


**COLLABORATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE**  
Systematic reviews for conservation and environmental management



**CONTEXT**

Rates of deforestation and forest degradation are high in many countries. To maintain and enhance the economic, social and environmental values of forests, many developing nations have devolved full or partial forest management authority to local communities. Does such Community Forest Management (CFM) supply global environmental and local welfare benefits in these less developed countries?

*This question was addressed by a systematic review of the accessible scientific referenced and grey literature. The systematic review takes into account the quality of the research and possible biases, in order to provide a rigorous, transparent, replicable and updatable review of the scientific evidence.*



From the CEE Library

**BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY FOREST MANAGEMENT**

**FINDINGS**

Community Forest Management (CFM) does not consistently deliver positive impact on forest cover compared to other management systems .

Tree basal area and stem density were greater in CFM-forests and plantations compared to state-managed or non managed forests, but there was no consistent effect of CFM on species richness or diversity.

Too few studies were available to provide consistent evidence of an improvement of livelihoods in local populations under CFM.

There were insufficient data to investigate the relative effects of different types of management used in CFM programmes.

Many factors impacted the results (e.g. activities, history and topography of the sites...) but their effect was not always quantified and analysed.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The shortcomings of experimental design in many studies means that it is not possible to say whether the positive outcomes reported are due to the project intervention itself, whether they will persist over time, or if they would have occurred anyway.

To build-up evidence, there needs to be consensus on, and standard measurement of, indicators of the success of CFM (including appropriate comparators, timeframe, experimental design, measurement of effect modifiers). This would greatly aid synthesis of its effectiveness.

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POLICY BRIEF from Systematic Review CEE 08-011



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**Complete Brief (A4), maximum two double-sided pages**

**ENLARGED (A3) cover page of your brief (one sided)**

Briefmaster: B. Livoreil  
CEBC – Bangor University

**Name of the brief-master(s) and affiliation, or logo of the institution if not on the brief**