

ABSTRACT

This article presents a review of methods in 60 empirical studies on forest conservation impact of popular participation in forest management. The review illustrates a high degree of variance in methods among the studies, and shows that a majority of the studies could benefit from a stronger focus on one or more of the following three areas: (i) the empirical verification and characterization of popular participation as it exists on the ground, (ii) the indicators of impact and the method used to assess them, and (iii) the disentanglement of the effect of popular participation from other developments in the study area that may impact on forest condition. The variation in methods inhibits comparisons and meta-analyses, as well as questions the basis on which policy recommendations on popular participation in forest management are made. Based on the review, we provide recommendations for future evaluations of the conservation impact of popular participation in forest management