



A STUDY ON VALUE CHAIN MANAGEMENT OF SELECTED NON TIMBER FOREST PRODUCTS IN UTTARA KANNADA DISTRICT OF KARNATAKA

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ABSTRACT: India is a vast, ecologically and culturally diverse, and densely populated country. Forests form an important resource base for communities which depend on forests for their livelihood. Reminisces of British times say forests provide ecological and economical services and economic services are in the form of both timber and Non Timber Forest Products (NTFPs). The Western Ghats form one of the 25 mega biodiversity hotspots of the world with abundant flora and fauna. This region is also home to many NTFPs like *Garcinia gummigatta* (uppage), *Garcinia indica* (kokum), *Myristica malabaricum* (malabar nutmeg), *Artocarpus lakoocha* (vatehuli), *Semecarpus ancardium* (marking nut), *Sapindus laurifolia* (soap nut) etc. The present study was conducted in four villages of Siddapur and Sirsi talukas of Uttara Kannada district of Karnataka with a sample size of 80 households through a semi structured interview schedule to know socio economic status of the respondents, NTFPs collected by them and association between NTFPs collected with few socio economic characters. The results of the study revealed that the majority of the population was from middle age group and small land holdings. Major NTFPs collected in this region were *Garcinia indica* (Kokam), *Garcinia gummi-gutta* (Uppage), *Myristica Malabarica* (Malabar nutmeg) and *Phyllanthus emblica* (Amla). The association showed a negative correlation between number of NTFPs collected and age. Though NTFPs have great demand at the national market, respondents felt that NTFPs collection is depleting due to decentralization of NTFPs collection through auction / tender by Karnataka Forest Department and the value chain starts from local collectors, the perishable NTFP's are either sold at local market or semi processed and sold to contractors through forest department. Few of the Wild fruits are processed by preservation and sold in the form of concentrated juices, candies and powders etc. The NTFP's also form raw materials to like pharmaceutical Industries and health industries.

Keywords: Western Ghats, non-timber forest products, value chain, ecological and economical services, mega diversities and small land holdings

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Forests form an important resource base for communities which depend on forests for their

livelihood. Right from the British period forests are known to provide ecological and economical services. The Non Timber forest products (NTFPs) form one of the important economic resources found in the forests on which many tribal and forest based communities depend especially in the central parts and Western Ghats of India. According to an estimate there are 425 families of flower plants in the world, 328 families with 21,000 species occur in India. From their varied emporium, Non Wood Products (NTFPs) are derived from over 3000 species (Hemant Bag et al. 2010).

Many of the communities living in the fringes of the forest collect firewood, leaves, fodder fruits roots and tubers for their day today basic needs and these include NTFPs also. Due to their physical remoteness, linkage between local communities and forests is traditional

and they are economically and ecologically inseparable from each other. Their dependency on the forest resource is both historic and cultural so much as that they constitute an integral component of the forest ecosystem of the region. (Lele, 2012).

The Western Ghats form one of the 25 bio-diversity hotspots of the world with abundant flora and fauna. This region is also home to many NTFPs like *Garcinia gummigutta*, *Garcinia indica*, *Myristica malabaricum*, *Artocarpus lakoocha*, *Phyllanthus emblica* etc. The important feature of this area is that most of the plantation owners here are allotted forest land which is adjacent to the plantations. The plantation owners and the landless labour communities consider collection of NTFPs as a subsidiary income generating activity which is seasonal in nature. There is a dearth of information on how the value chain works and market channels are exploited for selling NTFPs. A study conducted by Girish et al (2002) revealed that the market channel were different for different NTFPs. Hence, a study was