptions affect the institutional changes brought about to support participation. This also helps to analyse if any differences in the agendas of the state and donor may interfere with meaningful participation and sustainable governance of the forest resources in Bangladesh.

Methods:

This enquiry began with a policy/project document and literature review on the changes in forest management in Bangladesh and the impacts of the various 'co-management' arrangements thus far. Review of formal project documents, policy papers, legal documents informed the analysis of 'who's participation is sought, in what, who is participating and the nature and scope of actual 'local' participation and thus this assisted the shaping of the research questions and also played a useful role in confirming, contradicting and supplementing the findings claimed in various publications. The secondary literature on the impact of such co-management institutions and reviews of actual participation or functioning of the institutions was built on to analyze the actual 'translation' of the project goals and to find answers to who is participating, why and in what; what this participation has meant for them, or if this participation will lead to improved conservation, livelihood or governance outcomes. The overarching concern was to map what the various 'projects' aimed to gain from the kind of 'participation' they sought and what the translation of the same into Co-management organizations e.g. co-management committees, councils, forest user groups, resource management organizations etcetera meant to the local participants and this was done by a Grounded Theory Analysis of the project documents and literature. Grounded Theory is a qualitative method used to systematically analyze large bodies of text, to construct theoretical models that are ''grounded'' in the text (Corbin and Strauss, 1990 cited in Reed, 2008). Outcomes in achieving the triple goals of c*onservation, livelihood gains and governance* are reviewed from mainly secondary reviews, literature but also from project reports.

Background:

Across the globe many recent policy initiatives in forestry recognize community participation in forest management, and natural resource management in general, as indispensable. An 'estimated 22% of all forests in developing countries are now formally under some form of decentralized management' (White & Martin, 2002 cited in Lund & Treue, 2008, p 2781). Nelson and Agrawal (p 557 – 558, 2008) attributes this change to "a result of multiple factors, including the growth of scholarship on common property and in political ecology during the past twenty years; the broader tenets of the neo-liberal orthodoxy of market-based incentives, property rights, and decentralization; donor interests in achieving synergies between rural development and biodiversity conservation; and the intersection between local demands for greater control over resources and political decision makers' interests in reducing expenditures". The justifications for seeking public participation include practical considerations such as cost effectiveness, management capacity etcetera as well as rather philosophical and development concerns involving social justice, governance, decentralization (Brown, Malla, Schreckenberg, & Springate-Baginski, 2002). Agrawal and Gupta (2005) summarize the 'claimed effects' of participation to include "greater access to decision makers, higher levels of participation by various social groups in decision making, and the accountability of decision makers". This is particularly true in many developing countries in the south where the state has significant property rights over forests, forestry approach focuses on state production forestry or forest protection, and concerns for social issues and the interests of local communities are traditionally ignored.
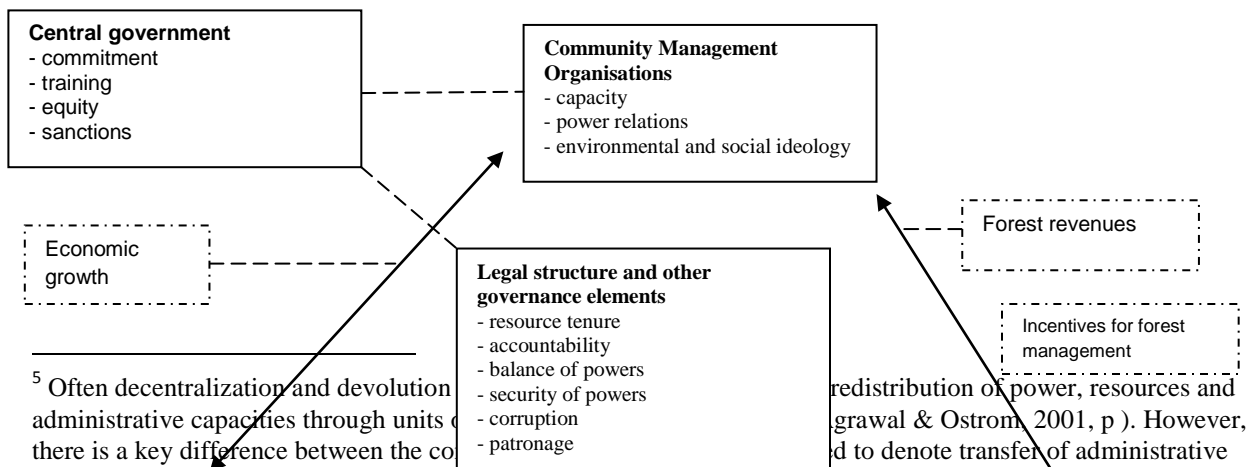
In many of these countries the most common modes of collaboration have been — transfer of control over forests, at varying degrees and differing modes, from the state to communities and sharing forest management roles amongst multiple stakeholders (Jane Carter, 2005). The *ideal* goal of the former is eventual complete devolution of forest management responsibility to local communities and this form of collaboration is usually sought where public management has sufficiently proven to be futile. The essence of the latter form of collaboration, on the other hand, is a partnership between local users, organized into smaller village scale forest management institutions and the state in which management responsibilities and benefits are shared on varying degrees while the state retains control over the partnership (Jane Carter, 2005).

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Decentralization (meaning sharing of roles) and devolution (meaning transfer of control) are the two terms that have been used, rather confusingly, to refer to these different forms of collaboration between the state and the community in natural resource management[5].

In other parts of the world, both in the developing and the developed parts, collaborative or adaptive management has been significantly mainstreamed in multiple use forest management, mainly as a response to conflicts over uses and values – commercial, communal and conservation – but also as results of environmental activism and growing need for responsive governance. Whatever the driver of change in forest management has been, the essence of partnership, according to the rhetoric, is the recognition, albeit partial and evidently inadequate, that no one stakeholder can, or should, take full control of strategic and/or operational management.

From Rhetoric to Reality:

Disillusionment in participatory NRM management processes have led many including Shackleton, Campbell, Wollenberg, & Edmunds (2002, p. 1) to conclude that most attempts to 'include' local participation reflect rhetoric more than substance. In an ideal world, participation in forest or NRM management in general is promoted with the triple objective of (i) forest conservation, (ii) improved rural livelihoods, and (iii) promotion of good governance. The actual realization of these goals however remains questionable (Cleaver, 1999; Lund & Treue, 2008; Brockington, 2007).

Central government
- commitment
- training
- equity
- sanctions

Community Management Organisations
- capacity
- power relations
- environmental and social ideology

Economic growth

Forest revenues

Legal structure and other governance elements
- resource tenure
- accountability
- balance of powers
- security of powers
- corruption
- patronage

Incentives for forest management

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[5] Often decentralization and devolution [...] redistribution of power, resources and administrative capacities through units [...] grawal & Ostrom, 2001, p). However, there is a key difference between the co[...]d to denote transfer of administrative functions only while devolution is more often associated with transfer of power (meaning both the capacity and authority to contribute to decion making) (Fisher, Durst, Enters, & Victor, 2000). To avoid confusion, this paper henceforth avoids the use of the word decentralisation, and uses the term devolution to mean transfer of rights, power to local communities and people. There is a more elaborate review of this concepts elsewhere in the thesis.
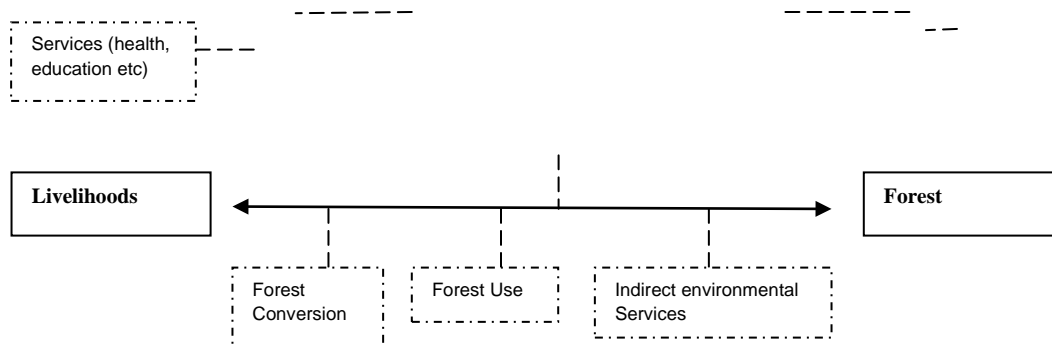
Figure 2: Framework to analyze devolution, forest management and livelihoods relationships, adapted from Tacconi (2007)

The effect of 'participation' in forest conservation is ambiguous and poorly documented:

There is growing evidence that participation in forest management can contribute significantly to rural livelihoods (Brown, Malla, Schreckenberg, & Springate-Baginski, 2002). The relation between poverty and environment, however, has proved rather elusive to be captured with accuracy. Theoretically the livelihood dependency, physical closeness to, local knowledge of and better information about the resource suggest that local communities are likely to be better and more efficient managers than centralized agencies (Lund & Treue, 2008). That local communities can manage and conserve natural resources autonomously has also been well documented in existing literature. However, the synergy between 'participation' and conservation is yet to be empirically explored (Reed, 2008;Lund & Treue, 2008) although claims of improved environmental health achievements made from effective devolution are not too difficult to find (Schreckenberg & Luttrell, 200; Ribot 2004; Larson, 2003; Jane Carter, 2005; Gibson, Williams, & Ostrom, 2005; Meshack, Adhikari, Doggart, & Lovett, 2006). Larson (2003) finds it 'naïve' to believe that local people will always opt for the conservation of forests or that their participation in and influence on local government will guarantee better forest use. He emphasizes that other factors such as economic incentives, the local incentive structure and an appropriate balance of powers with the central government, etcetera play an important role in achieving the desired benefits of devolution (Larson, 2003). Agrawal and Gibson (1999) and Enters & Anderson (2000) describe the weakness of earlier approaches to local engagement in that the assumption that relationships among community, livelihoods and natural resource as one of harmony, equilibrium or balance is fundamentally

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flawed and that local participation in NRM is often based on the following untested assumptions: local populations are interested and skilled in sustainable forest resource use and conservation; contemporary rural communities are homogeneous and stable; and local community-based tenurial, knowledge and management systems are uniquely suitable for forest conservation.

'Participation' has meant little, if anything, for the poor:

Although theoretically 'participation' has significant livelihood improvement and equity potentials (Ribot, 2002; Larson, 2003) practice has largely failed to live up to these expectations. Many efforts to incorporate 'participation' often tightened control of resource utilization resulting in more limited access to benefits, at least in the short term, as well as transaction costs to be borne by the poor (Ribot, 2004).

Although partnerships in forest and natural resource management in general usually included restructuring the power relations between central state and communities through the transfer of management authority to local-level organizations, experience suggest that co-management has meant little for local resource users; in most cases only limited incentives to support state revenue or conservation interests rather than local livelihood needs (Shackleton, Campbell, Wollenberg, & Edmunds, 2002). "To date, most public participation processes for many protected area management projects have been applied at the lower stages of consultative participation, which in Arnstein's (1969) terms, only serves the purpose of tokenism, merely paying lip service to the requirement of participation" - (International Resources Group, 2004, p 39). Nor has there been much evidence to support that devolution of forest management resulted in more increased efficiency, in terms of protection, livelihood or governance goals, than earlier conventional, exclusionary approaches brought about (Enters & Anderson, 2000; Cleaver, 1999; Lund & Treue, 2008). Enters and Anderson (2000) find this failure obvious since in most devolution efforts participation has been only lip service, where limited coercive participation has been achieved it often was limited to influential stakeholders with agendas conflicting to those of local resource users (Enters and Anderson, 2000). In particular, co-management largely failed in situations where the state and local people had 'different expectations of what devolution was supposed to achieve and how' (ibid). More recently, many co-management efforts have been increasingly criticized for being vague promises without substance and occasionally for their overwhelming failures (Ribot, 1999; Nelson & Agrawal, 2008) which in turn has threatened to withdraw support for devolution strategies before being ever implemented. Neumann (1997 cited in Nelson & Agrawal, 2008) went as far

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as to suggest that many efforts to involve local people have only succeeded in reproducing earlier more coercive forms of conservation. This has led many to suggest that the blanket application of various participatory management approaches are 'overly optimistic' (Brown, Malla, Schreckenberg, & Springate-Baginski, 2002).

This gap between the rhetoric and actual realization attests to the fact that there is an important distinction between real devolution of management and something merely called decentralization (Cleaver, 1999).

In the absence of accountable, representative devolution entwined with active participation of the local resource users, and particularly the pro-poor, conservation, equity or governance are hardly achievable goals. Ribot et al observes that most efforts to involve participation are either flawed in their design, or encounter strong resistance from a variety of actors that erodes their effectiveness (Ribot, Agrawal, & Larson, 2006). Most, if not all, efforts that 'pass as participatory forestry' have managed to encourage participation as the lower levels of Arnstein's (1969) ladder and rarely involved access to valuable forest resources (Fisher, 2000). Examples of decentralized forest management where meaningful powers are transferred to democratically elected and downwards accountable decision-making bodies are, in fact, rare (Arnold, 2001; Carter & Gronow, 2005; Ribot, Agrawal, & Larson, 2006; Shackelton, Campbell, Wollenberg, & Edmunds, 2002 cited in Lund & Treue, 2008).This observation is in line with Jane Carter (2005), Ribot (2002, 2006) and Shackleton, Campbell, Wollenberg, & Edmunds (2002) who maintain that reluctant and incomplete implementation of decentralized forest management is the primary impediment to success in a number of African countries. "This is because co-management processes, and the institutional arrangements that oversee their implementation, may easily be dominated by wealthier or more powerful members of the community, producing an outcome that perpetuates or even reinforces social inequities, including gender." (Jane Carter, 2005; Schreckenberg & Luttrell, 2009; Glasmeier & Farrigan, 2005). Conversely, where meaningful devolution has taken place community management has succeeded, for example in Mexico communities successfully controlling as much as 80% of the forests and exploiting them commercially (Bray et al, 2003; Antinori and Bray, 2005 cited in Tacconi, 2007). Communities are also seen to be successfully managing large forest areas in Kumaon (India) and exploit them for non-commercial uses (Tacconi, 2007).

Thus the problem with community conservation is not that it does not work, but that it has not been tried vigorously enough (Murphree 2000 cited in Brockington, 2007).

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Although the success of community-based conservation has been limited it is reasonable to insist that communities and local government have not been sufficiently empowered to allow them to work properly and that adequate and proper devolution is the core of successful participation (Ribot, 1999; Brown, Malla, Schreckenberg, & Springate-Baginski, 2002). Brockington (2007) underlines similar observations on the centrality of adequate and proper devolution.

When is participation perceived as empowering or meaningful?

Contrary to what is often seen in practice, meaningful participation is dependent on high degree of accountability towards local needs and priorities, particularly those of the disadvantaged, the presence of mechanisms to prevent elite-captures and most importantly strengthening of local capacity (Shackleton, Campbell, Wollenberg, & Edmunds, 2002). Presumed benefits of devolution of NRM depend heavily on intensive participation of resource users which is also a fundamental goal of devolution (Agrawal & Gupta, 2005).The benefits of devolution policies are seen to improve with greater participation. Presumably, those that participate more in state efforts to devolve control over resources are also the ones that gain greater benefits from resources. Conversely, nonparticipating actors benefit less from devolution because they are unable to exercise their voice (Hirschman, 1970 cited in Agrawal et al 2005).

In the same line community participation in itself is dependent on the existence of or the emergence of locally accountable and representative and duly empowered structures, institutions for decision making (Ribot, 1999). While acknowledging the potentials of participation when coupled with proportionate devolution Ribot (1999) makes two crucial observations about participation: first that in many contexts the instruments of enhancing participation do not constitute participation and second that where tokenism is achieved the participant rarely has any 'power' on decisions on forest management or the distribution of benefits flowing. He observes that "when local structures are representative few powers are devolved to them, and when local structures have powers they are not representative but rather centrally controlled. Rather than empowering or enabling, these policies control and administer the local, treating rural population as subjects to be managed and used. For these reasons, new laws and projects masquerading as political decentralization or community participation must be carefully analyzed" (Ribot, 1999: p 28 - 29)

Devolution Vs Decentralisation:

Although often used interchangeably, the terms decentralization and devolution are quite distinct ideas. The subtle difference between the two is that decentralization often refers to relocation of *administrative functions*, as distinct from *power*, away from a central location. Devolution, by contrast is the relocation of power, understood as the capacity to affect the outcome of decision-making processes (Fisher, 2000). It is important to stress that this implies a genuine role in decision making, not just a token input in the form of "consultation". By contrast devolution within branches of the central state is de-concentration - bringing government and its services closer to the population (Ribot, 1999). Devolution to 'community' and representative local government, the focus of our interest here, is also coined political decentralisation and can be a mechanism of community participation (ibid). Ribot (1999) envisages the achievement of a powerful form of community participation where locally accountable, representative, or even appointed, autonomy is created through right power devolution of real powers.

Fisher (Fisher, 2000) identified three types of decentralization and devolution approaches prevalent in forest management. The first type is one of decentralization (of responsibilities without corresponding power); best exemplified in the JFM model in India, where real local user groups are 'rewarded' with limited benefits for the protection responsibilities they carry out. A slightly different variant of decentralization is common in many parts of Asia and the rest of the developing world, for example in the Philippines where major responsibilities as well as some power (as in limited devolution) are transferred to the local administration, as compared to a local community or organization. The final variant, arguably the most meaningful devolution, hands over a significant degree of control to local communities (for instance the model of community forestry in Nepal).

Building on Ferguson and Chandrashekharan (2005), Thi extends the typology in line with the recipient of transfer by identifying four approaches that mark decentralisation in the Aisa-Pacific: from national to district government; to village government; to communities by recognizing customary ownership of the communities**;** through privatization." - (Thi, 2009). However, this typology does not make any reference to the degree and nature of decentralization.

To result in effective participant engagement and improved environmental decision making, processes of participation must be supported by meaningful, if not complete, 'devolution'. The benefits of participation are most likely to be achieved from devolution rather than any form of decentralization.

Nonetheless, local participation in forest management is no longer limited to a few pilot projects and remote places, but it has found recognition in mainstream development (Sikor, 2006).

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Governments around the world are in the process of devolving rights on forests to local people (Edmunds and Wollenberg, 2003 cited in Sikor, 2006). In Bangladesh, however, 'co-management' has assigned heavy responsibilities in combination with limited rights on the actual forest dependent participants.

The theory of public engagement: typologies of Participation

Typologies of Participation (taken from Reed, 2008)	
Basis of Typology	Example
Typology based on different degrees of participation on a continuum.	Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation: *manipulation* to *citizen control*; *non-participation* to *Citizen Power*. Davidson's (1998) wheel of participation: *Information – Consultation – Participation - Empowerment*
Typology based on nature of participation according to the direction of communication flows	Rowe and Frewer (2000): *communication - consultation – participation*
Typology based on theory, distinguishing between normative and/or pragmatic participation	
Typology based on the objectives for which participation is used	Michener (1998)

Stakeholder participation has the potential to improve the quality of environmental decisions by embedding more comprehensive information inputs into decision making. A brief overview of the diverse range of typologies informs the interpretation of ideological, social, political and methodological meanings they are loaded with. This overview will help linking our context with the appropriate typology, i.e. to categorize the participation that is taking place.

The first mainstream categorization of stakeholder engagement was put forward by Arnstein (1969) whose 'ladder of participation' described a continuum of increasing stakeholder involvement, from passive dissemination of information (*manipulation*), to active engagement (*citizen control*). The ladder metaphor implies that higher rungs should be preferred over lower rungs. Davidson (1998) attempted to adapt the ladder to emphasize on legitimacy of different degrees of participation. His concept is that, with community involvement, a decision would be made as to which quadrant of the *Wheel* the project belonged. Then the appropriate strategy or strategies would be selected. The *Wheel* will only work

equitably as a model if this pivotal decision is taken collaboratively, failing this participation becomes 'information only' projects.

Rowe & Frewer (2000) emphasises on communication flows between parties. They categorise engagement into *communication*: information dissemination to passive recipients, *consultation:* gathering information from participants and *participation:* two-way communication between participants and those who engage participants.

Reed (2008) also points at typologies that make distinction between participation that is normative and/or pragmatic. The key difference between the two is that normative participation is process oriented, recognizing participation as a democratic right and thus needs to be fair, representative, equalizes power between participants. Typologies relying on the pragmatic essence of participation, on the other hand, conceptualize key practical issues like 'public acceptance' versus 'decision quality' or 'political' versus 'technical' participation (ibid).

Michener (1998) made a further observation on 'participatory' processes that engage participation in meeting planner goals , hence the name 'planner centered', to the ends of early diffusion of an imposed change, local knowledge exploitation, shifting transaction costs to the participants and conflict avoidance. She then contrasts this with 'people-centred' participation, which is considered both a means and an end in itself. It is a means to meet local felt needs and redistribute scarce resources, but also has inherent value as a process which empowers the poor by enhancing local management capacity, increasing confidence in indigenous .

Critical perspectives to policy making and implementation

A critical anthropological perspective on how devolution policies are formed, interpreted and implemented is extremely relevant as a backdrop to any enquiry of agency and nature of local engagement (Thi, 2009). This perspective assumes that the 'very tone of written policy documents adequately hint on whose knowledge or interests the policy serves' and thus a critical perspective attempts to discover the hidden agendas by enquiring how concepts are formed and used, what implications the discourses and the language of the policy documents may have on the given context comprising of the norms and institutions, knowledge and power (Apthorpe & Gasper, 1996 cited in Thi, 2009). Discourses in texts and outspoken statements can be analyzed in relation to context specific rules and institutions. Besides it may also shed light on the capacity, and thus empowerment levels, of the

participants engaged. As discussed earlier, devolution of authority to a participant who is not capable of influencing decisions is just useless; a critical perspective has the potential to show a capacity-mapping of the actors involved in devolution. While identifying policy as a rational but bureaucratic technology, critical anthropology criticizes "labels of participation or bottom-up approach of development projects in reality is a concealment of outsiders' agencies" (Chambers, 1997; Chambers, 1983; Mosse 2005 cited in Thi 2009).

Management of the state owned 'protected forests' in Bangladesh: taking a closer look at our context

As in many parts of the world, the state owns and controls the brunt of Bangladesh's forest that cover just over 17% of the country's land cover[i] (statistical data from Chowdhury et al 2010). Of the total 2.52 million ha state owned forestlands, 243,723 million ha have been coined as 'protected forests' and are considered as spaces 'set aside' for 'nature' along the lines of parks systems in Europe or North America. As of today, there are 23 protected areas (national parks, wildlife sanctuary, game reserves)[ii] in Bangladesh (Arannyk Foundation, 2010). Covering almost approximately 1.65 % of the country's total land area, the protected areas of Bangladesh cover 11% of the total forest area, an average of 5% of the hill forests, 11% of the Sal forests and 23% of the mangrove forests being protected (Chowdhury, Koike, & Muhammed, 2009; International Resources Group, 2004).

Thus far, the state has been a poor manager of the country's forests for various reasons — including having a traditionally corrupt and entrenched forest department as the custodian of the country's forests; absence of an appropriate land-use policy, the low value of the forest resource compared to their high management costs; the lack of management capacity; and the de-facto open-access nature of national forest lands and illegal commercial extraction by local, political elites and crime syndicates (Biswas & Choudhury, 2007; Muhammed et al 2008; Quazi, Bushley, & Miles, 2008).With few exceptions, protected areas and reserved forests reside largely on paper, attesting more to the pro-conservation state-donor alliance than to the presence of ''actual'' (i.e. well-managed) protected areas comparable to those found in the developed parts of the world. Consequently, forest degradation in Bangladesh is reported to be happening at a rate of 0.3% annually (FAO 2007).
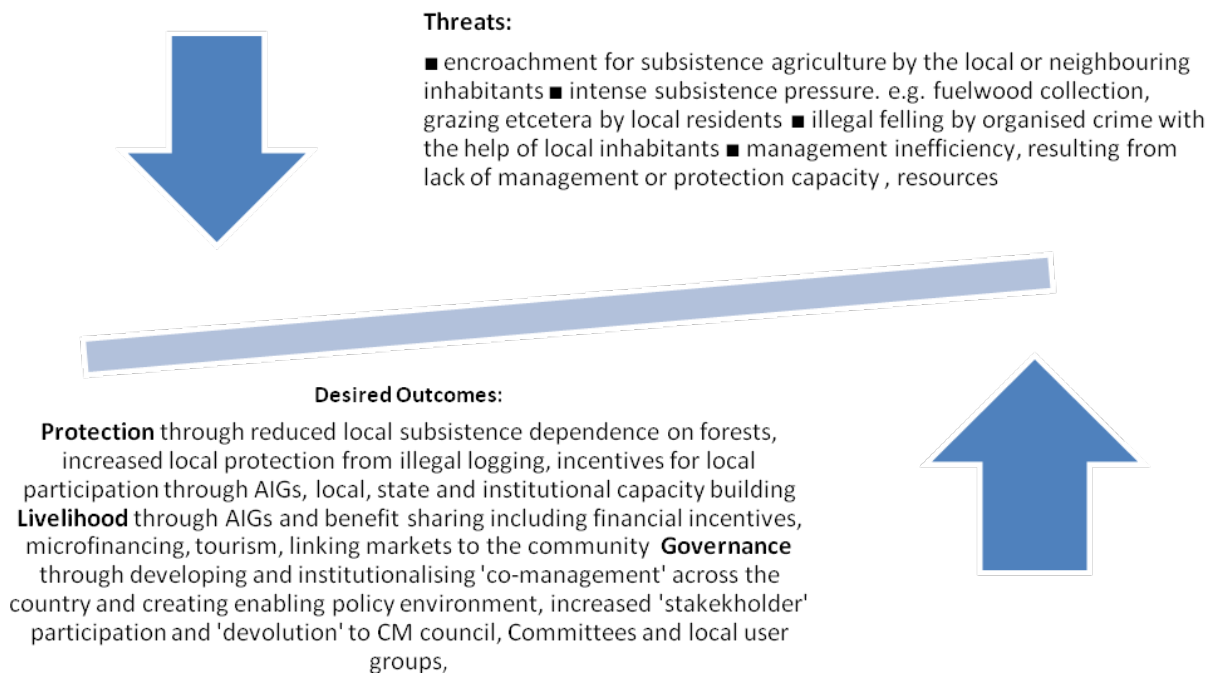
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Threats:

■ encroachment for subsistence agriculture by the local or neighbouring inhabitants ■ intense subsistence pressure. e.g. fuelwood collection, grazing etcetera by local residents ■ illegal felling by organised crime with the help of local inhabitants ■ management inefficiency, resulting from lack of management or protection capacity , resources

Desired Outcomes:

Protection through reduced local subsistence dependence on forests, increased local protection from illegal logging, incentives for local participation through AIGs, local, state and institutional capacity building **Livelihood** through AIGs and benefit sharing including financial incentives, microfinancing, tourism, linking markets to the community **Governance** through developing and institutionalising 'co-management' across the country and creating enabling policy environment, increased 'stakeholder' participation and 'devolution' to CM council, Committees and local user groups,

Figure 3: Bangladesh's forest management: threats and desired outcomes

The 'co-management' institutions are proposed in response to the possibility of the above *lose – lose* scenario which threatens both livelihood and forest health. Co-management is expected to engage local participation to compliment the forest department's central role in management, by taking part in conservation in exchange for financial or minimal rights gains. The international donor, NGO sponsorship of almost all 'participatory' management efforts leaves little to doubt that 'co-management' was not locally conceptualized, instead it is donor driven. As the following discussion will show, however, the 'participatory' edge of 'co-management' is at most a tertiary goal overarched by conservation demand.

Protected Forest – Livelihood intersection:

Recent research on decentralized forest management suggests that the tightened control of resource utilization is most costly to the poorest, who often also bear the lion's share of management transactions costs (Lund & Treue, 2008). Most of the protected areas are embedded in human-dominated landscapes where the agendas of the poor are often in conflict with protection goals (Patwary, 2008). As such any 'inclusive' participatory management approaches should be carefully compared to similar efforts

elsewhere that only meant tightened control of resource utilization leading to more limited access to benefits coupled with heavy transaction costs to be borne by the poor.

As shown in charts 1 and 2 below, there is significant subsistence livelihood as well as economic dependence on the protected areas. Almost all rural appraisals, including Rapid Rural Appraisals and Participatory Rural Appraisals, done by the project planners identified subsistence dependence is a major cause of forest depletion. While chart 2 captures the relative extent of this dependence, field studies confirm that the local population accrues the following extractions from the PAs: fuelwood collection for household use and sale to local markets, agriculture, timber for use in habitat construction or repair, timber for sale to external illegal loggers, bamboo, Cane collection for household use, to meet energy needs, fodder gathering, hunting, betel leaf cultivation, honey, vegetable, medicinal plants collection.
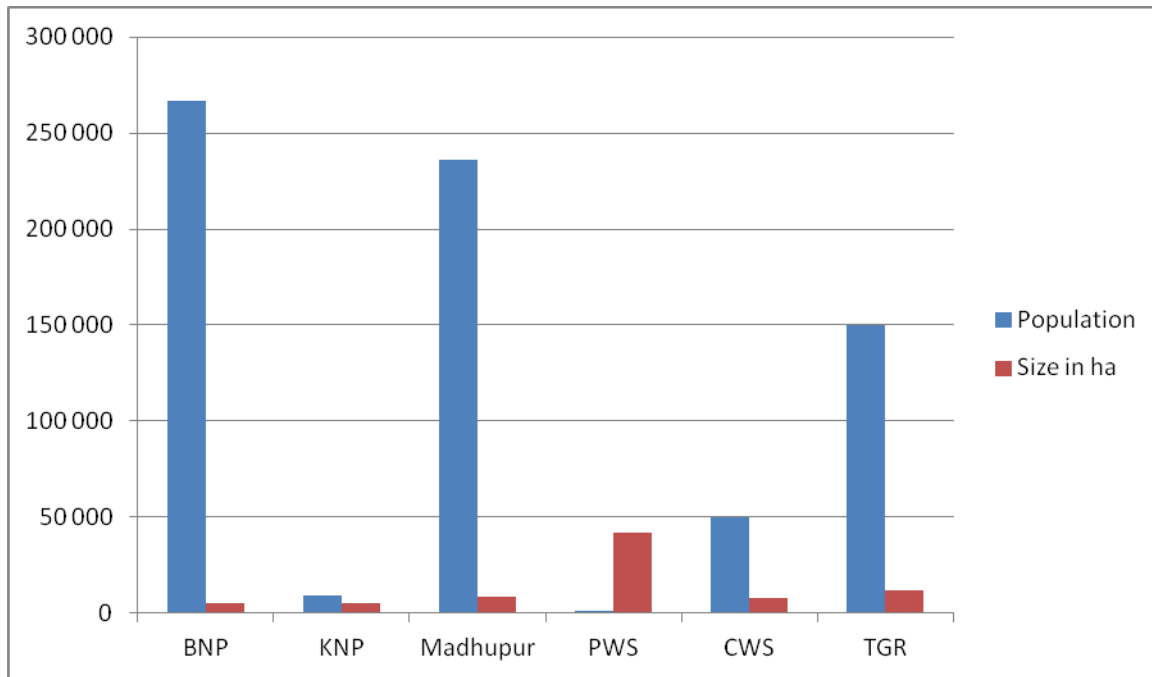

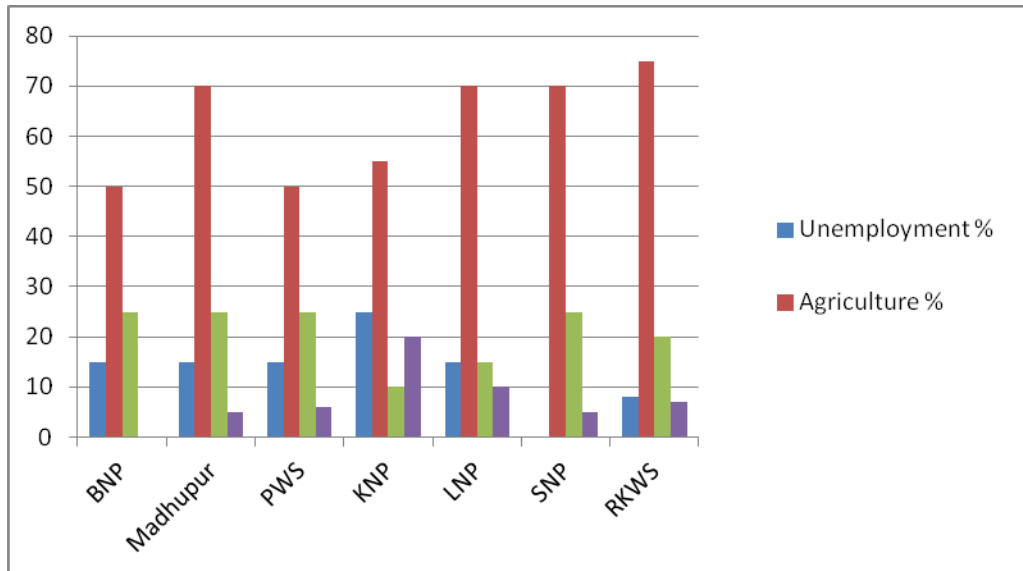**Chart 1: highlights population density in several 'co-managed' forests**

Chart 2: shows the degree of subsistence dependence on 7 'co-managed' forests (by % of total inhabitants in those forests)
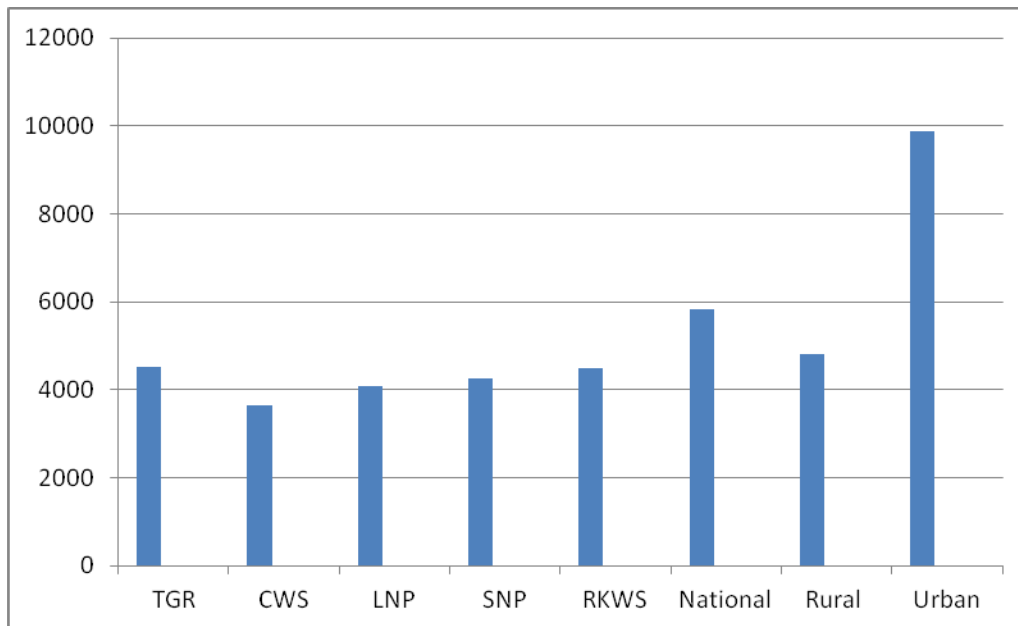

Chart 3: compares the average income of forest dependents in 5 PAs with national income (in Bangladesh Taka) (International Resources Group (IRG), 2008)

To take for example, one of the protected areas The Teknaf Game Reserve spreads over an area of 11615 Ha and is home to 113 human settlements (an estimated 119950 inhabitants) that have complete (70

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settlements) to minor (7 settlements) dependence on the forest (Nishorgo Support Project, 2004). Karim (2008) provides slightly different figures of local inhabitants depending on the same forest; he finds that a total of 115 villages with the population of 149564 are located within, on the periphery or adjacent to the forest. He finds that 62% of the population have major stakes while 32% have moderate stakes in the forest.
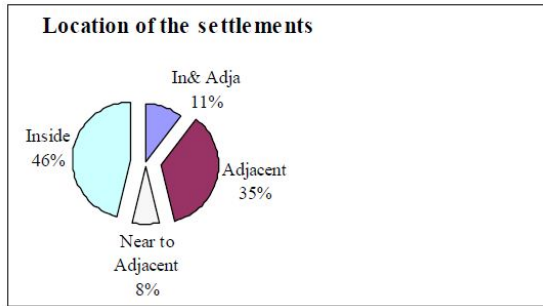
(Nishorgo Support Project, 2004)

This intense subsistence dependence has at least *two* implications for conservation; *first,*exclusionary or coercive protection is difficult to achieve or altogether impossible to attain without local participation *Second*, any 'labeled' participatory process will soon be subject to a variety of conflicting interests intersecting the volatile agenda of conservation; while any 'inclusive' management regime should at the very least take these conflicts into account to inform what can or should be achieved and whose interests are marginalised and thus needs to be protected .

Conceptualising possible outcomes of PFA management:

Sunderlin et al (2005) proposed a simplistic but useful fourfold typology for achieving a clear conceptual grasp of various positive and negative outcomes, and the reasons 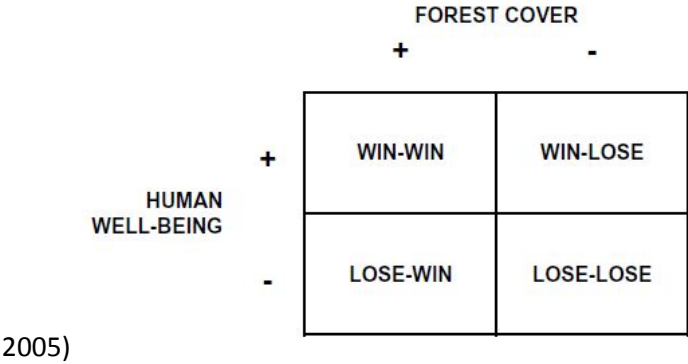for them, as described in figure 4 below. The typology can be used to capture the management outcome being sought in Bangladesh.
Although a *win-win* scenario is often seen as a strong possibility, such a scenario may well be a long-term rather than short term goal.

Win- win	*Win – Lose*
• Extraction, endogenous subsistence dependence and exogenous product extractions, significantly reduced • Local engagement in regeneration and more improved management • Livelihood options diversified, given the market-economic growth linkages and overwhelming funding requirements this may not prove viable, thus migration or other un-equitable coercive conservation rule-abidance may be desired • non-local extraction is halted, i.e. illegal organized felling	• A high value of forest products and services provide significant short-term opportunities, such as cash-ins or economic growth • Extraction outweighs forest delivery capacity • In many protected areas, resources have been depleted to the extent that sedentary agriculture is neither a viable livelihood option; resource scarcity has led to decline in extraction in TGR, CWS. This may indicate that a w*in – lose* is improbable in the short term.

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• local extraction is within the limits of regeneration	
Lose – Win • Forest dependents coercively restricted from extraction and engaged into regeneration and protection • Forest dependents migrate	*Lose – Lose* • Forests are depleted by subsistence as well as outsider extraction • Environmental services cease to flow, no cashing in of forest products is possible

Figure 4: Fourfold classification model of human well-being and forest cover (Sunderlin, et al.,

FOREST COVER

	+	-
HUMAN WELL-BEING +	WIN-WIN	WIN-LOSE
-	LOSE-WIN	LOSE-LOSE

2005)

The 'co-management' institutions:

The 'Co-management' model in Bangladesh was developed by the USAID[6] and the Department for Forests and Environment and the first Councils and Committees were formally formed in 2006.

A two-tier institutional structure of Nishorgo Support Project (2003) includes Co-management Council and Co-Management Committee. The Co-Management Committee (CMC) consists of around 19 Council elected 19 members is responsible for overall management of the protected area. The Council consists of 50 members, selected by the FD, NSP, IPAC, and the project consultants with 'consultation' with the poor, the mode or effect of which is not known. The Committee is responsible for forest management planning and, upon approval of the Council or the FD, Projects, execution of those plans with the support of FD and the project (NSP, IPAC have contractors International Resources Group, CODEC, NACOM, RDRS and more).

An organization of the Council and Committee members as wells as their duties are presented in Box 1 as an endnote, from (Chowdhury, Koike, & Muhammed, 2009). [iii] An influence map of the Council members, presented in figure 4 and an administrative hierarchy presented in Figure 3, attempts to capture the extent of 'local participation'.

Through the Nishorgo Support Project made up of International Resources Group (IRG), Community Development Centre (CODEC), Nature and Conservation Movement (NACOM) and Rangpur Dinajpur Rural Services (RDRS)

state: *owner of the forest land, decisions relating to re-investments are on the state departments, CMC is formed by the state - donor alliance, formal management rights still rest with the state*

The Forest Department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Finance, Local Government: Thana, Upazila, District, Donors (e.g. NSP and IPAC project entities)

'co-management' organisation : 50 members of the council are selected by the State, such selection does not preclude any form of participation, Council is dominated by those perceived as 'educated' and 'influential'

Co-management Council

'co-management' Committee: members chosen from the Council, based on perceived influence and affinity with NSP

Co-management Commitee

Community: under-represented, no capacity to influence decisions except through information providing, non-participating members, except the extreme poor, do not receive grants

Community Patrolling Groups
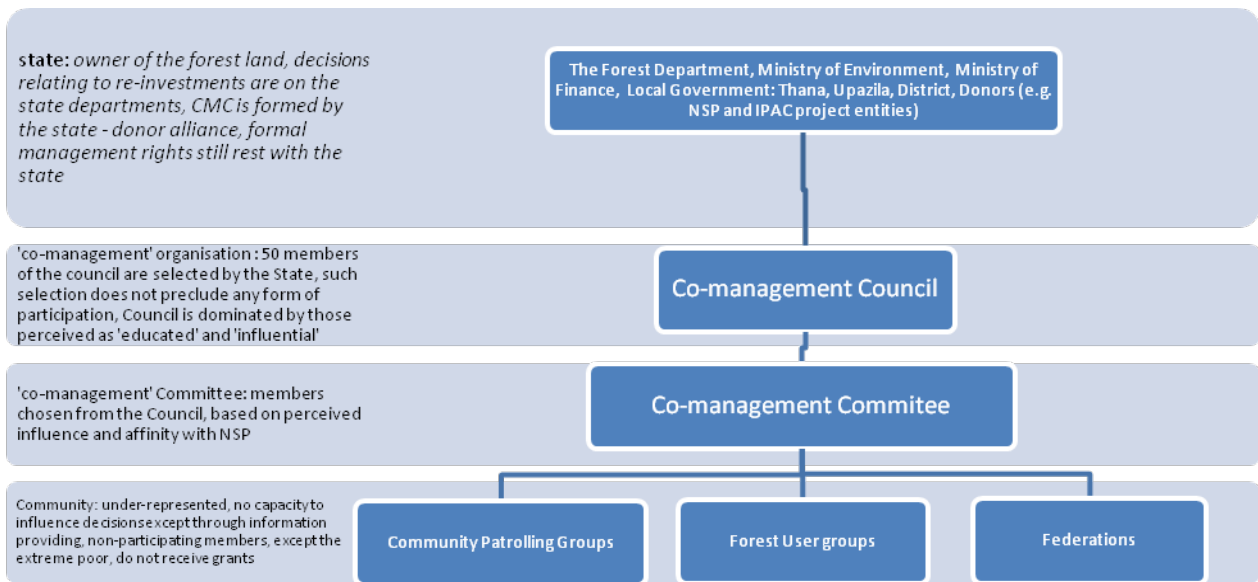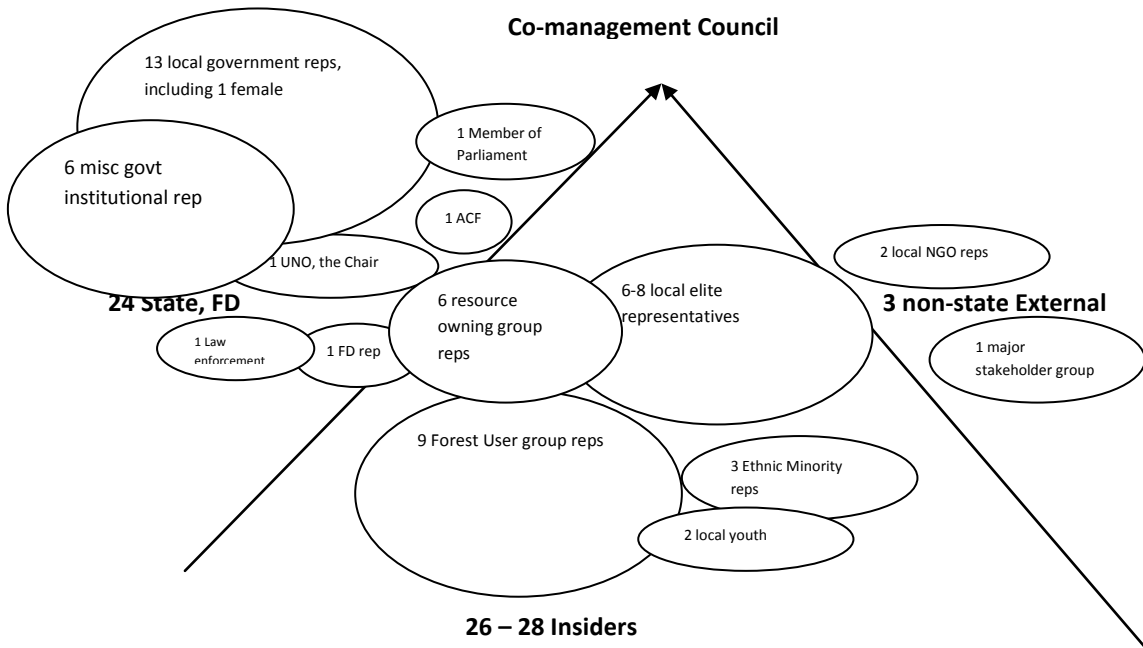
Forest User groups

Federations

Figure 2 Management/Administrative Hierarchy of the current 'co-management' structure

Figure 4: an organizational structure of the formalized Co-management Council shows influence mapping as well as representation size

Co-management Council

13 local government reps, including 1 female

6 misc govt institutional rep

1 Member of Parliament

1 ACF

1 UNO, the Chair

24 State, FD

6 resource owning group reps

6-8 local elite representatives

2 local NGO reps

3 non-state External

1 Law enforcement

1 FD rep

1 major stakeholder group

9 Forest User group reps

3 Ethnic Minority reps

2 local youth

26 – 28 Insiders

Whose agendas does 'co-management' serve?

In an earlier section we briefly touched upon *critical anthropological perspectives* that deploy analysis of texts, documents, overt claims to discern the hidden agendas of policy makers, who often are outsiders and have the capacity and agenda to suppress those of the poor and marginalized. Although the enquiry of this section is more easily answered by looking at who sponsors this 'co-management' a critical anthropological analysis of 'co-management' institution building in Bangladesh literature proves to be no less revealing.

Is local user 'participation' in the Protected Forest Management more of a construction than a reality?

The process of a robust, representative and forward looking institution building would begin with identifying those affected by or are able to affect forest governance and then prioritizing these individuals and groups for involvement in the decision-making process (Reed, 2008). This means then that stakeholder participation should be considered right from the outset, from concept development and planning, through implementation, to monitoring and evaluation of outcomes. Engagement with stakeholders as early as possible in decision-making has been frequently cited as essential if participatory processes are to lead to high quality and durable decisions (ibid).

Chowdhury R. M., (2008) observes that 'co-management' was not an outcome of local participation. In contrast to explicit claims of 'participation' the new sturctures were in reality conceptualised, implemented and now being mainstreamed by a donor supported state (Hossain M. , 2008). Patwary (2008) studied stakeholder perceptions of local engagement at various levels of management decision making in CWS; and he quotes Uphoff (1992 cited in Patwary, 2008, p 132) to report findings similar to Chowdhury and Hossain (2008): "The problem of biodiversity loss was raised by international and national conservationists and biologists and decisions regarding what, where and how to conserve biodiversity were made by external scientists with no participation, consulation or input from local inhabitants, despite the fact that the local residents have the largest stake in, and much information about, natural resources in the area".

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Similarly, the top tier of the institution shown in Figure 3 below, co-management councils are formed and their members are chosen by the state with consultation of the project planners and participating NGOs (Chowdhury R. M., 2008). While the selection of a wide array of local non-local actors indicates an attempt of confrontation-avoidance and concensus building, the basis for this formation remains essentially in contrast to the 'participation' outcome the policy papers purport to achieve.

The top tier of the co-management hierarchy, the Councils are formed and council members are 'selected' by the state on recommendation from external agencies e.g. NSP, IPAC, NACOM, IRG, etcetera, who only hints at consultation with various stakeholders. Although how this consultation was carried out, who took part, what their 'participation' meant to the process or the final structure, is unknown since no available literature, project document refers to this process. Consequently, Patwary (2008), Chowdhury, and Quazi et al (2008) report absence of participation and accountability in the 'co-management' institutions.

Type of participation		Participants in different phases of project activity (N=30)			
		Planning	Implementation	Monitoring and Evaluation	Benefit-Sharing
Passive participation	Domestication (D)	14 (47%)	15 (50%)	25 (83%)	12 (40%)
	Paternalism (P)	9 (30%)	6 (20%)	-	11 (37%)
Active participation	Cooperation (C)	3 (10%)	1 (3%)	3 (10%)	-
	Empowerment (E)	4 (13%)	8 (27%)	2 (7%)	7 (23%)

Figure 3: participant perceptions of participation in different stages of management of the CWS (Patwary, 2008)[7]

"Co-management processes, and the institutional arrangements that oversee their implementation, may easily be dominated by wealthier or more powerful members of the community, producing an outcome

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[7] Patwary (2008) relied on quantitative interviews of 10 participants (3 Co-management Committee members, 3 Co-management Council members and 4 community patrolling group members) and 20 non-participating local resource users. Although his interviews document participant perceptions of their engagement, Patwary does not explain how, for example, non-participating members may possibly have 'participated' when there is no place for such participation in the co-management arrangements.

that perpetuates or even reinforces social, including gender inequities " - (Jane Carter, 2005) . In the 'co-management' structures in Bangladesh this may already be the case. The second tier of the structure, Co-management Committees are elected by the Council and often they are selcted on the basis of influence and affinity with NSP. Chowdhury (2008) interviewed co-management committee members in LNP who confirmed that they were the local elites; they revealed that the basis for their selection as committee members was their awareness of the scenerio in LNP and their early and close involvements with NSP. Hossain thus juxtaposes claims of equity and governance achievements with the reality of 're-production' of elite capture. Thus because committee members are either elites of the society, members of the local government or political parties they seldom represent the community or the poor (Chowdhury, 2008; Patwary, 2008).

Further the only forums of the local resource users, FUGs and CPGs or the occasional community meetings with participating NGOs, planners, committee members, can only be seen as information gathering sessions.

Thus Hossain and Choudhury (2008) observe that with only minimal devolution of responsibilities and bare local representation, the current structures of co-management committees and councils are no more than replications of earlier structures dominated by outsiders, forest department and by elites with political dominance.

This confirms a general theme in the literature, policy documents that overall popular participation in natural resource management in Bangladesh is appreciated only as 'complimentary' to forest department's leading role in forest management. This is evidenced in the organization of the NSP institutions, particularly in the Community Management Councils and Committees and also in the literature; for example in Khan, Dutta, Ahsan, Mrong, Sultana, & Rahman, 2008; Chowdhury R. M., (2008).

A lip-service may be difficult to differentiate from consultation or active engagement where the participants are theoretically 'devolved' the power but lack the ability to engage, for example due to perceived or real power imbalances, or from a lack of confidence in engaging. Thus only providing stakeholders with the opportunity to participate in decision-making may not preclude their ability to influence decisions; they must actually be able to participate (Reed, 2008; Larson, 2003). Khan et al

(2008) provides a representative description of the expectations the state, donor and *experts* currently have about resource user 'empowerment'. To them 'empowerment' in the context would constitute of capacities in 'communicating, organization, accessing resources, and voicing on issues of equity, advocating needs at the community and policy levels and evaluation.

'The prevalence of patron-client relationship between elite individuals/families at different administrative levels and between local elites and poorer members of society dependent on them for land or work or access to state resources that they control or distribute' is seen as a barrier to the participation of the poor in our context (The WorldFish Centre, 2009, p. 28). Those living in the protected areas are often illiterate, lack confidence in taking part since only the local government members, the project staff, FD, outside experts; academicians are the ones who traditionally 'owned' decisions (Patwary, 2008).

What implications does 'co-management' have on the poor?

Decentralized forest management may improve access to economic benefits through consumption and trading of forest products, hence, promoting improved rural livelihoods (Larson, 2005). In the protected areas of Bangladesh forests are of immense value to a significant number people, most of who are extremely poor. Decosse (2006 cited in Chowdhury, Koike, & Muhammed, 2009) estimated a population of over a quarter of a million at the 5 NSP sites, 90% of which he considered to be poor or ultra-poor. Any management decision must take this dependence in account, not just because there is poverty reduction agenda but also because excluding these people from the 'protected forests' or reducing their dependence on the forests is a nearly impossible goal to achieve. Declaring forests as 'protected' and making extraction illegal has failed to deliver.

'Co-management' has however placed increased protection responsibilities on the local resource users. Forest patrolling groups are policing against both illegal timber product extraction as well as local extractions. Participating in externally organized tree felling used to be a source of income to many local poor; this however is largely reduced from the FPG and other local enforcement. Similarly, income from fuel wood collection and their sale to markets is also no longer a livelihood option, at least without confronting FUG or FPG opposition. This only means that 'co-management' is proving costly to the poor.

Planned AIGAs, small funds, grants to public services, re-channeling of the 'co-management' institution's share of forest revenue are also failing to adequately compensate for the trade-offs. The AIGAs are offered to diversify livelihood from forest extraction to the following options cow fattening

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both for beef and milk, poultry rearing, nursery production, improved stoves manufacture, nature tourism and eco-lodge, eco-guiding, service enterprises in PAs, elephant rides as tourist amusement, tribal cloths manufacture, date palm leaf based cottage industry, social forestry in buffer zone for poles/logs, fuel wood and medicinal plants cultivation, direct payments for conservation, access to capital such as NGO microfinance, CMC-led microfinance, linkages to existing Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) and matching grants (DeCosse 2006).

Conclusion

To quote the Forest Department (2007, p 23), 'co-management' 'is designed to assist in achievement of the primary objective of conservation of biodiversity within the Protected Forest Areas (PFA). This overall objective is to be achieved through support to the Forest Department and to key local and national stakeholders using a collaborative approach to the management of the PA'. Local resource user or resource dependent participation is evidently conceived as 'supportive' to FD's mandate. The insignificant representation of the local people and the minimal 'power' devolved on all levels of the institution means that almost all decisions are state owned.

If 'participation' in forest management does not cover the costs imposed on the poor, if AIGAs fail to deliver the promised livelihood diversification, the effectiveness of 'participation' may eventually be questioned. In Bangladesh, evidence suggests that poor locals may only receive, if anything, derivative possibilities of benefitting from 'Co-management' of PAs (Karim, 2008). While *insufficient* AIGAs and evidently *small* direct grants are made available to *selective* 'participating' members, their flow cannot be continued without unrealistically *heavy external funding* that needs to be carefully protected from *elite-capture*.

Transforming state institutions, from agencies that enforce, regulate, control and restrict to ones that facilitate, support, decentralize and disengage is at the very least a long-term goal. Current 'co-management' institutions and processes are fraught with a sheer lack of devolution. In the first place, they do not adequately represent or account to local resource dependents or own decision making. Secondly, they are only sidelined to the forest department and the 'project' while their legitimacy is still to find place in the legal system. The possibility that an adequately empowered 'co-management' institution

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would become sources rather than sinks of public or donor fund and thereby enhance governance and equity is a distant goal.

Conservation remains a task to be carried out by a 'technically' empowered Forest Department whose capacity building is a major agenda of the donor-state coalition. While agreements between forest user groups and the co-management committee are put forward to enhance re-generation, their security is questionable.

Livelihood-Governance Issues:

The local resource users are not adequately represented in the institutions, their limited representation is mostly limited to through local government and elites, with whom the poor have a 'client-patronage' relationship. Thus livelihood needs may not be accounted for and where 'heard' can easily be overridden.
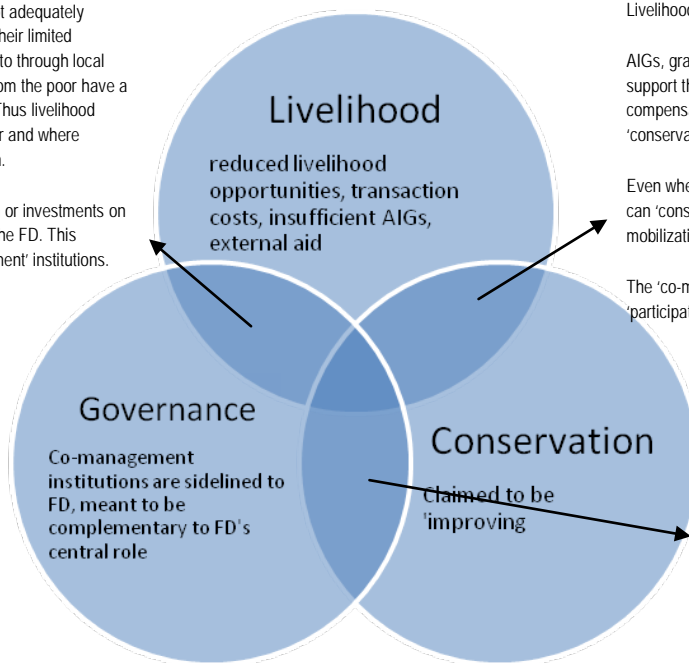
Decisions on revenue utilization or investments on public services are 'owned' by the FD. This severely weakens 'co-management' institutions.

Livelihood-Conservation Issues:

AIGs, grants to community services, small financial grants to support the poorest are proving to be insufficient to compensate for the reduced extraction required to achieve 'conservation'

Even when adequate incentives can be externally injected, can 'conservation' goals be reached without community mobilization?

The 'co-management' structures make a distinction between 'participating' and non-participating members.

Livelihood

reduced livelihood opportunities, transaction costs, insufficient AIGs, external aid

Governance

Co-management institutions are sidelined to FD, meant to be complementary to FD's central role

Conservation

Claimed to be 'improving

Conservation-Governance Issues:

FD, the state and the donor led planners remain the 'owners' of 'co-management'. This leads to decision efficiency where approvals are time-consuming, which in turn results in distrust in the institution

The 'co-management' institutions are not devolved with adequate authority, have been elite 'captured', does not adequately 'include' the poor.

FD and the 'co-management' institutions are

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Total Forestlands of Bangladesh (Bangladesh Forest Department, 2008 cited in Chowdhury et al 2010)

Category		Area (million ha)	Percentage of total land
Forest Department managed forests (1.52 million ha, 10.3% of total land)	Hill Forests	0.67	4.54
	Natural mangrove Forests	0.60	4.07
	Mangrove plantation	0.13	0.88
	Plain Land Sal Forests	0.12	0.81
Unclassified State Forests		0.73	4.95
Village Forests		0.27	1.83
Grand Total		2.52	17.08

[ii] Table: Protected areas of Bangladesh (Chowdhury & Koike, 2010)

Protected Area	Forest Type	Area (ha)	Established (Extended)
Modhupur National Park	Sal Forest	8436	1962 (1982)
Bhawal National Park	Sal Forest	5022	1974 (1982)
Himchari National Park	Hill Forest	1729	1980
Lawachara National Park	Hill Forest	1250	1996
Kaptai National Park	Hill Forest	5464	1999
Ramsagar National Park	Sal Forest	27.75	2001
Nijuhm Dweep National Park	Coastal Mangrove	16352.23	2001
Medha Kachapia National Park	Hill forest	395.92	2004
Satchari National Park	Hill Forest	242.82	2005
Khadimnagar NP	Hill Forest	679	2006
Sundarban (East) WS	Natural Mangrove	31226.94	1960 (1996)
Pablakhali WS	Hill Forest	42087	1962 (1983)
Char Kukri Mukri WS	Coastal Mangrove	40	1981
Chunati WS	Hill Forest	7761	1986
Rema-Kalenga WS	Hill Forest	1795.54	1996
Sundarban (South) WS	Natural Mangrove	36970.45	1996
Sundarban (West) WS	Natural Mangrove	71502.13	1996
Fashiakhali WS	Hill Forest	1302	2007
Hajarikhil WS (Proposed)	Hill Forest	2908	
Teknaf GR	Hill Forest	11615	1983
Sita-Kunda EP	Hill Forest	808	1998
Madhu-Tila EP	Sal Forest	100	1999
Madhob-Kunda EP	Hill Forest	266	2001
Banskhali EP	Hill Forest	1200	2003
Kua-Kata EP	Coastal Mangrove	5661	2006
Dulahazara SP	Hill Forest	900	1999

[iii] **Box – 1: Structure of Co-management Council and Co-management Committee (Government of Bangladesh 2006 cited in Chowdhury, Koike, & Muhammed, 2009)**

Co-management Council:

• Member of the Parliament as advisor
• Upazila Nirbahi (Executive) Officer (UNO) as Chairperson
• Assistant Conservator of Forest (ACF) as Member Secretary- 1
• Representative from the Forest Department (FD)- 1
• Representative from local government- 13 (1 being woman)

• Representative from resource user groups (poor stakeholders)- 9
• Representative from local elites (teacher, physician, social worker, newsman, religious leader, freedom fighter)- 6-8
• Representative from resource owning groups (owners of brickfields, sawmills, wood & furniture businessmen)- 6
• Representative from ethnic minority group- 3
• Representative from law enforcing agencies (police, BDR, Ansar & VDP)- 1
• Representative from local youth groups-2
• Representative local NGOs- 2-4
• Representative from major stakeholder groups (e.g., tea estate where ever applicable)- 1
• Representative from other government institutions- 4-6

The total number of members in the council shall be not more than 55, and at least 10 of the members shall be women. The members will be elected for 4 years and new council will be formed every 4 years through Annual General Meeting.

Co-management Committee:

• Upazila Nirbahi (Executive) Officer (UNO) as advisor
• Assistant Conservator of Forest (ACF) as Member Secretary- 1
• Representative from the FD- 1
• Representative from local Government (one being woman) - 3-4
• Representative from civil society - 2-3
• Representative from resource user groups – 2
• Representative from local youth groups – 1
• Representative from resource owning groups – 2
• Representative from ethnic minority groups – 2
• Representative from law enforcing agencies – 1
• Representative from other government institutions – 2
• Representative from NGOs – 1

The total number of members in the committee shall be between 15 and 19. The committee will be formed amongst the members of Co-management Council and will be elected by the respective groups of the Council for 2 years.

Job responsibilities of Co-management Council and Committee:

Co-management Council:

1. Convening an annual general meeting and at least one additional meeting
2. Providing pertinent suggestions to the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) on any modification, addition or correction after reviewing the annual work-plan of the PA
3. Taking collective decisions on activities that have adverse effect on areas in and around PA
4. Providing required guidance to the Co-management Committee (CMC) on PA management
5. Developing policies for distribution of goods and services gained from PA among the stakeholders and also oversee such distribution among them by the CMC
6. Providing required approval to the PA Annual Work Plan developed by the CMC
7. Playing effective role in quelling any conflict that arises among the members of the CMC

Co-management Committee:

1. CMC will act as executive body of the Council and will be accountable to the Council for all their activities
2. Liaising with FD officials responsible for management of the PA on local stakeholders' participation;
3. Distributing the proceeds from goods and services from the PA among the groups or teams linked with management activities according to the guideline developed by the Council
4. Supporting FD in employing labor from groups/teams linked with PA management in development activities undertaken by NSP
5. Developing and submitting project proposals requesting funds for development of the PA and landscape zone
6. Developing work plan for expenditure of fund collected locally through PA management and ensuring spending upon approval from respective DFO
7. Maintaining proper accounts of all local collection and expenditure from PA management.
8. Taking required steps, upon approval from the DFO, to initiate patrols for maintenance of PA resources

9. Playing supportive role in containing any conflict arising between local stakeholders and FD or any other government/nongovernment organizations.

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