

# **Conflicts and Anarchy in Indian Natural Resources Governance: Need for a Paradigm Shift.**

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## **Abstract**

Past over a decade, the Indian economy clearly seems to have followed a high growth trajectory breaking all previous records and consistently growing at a GDP over 7 percent. The main contributor being the service sector contributing around 50 per cent of national income and growing at the rate of double digit. Still today, a vast majority of the people continue to remain dependent on the natural resources-land, water, forests and fisheries. The importance of natural resources was recognised during colonial rule in India both in terms of development as well as a source of revenue generation. Immediately after independence, a consensus emerged; the state became a dominant player in development and launched many programmes leading to commoditisation of natural resources and capital accumulation. Natural resources conservation received low priority. Access and control of natural resources therefore, became convenient means for wealth accumulation in which the state played a part in a differentiated social structure leading to conflicts and chaos all over the natural resources.

In this paper an attempt has been made to map out these colossal conflicts around natural resources in India. The conflicts are amplified due to institutional failure, technology and market penetration in which state played a divisive role, seemingly colluded with privileged and powerful segment of the society. The appropriations of critical natural resources by powerful have been challenged by the NGO's, social activists, civil rights groups and others. Recently, NGO's and civil societies agenda have been adopted in mainstream policy, like the involvement of community in forest and water resources management, without substantial progress in space for community involvement. It is argued that the Indian natural resources are facing challenges that can not be addressed in the current policy and an analytic framework and a paradigm shift is required. The new paradigm is to be based on everyday realities within which people live and sustain their livelihood. Tentative outline of the paradigm shift needed is also highlighted in the paper.