

## The Challenges of Forestry Research in Developing Countries: Nepal

Kripal Khadka (Environment Nepal)

Nepal is one of the richest countries in biodiversity due to its unique ecological position and altitudinal variation. The country is one of the pioneer countries to implement community forestry program under decentralized forest policy regimes in the world. By 2008, approximately one third (34.6%) forest areas were handed over to local communities for management of forest resources through their collective efforts in order to reduce poverty and integrate the forest benefits in overall economic development process.

Forestry research in developing countries like Nepal can contribute significantly to the development and management of forest resources. Low policy priority, lack of development vision on the part of planners and managers, lack of funds, decreasing appointments of professional researchers and increasing frustration among existing researchers are major constraints for the development of effective research and development. Research administrators are often inept in creating favorable environments to stimulate research activities. Moreover, international research support organizations fail to encourage young research officers to participate in international forums, and line ministries ignore research participation in country meetings.

Appropriate thought must be paid to removing constraints in order to enable research institutions and researchers to fulfill the needs of forestry research to meet sustainable forestry development in developing countries. Forestry research has been given little attention by the public media. This is due to insufficient understanding of the importance of such research and its long-term nature. This paper aims to bring the issues of forestry research to the attention of wider audiences, of policy-makers and planners in order to draw attention to identifying appropriate solutions to the problems that forestry research is presently facing specially in developing countries.