

Exploring Human Wellbeing Indicators from Restored Forests in India and Nepal

Anamika Menon

PhD student

Dept of Urban and Rural Development

SLU, Uppsala



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What benefits to human well-being come to mind?



Provisionary services

- Fuelwood
- Fodder
- NWFPs
- Fiber
- Forest food
- Water

Regulatory services

- Climate regulation
- Flood control
- Disease control
- Pollination
- Water purification

Cultural services

- Spiritual
- Recreational
- Cultural
- Aesthetic
- Sense of place

Supporting services

- Nutrient cycling
- Soil formation
- Primary production



What is human wellbeing?

- Complex, subjective and multi-dimensional concept
- Metrics may range from ‘material well-being’ measured through simple income and HDI- based measurements
- ‘Aristotelian’ or Psychological well-being metrics such as power of choice, intellectual faculties, reasoning, meaning-making, freedom of imagination, and forging societal links and identities
- ‘Capabilities’ or ‘freedom’ based ideas of Human Well-being
- Also linked to social capital (such as social cohesion and engagement, as well as community and family networks) where people have entrepreneurial opportunities and good access to services such as health and education leading to sustainable rural development



CONSTITUENTS OF WELL-BEING



Source: Millennium Ecosystem Assessment

ARROW'S COLOR
Potential for mediation by socioeconomic factors

- Low
- Medium
- High

ARROW'S WIDTH
Intensity of linkages between ecosystem services and human well-being

- Weak
- Medium
- Strong

Study context

- Mid-hills of Himalayas in India and Nepal
- Long histories of forest restoration
- Foreign aid projects- Swiss, Japan, World Bank, UNDP
- Community governance



Basic material for a good life

- Adequate livelihoods: livestock rearing, NTFP collection, Medicinal plants, forest guards
- Sufficient nutritious food: vegetables, tubers, fruits, spices, flower
- Shelter: bamboo, fiber for rope, timber for houses, livestock shed
- Access to goods: fuelwood (cooking food for house, cooking animal feed, heating), fodder for livestock, NTFP's, water



Security

- Tenure security: community forestry and PFA in policies, Feeling of belongingness
- Secure resource access: water, land
- Security of rights: right to roam, sustainable harvesting and use, marketing of products
- Security from disasters: landslides, flood control



Health

- Strength: walking, hiking
- Feeling well: meditation, relaxation, birdsong, sounds of water, heating house in winter, picnic in forest
- Spiritual wellbeing: temples, trees with spiritual value (banyan), funeral sites or burial grounds inside forest
- Access to clean air and water



Good Social Relations

- Social cohesion: feeling of belongingness, formation of forest institutions for better collective management, forests as social space for gathering, sharing ideas and emotions
- Mutual respect: understanding of protecting forests for future generations, decision-making in community forestry user groups
- Ability to help others: Forest User Groups serve as banking and credit institutions, trainings for forest management (Forest department, institutions, NGOs)



Negative wellbeing outcomes

- Human-wildlife conflict
- Fear of thieves
- Forest fire
- Leeches
- Consider going to forest as a chore/
boredom
- Injury/ inability to walk
- Presence of invasives as hindrance to walk





Thank you for your attention!

anamika.menon@slu.se

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