

Is Big Business Approach to Managing Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) Benign? Rising Unsustainable Extraction and Looming Policy Challenges

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ABSTRACT Until 1960s, the importance of NTFPs was unnoticed as they were mainly collected free of charge from forests to meet the subsistence needs of poor or forest dwelling communities. The economic significance of NTFPs became well known to people and governments in 1970s; this led to a global surge for the exploitation of these resources. As a result, large scale extractions of NTFPs have occurred and resulted into over-exploitation and extinction in some cases. Frequent occurrences of unsustainable extraction of NTFPs are now well cited in the literature. These concerns necessitate the establishment of a new framework for sustainable management of NTFPs on world-wide basis. This study provides a policy framework which recommends a set of policy initiatives on the part of governments, particularly in the tropical countries, to keep using this resource on sustainable basis.