

Conflict and Cooperation in Participatory Natural Resource Management  
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This contribution is the latest in the publishers *Global Issues Series*, and deals with the experience of managing natural resources through collaboration rather than competition. Four key areas are dealt with in separate sections, each of which contain two or more case studies by different authors. These key sections include situations 'where local conflicts over resource use make participation unlikely', where there are 'Local level projects attempting to overcome unsupportive national contexts', and examples of 'Learning from success', which illustrate different levels of national support and community participation. The case study examples are well chosen, being drawn from East Africa, India, Nepal, and Bolivia, though a wider perspective which included case studies from the Americas, Europe, and other parts of Asia would have greatly benefited the global application which the editors seek. Having said this, there is much of interest in this publication which helps to illuminate the context of community participation in the management of environmental development. A study of the typology of participation prefaces a discussion on the wider implications of the case studies, including an evaluation of the quality of project design and 'lessons learned' from each study. The varied issues of multiple goals (integrated development), social capital, and the 'root causes of environmental deterioration' are also explored, with good, clear description, analysis, and conclusions for each section. Comparable sections in the case studies examine issues of conflict management, prevention, and resolution, as well as the part(s) played by power struggles (local, regional, national) in project management. Explicit in the analysis are questions of the ownership, manufacture, and use of knowledge, though this is wisely treated as a discourse on application, rather than theoretical abstractions.

Each case study, while describing practical examples of local management activities, has been selected to investigate a different aspect of natural resource management, whether forest, water, or land-based resources. Conceptual issues, such as environmental education, local decision-making, and the balance between indigenous versus imported management techniques are also examined carefully. Although the focus is primarily on working examples from the 'less developed countries' the underlying applications and conclusions have a wider transferability. It would have been extremely interesting to explore these connections (perhaps the authors are saving that for a future publication) but even without this comparison, this book makes a very useful contribution towards our understanding of the interface between human and natural systems. The final chapter, entitled 'Changing natural resource research and development capability: Whither Social Capital?' attempts to place the selected case studies within a wider framework of social theory, and once again, with the eye of faith, there are some very clear conclusions which have an important transferability to the Western world, and it would have been valuable to have this underlined in more explicit detail. These case studies illustrate the need for greater local responsibility in natural resource management, but also evaluate the limitations which appear to feature in participatory approaches to the management of collective assets.

The book is not rich in diagrams, and there are no photographs, which might have given an extra depth to the clear descriptive text, but this is a nicely produced textbook which makes a valued academic contribution to an important area of research. It is clear from the narrative that the importance is not simply from the juxtaposition of social and natural science research methods to produce a more holistic analysis of sustainable development, but also from the educational and planning roles which require to be more widely applied. This will be a good addition to the college library, and should be included on the reading list for second and/or third level undergraduates pursuing courses in rural development, environmental studies, or community development and politics.