

Analysis of the DOF Decision

Although the dispute was not settled through mutual understanding, the decisions taken by the DOF seemed to satisfy both sides as far as their own interests were concerned. The decisions taken by the DOF on April 31st, 1994, are as follow.

- There is a provision in the rules to dissolve a users' committee if it violates an OP.
- Action can be taken according to the decision of a general body meeting of the group.
- Timber and fuelwood will be made available to the group after the approval of the revised OP, and all the revenue generated from the sale will be used for the conservation and preservation of the forest.
- No trees will be felled for the next five years.

It can be seen from the decisions that, on the one hand, the DOF wished to punish and warn the women's group against violating the OP and, on the other hand, not

not only can the women enjoy the rights to sell the forest products according to their interests but they can also decide themselves whether or not to dissolve the committee.

In order to follow this decision, the OP has been revised and a group decision made to implement it. However, some difficulties remain. For instance, although the revised OP does not allow money collected in the account of the users' group to be used for lending, the group lent some money to an outsider, keeping a house as collateral. The group took this step to increase its income from interest. While this is a violation of the revised OP, the women's group claims that it was unaware of this clause.