Buck *et al* (2001) defines networks as platforms or avenues of social learning or collaborative learning, which is a framework for public policy. Britt, (2002) defines that networks represent "communities of ideas" where people interact on the basis of both common and conflicting interests. Bodin *et al* (2005) refers to the argument of Tompkins and Adger (2004) that social networks between stakeholders and actors can build community resilience and increase the adaptive capacity for environmental change. Community-based networks can play different

Organizations that have been actively promoting community-based forest management in Odisha. In order to study the evolution a

the state level NGOs, namely

Another study conducted by Khanal (2007) on the Community-Level Natural Resource Management Networks in Nepal found that those networks have indeed been more effective with regard to key governance issues, i.e. *inclusive decision making*, *transparency,* and *accountability*. The study found that the networks of Nepal have also succeeded in influencing local environmental practices and supporting more sustainable livelihoods. They have been effective in building local capacity, enhancing service delivery, supporting informed policy

networks is necessary in order to encourage their involvement and strengthen their role in forest resource management and natural resource governance.

Conclusion

In reality however, the networks of these community-based forest groups, especially in India, are considered nothing more than a mid-wife in the forest governance and management. As mentioned by Borgoyary, (2006), community-based forest groups are emerging as 'connectors'. However, the designation 'connector' is not the same as 'decision makers', which can make a marked difference for these communities in managing the resources on which they depend for their subsistence and survival. Despite of their dependence on forests and the vast amount of indigenous knowledge accrued over generations on management of forest resources, these networks consisting of forest community groups have been kept at the periphery of forest governance without any role or power in the decision making process. This is because of the fact that these Participatory Forest Management networks represented by community-based forest protection groups don't have any legal recognition or legal ownership on the forest patches that they have been protecting for generations. Such lack of legal recognition has

links between Forest Rights Act 2006 and participatory forest management networks of Odisha in order to improve our understanding of the community-based forest management networks in the post Forest Rights Act 2006 scenario.

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