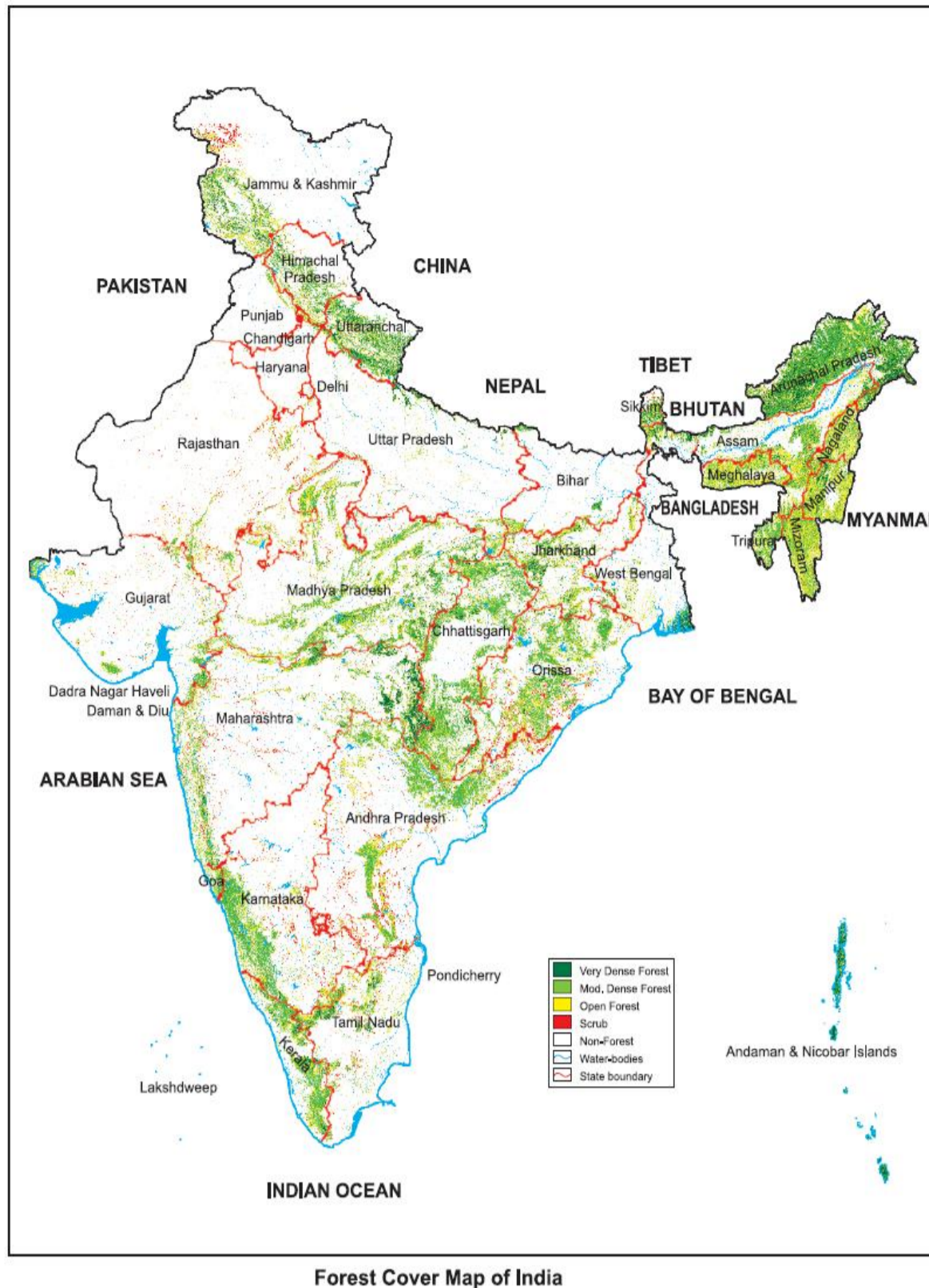


Prospect of People's Participatory Forestry in India: A Case Study of Van Panchayat in Himalaya

Kazuyo NAGAHAMA

nagahama@nenv.k.u-tokyo.ac.jp

Introduction



Percentage of Land Mass Under Forest Cover (2005 FRA assessment)

World: 26.6% ⇒ The forest cover is decreasing.
Asia: 16.4% ⇒ The cover is slightly decreasing.
India: 21.02% ⇒ The forest cover is slightly increasing for two decades.

The paradigm shift

"from centralized to decentralized forest management"

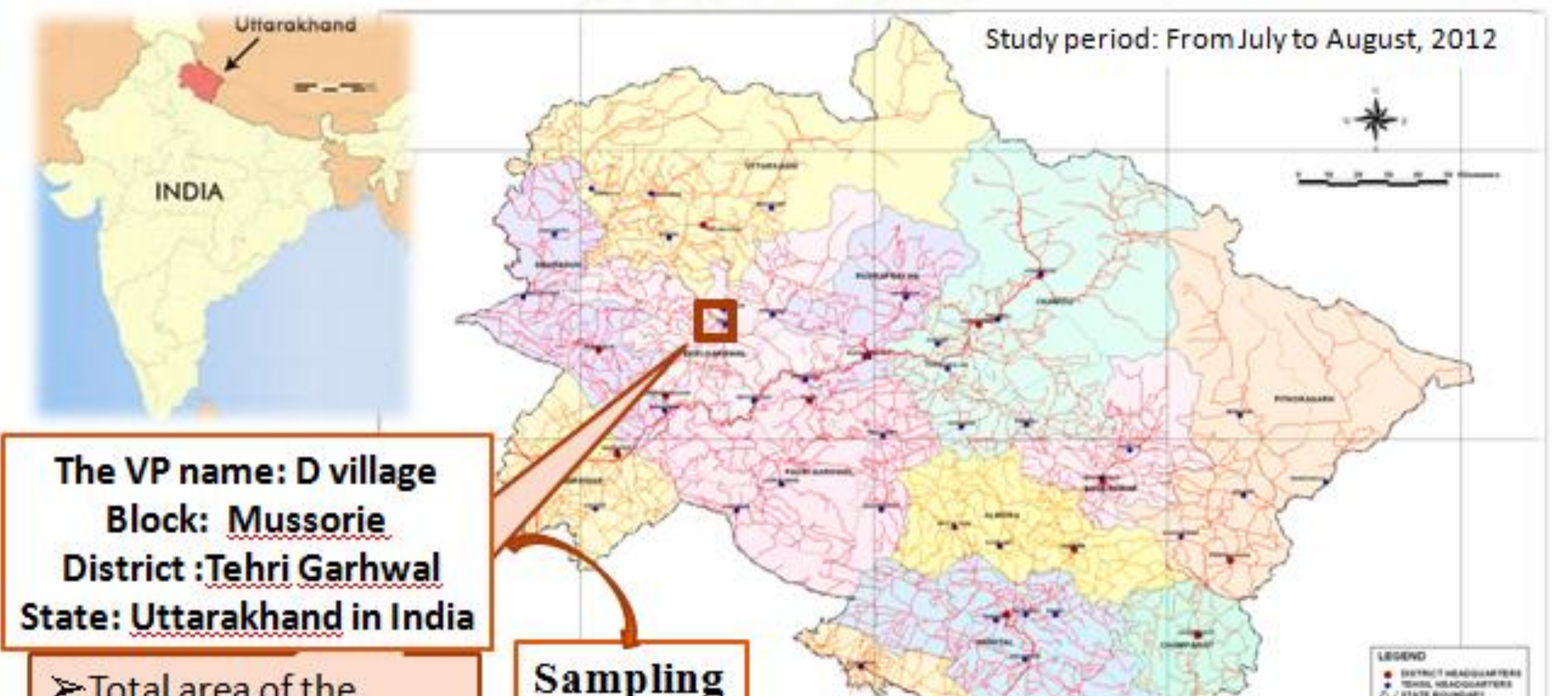
- Increased the access of local communities to forest resources (Post and Snel, 2003)
- Paved the way for positive changes and explored potentials for better forest management (Edmunds and Wollenberg, 2003)
- The empirical evidence of decentralized forest management effects (Kaimowitz et al., 1998; Rosyadi et al., 2005)

Objectives

This study targets the VP system and examines forest management via the question: To what extent have local institutions successfully achieved sustainable forest management? The intention of this study was to clarify actual forest management and utilization, as well as to analyze the perceptions within forestry in relation to the Management Committee (MC), which is responsible for VP and other members of VP and the FD (Forest Department).

Methodology & Study Site

The selected VPs surveyed to clarify reality between local people in Forest Protection Committee and Forest Department. Based on the result, analyze the factors and find the mechanism under VPs; this will also be based on the previous study about forest policy, VPs rules, and the VPs development. Data collection from the organizations and local governments, and interviews with the local people in villages under VPs



The VP name: D village
Block: Mussoorie
District: Tehri Garhwal
State: Uttarakhand in India

- Total area of the village: 137 ha
- Altitude: 1850 m
- Year of VP established: 1993
- Total VP area: 20 ha
- Total HH: 51 (Population: 348)

Sampling

- The reason of selection D village: Present sarpanch (VP head) is a Block Committee leader of 151 VPs in Mussoorie, supporting VP association and the assumption of active VP.
- Method and number of household (HH) interview: Snow-ball sampling collecting 41 HH data (80% HH in the village)

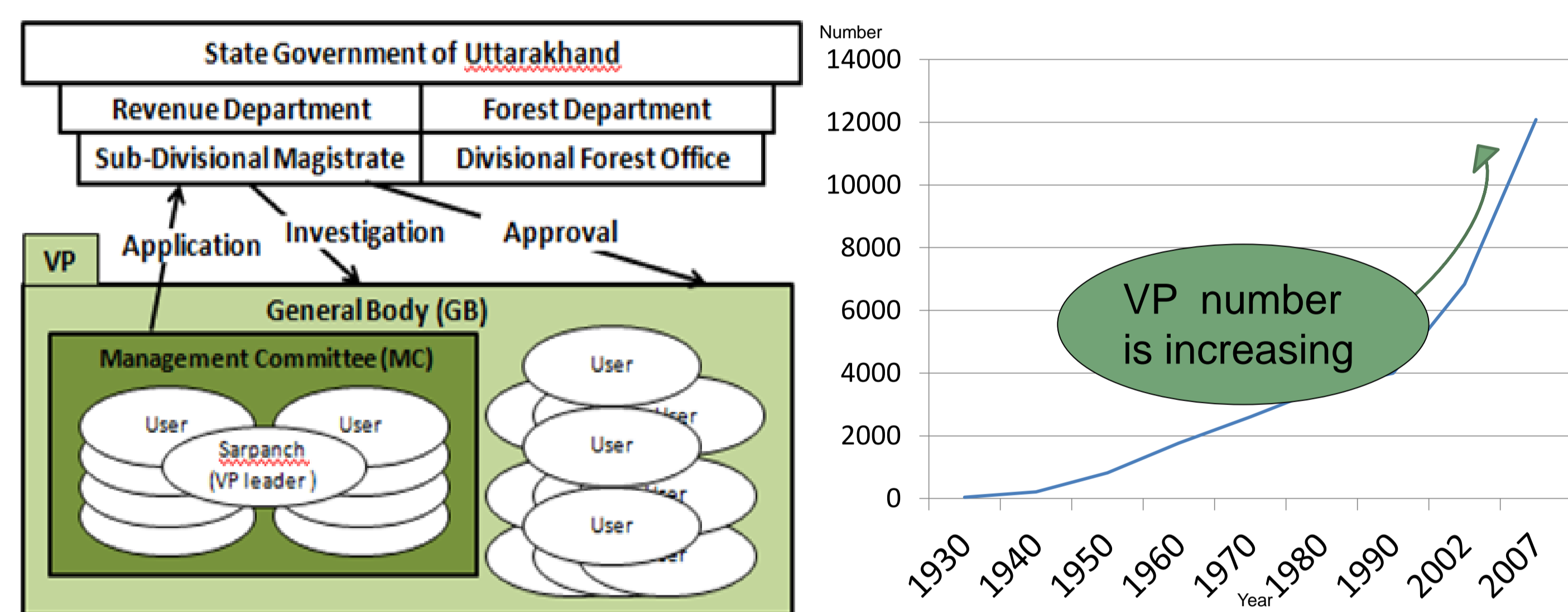
Background

Van Panchayat: Self-initiated forest protection groups in Uttarakhand

Van Panchayats (Forest Councils): History and Present Status

- 1815: British arrived in Uttarakhand - use forests as commercial resource
- 1864: Established the Indian Forest Department
- 1878: Forest Act passed, transfer mountain forests into the control of Forest Department, imposed new restrictions on lopping and grazing rights of villagers, prohibited the extension of cultivation, and banned forest fires
- 1921: Kumaon Forest Grievances Committee
- 1927: Indian Forest Act, major forest policy British Indian government
- 1931: First Van-panchayats Rules

Van Panchayat (VP): ownership and user rights lie with the people forming these micro-institutions



The change of VP number in Uttarakhand

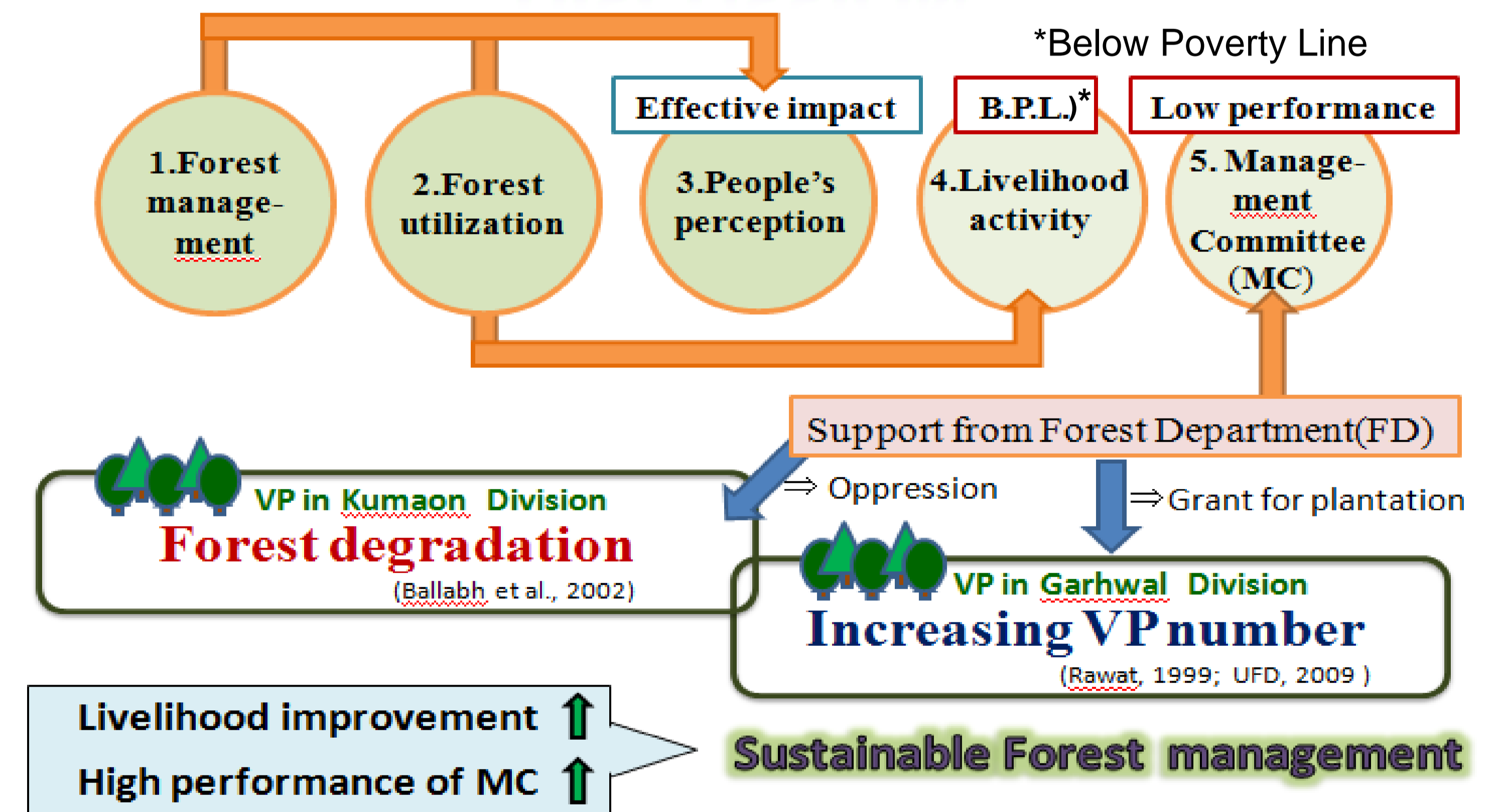
Literature review

- Why local resources management institutions are on the decline? ⇒ strong control by the Forest Department over these people's institutions (Ballabh et al., 2002)
- There is a steady decline in instituted forest management practice ⇒ quantitative and qualitative decline of once dense and well-managed Van Panchayat forest in the Kumaon hills in the central Himalayas. (Balooni et al., 2007)

Are local resource management institutions on the decline?

There is the case of Van Panchayat forest in the Kumaon hills in the central Himalayas of India

Tentative results

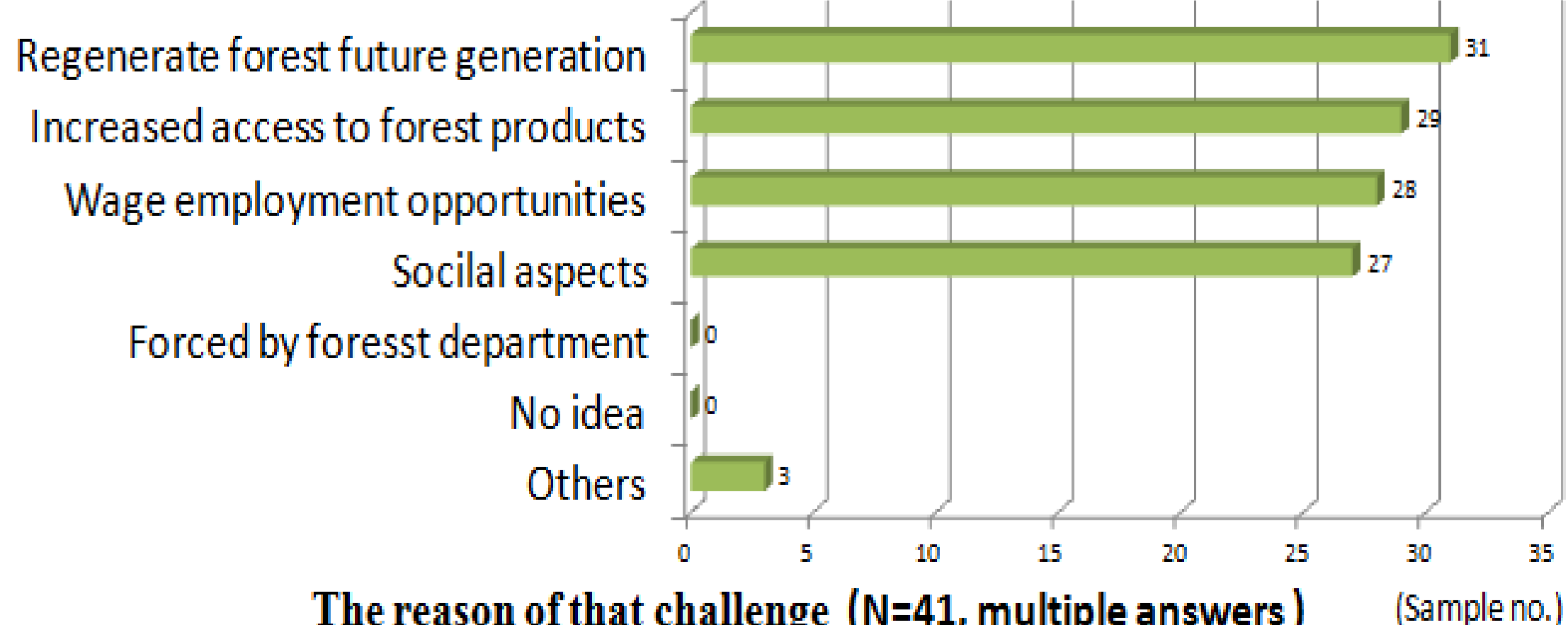
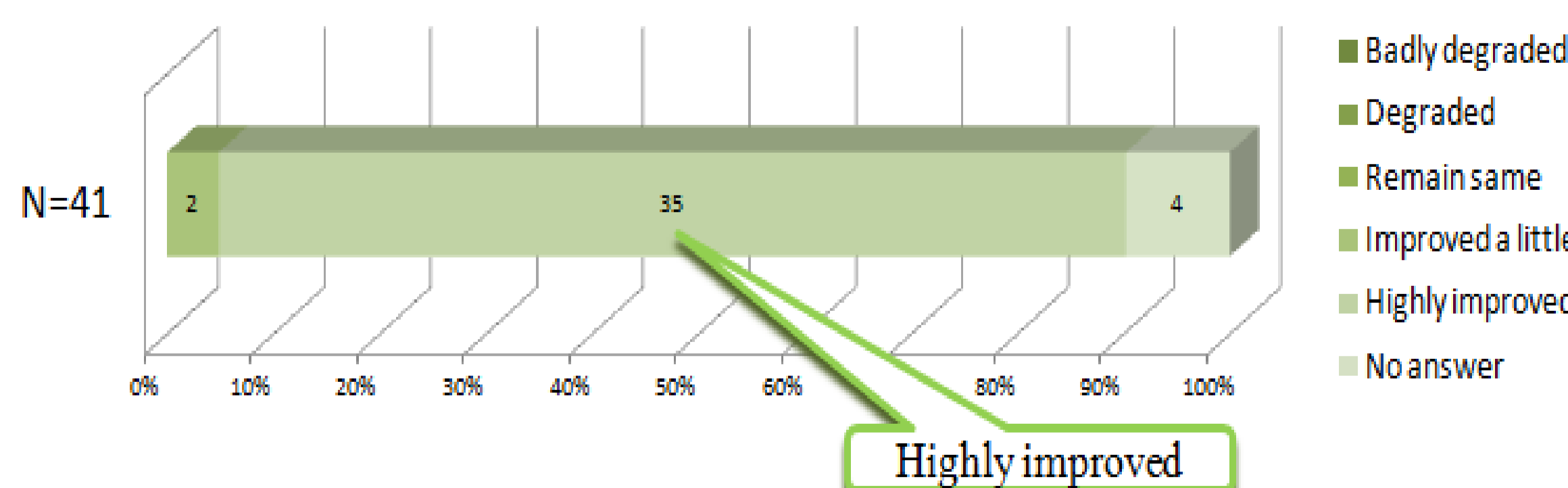


Further study

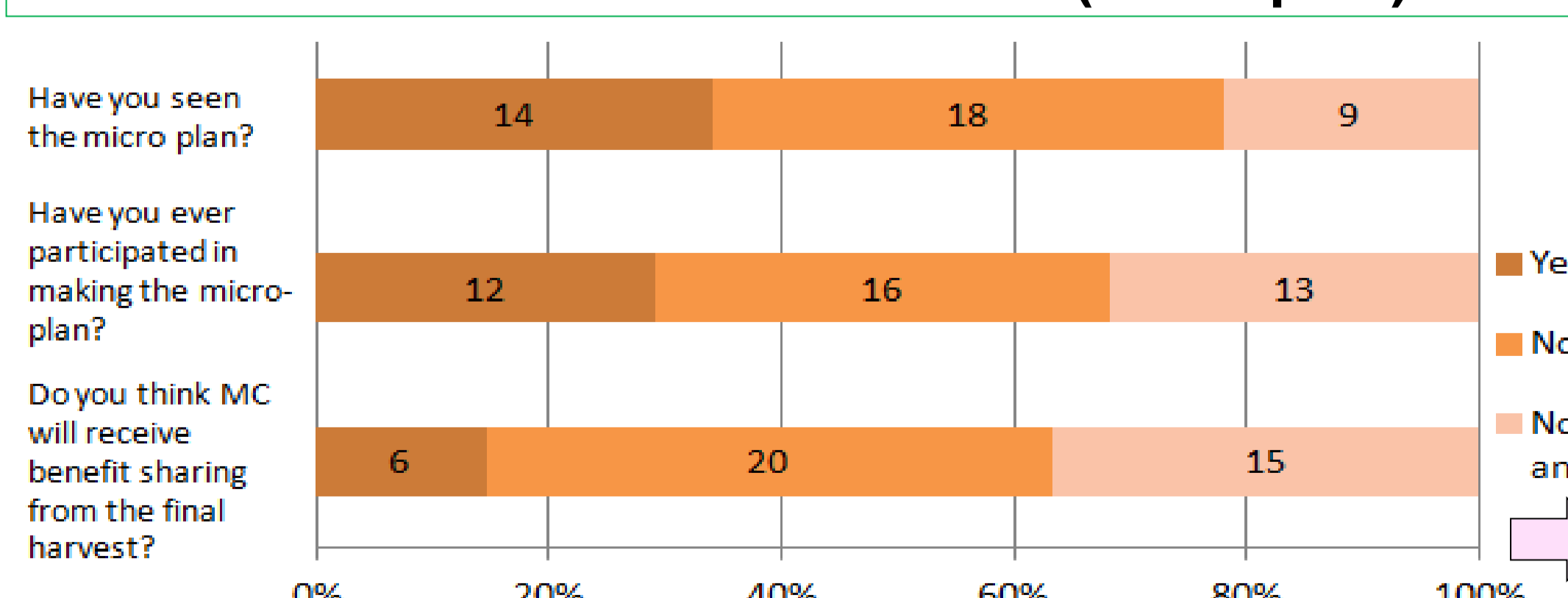
1. Measurement of VP by biomass approach
2. More data of another VPs
3. Improvement of educational level of the local people with support of NGOs

Interview from Van Panchayat members (n=41)

Impact on the current VP conditions after VP was formed



The consciousness MC and MP (micro plan)



78% respondents depend on the firewood routinely, which is necessary for maintaining their livelihood.
88% respondents are satisfied with the condition and management of VP.
Most of the villagers did not have any question of the existence of micro-plan and almost fixed MC members.

Relation between MC member's composition and the factors

Factors	χ^2	Fishers p	Result
Caste	4.04	-	Rejected
Migrant	0.303	0.27	Accepted
Outside study	0.74	0.23	Accepted
Cell phone	-	0.50	Accepted
Dish TV	-	0.17	Accepted
Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG)	-	0.0003	Rejected
VP distance	-	1.32	Accepted
Collecting firewood	-	0.37	Accepted
Grazing animals	-	0.29	Accepted

The consistence of caste is not fair to consider the proportion of the villagers. LPG is the indicator of the independence of firewood, MC members depend on firewood.