National Forest Policy In Bhutan

National Forest Policy

Bhutan is a mountainous nation situated on the eastern Himalayas of the southern slope. It is a home for 738,000 populace with amazing biodiversity array with the country being one of the world's ten biodiversity hotspots. Also, over 72 percent of the total land area is under forest cover for all times by the Constitution of Bhutan. (Wangdi,T., Lhendup,P & Wangdi,N., 2013)

The forest brings a variety of ecosystem resources with spiritual and ecological benefits for Bhutan’s people. The potential for emerging into the 21st century with natural resources intact is because of the vision and culture of living in harmony with its nature. With the initiation of a better management plan in the late ’60s various preservation approaches and policies were placed in place to direct and protect the natural resources of Bhutan from over-exploitation of resources. (Wangdi,T., Lhendup,P & Wangdi,N., 2013)

Bhutan’s Forest Policy is one of them and has especially given importance in protecting of country’s rich natural resources. The primary office enforcing forest policies is the Ministry of Agriculture and Forest, and Forest and Park Services. Simultaneously, these policies have built a good relationship among the communities and connected the community to conserve and sustainable use of ecosystem resources by introducing further policies and laws. Forest policy acts and regulations include Forest and Nature Conservation Acts, 1995 and Forest and Nature Conservation Rules, 2006 (Wangdi,T., Lhendup,P & Wangdi,N., 2013). It is an act that ensures the use of wildlife, forest, water, and other natural resources without over-exploiting it and using it sustainably for the better use of present and future generations. This act focuses on the conservation of forests, wild life, nature and natural resources. (FOREST AND NATURE CONSERVATION ACT OF BHUTAN, 1995)

The main aspect of this National Forest Policy is the implementation of an integrated advance towards sustainable management on terrain management. This is achieved by implementing policies that seek to strike the balance with conservation and sustainable use that respect the cultural values of the ecosystem. (NATIONAL FOREST POLICY OF BHUTAN 2009)

However, though Forest and Nature Conservation Acts have helped the environment in numerous ways there are still problems that are faced in the Acts, which include, rising population with human settlement in and around the forest areas especially in villages where it creates problems and damage for forest management. Since the people living in forests in Bhutan are viewed as a fundamental part of the forest and depend on their biological resources making sustainable use of resources for their livelihoods. Also, climate change, for example, precipitation and temperature with numerous disastrous effects in the lives of most communities and thus, creating food insecurity risk. Thus, decreasing the soil yield and increasing crop loss and damage to soil fertility loss. (Wangdi,T., Lhendup,P & Wangdi,N., 2013)

It is mainly since the Forest and Nature Conservation Act was designed in an ad hoc manner and had not been founded based on any forest study or research on finding and observing of the past policies and acts. This has brought about the rules that are not appropriate for field-

level implementation. (Wangdi,T., Lhendup,P & Wangdi,N., 2013)

The study demonstrated that the people in the region are facing an increasing number of populations in the forest community and facing future climate threads. However, unless the government and the forest administrators give the necessary support to the people, they will face less damage in the agriculture sector that supports them and will also gain ideas and will have access to knowledge to cope up with the climate change calamity and population control. (Wangdi,T., Lhendup,P & Wangdi,N., 2013)

Adaptation initiatives require a coordinate methodology that takes into account different sectors including forest protection, water management, disaster reduction sectors, and other more different sectors. This can, therefore, be overcome by various measures and steps. Firstly, sustainable use of land and natural resources by preserving it without overusing them through encouraging community-based forest management. Secondly, setting up improved storerooms in several areas to ensure and help store the farm goods that were harvested during crop cultivation and also give access to basic food supplies and grains as protection from natural disaster damage and extreme loss in food production when occurred. (Wangdi,T., Lhendup,P & Wangdi,N., 2013).

Rather than implementing the policy of forest and nature conservation act quickly it would have been better if the act were implemented based on the research and development and also by taking into consideration of past experiences so that the policy will base favor the nature, wild life and human life. The policy can further be rectified by attending the workshops emphasizing the protection of the ecosystem and focusing in other aspects which affect the ecosystem like climate change and human interference so that ecosystem will be conserved.

Reference

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