

## **Brief Note on Watershed Development programmes being implemented by the Rural Development Department.**

With the objectives to develop wastelands/ degraded lands drought Prone and desert areas on watershed basis and to restore the ecological balance by harnessing, conserving and developing natural resources i.e. land, water, vegetative cover, employment generation, poverty alleviation, community empowerment and development of human and other economic resources of the rural areas, Mitigate the adverse effects of extreme climatic conditions, Development of natural resources etc, the Watershed Development Programmes are in operation over the past few years. In Himachal Pradesh, the Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP), Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP) and Desert Development Programme (DDP) are being implemented on watershed approach since 1995-96 as per the guidelines of the Govt. of India. The Programme wise / districts wise position of the Watershed Development programmes is as under:

### **i) Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP):**

The Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP) is being implemented in districts Chamba, Hamirpur, Kangra, Kinnaur (Except Pooch Division), Kullu, Mandi, Shimla, Sirmour and Solan (Except Kunihar and Dharampur block).

### **ii) Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP):**

The Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP) is being implemented in district Bilaspur, Una and Solan ( Kunihar and Dharampur Block).

### **iv) Desert Development Programme (DDP):**

The Desert Development Programme (DDP) is being implemented in district Lahaul & Spiti and Kinnaur (Pooch Division) in the State.

Under Watershed Development Programmes, the Micro Watershed projects (Each Micro Watershed consisting of an area about 500 hectares) are taken up for treatment normally within a period of 5 years. The programme is basically aimed at treating of identified area particularly degraded land with low cost and locally assessed technologies through participatory approach that seeks to secure close involvement of Users Communities. The main activities taken up under the Watershed Development Programmes are Soil Moisture Conservation, Construction of Water harvesting structures, Afforestation, Horticulture, Pasture and Agriculture development etc.

Since the inception ( 1995-96) of the programme, 1837 micro watersheds with a total cost of Rs. 529.82 crores for the treatment of identified 864386 hectare area under all the above programme have been sanctioned by the GOI as per old guidelines.

### **Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP)**

Now the new "Common Guidelines" have been notified by the Government of India on 12-03-2008 and National Rainfed Area Authority has been created to oversee the implementation of Watershed Management Programmes in different sectors with a complete change in the approach in which these programmes are to be operated. All schemes of Watershed Development Programme such as IWDP, DPAP, DDP brought under a single umbrella i.e IWMP. The new Common Guidelines emphasis on the following aspects,

- Set up of a Institutional frame work at National Level (National Rainfed Area Authority), Sate Level (State Level Nodal Agency) and District Level (District Watershed Development Unit) have been devised to coordinate and oversee the Watershed Management Programmme.
- Given priority to participation and sustainable livelihood;
- Emphasized on engaging professionals for smooth implementation of Watershed Management Programme.
- The Traditional Ridge to valley approach of Watershed Management has been reoriented in favour of a more flexible framework.

The State Level Nodal Agency under the Chairpersonship of the Chief Secretary Himachal Pradesh has been constituted and the Secretaries, HOD's of Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Forest, Rural Development Department etc. have been nominated as members. In the Common Guidelines for Watershed Development Projects,

The Perspective and Strategic Plan under Watershed Management Programme for the State is prerequisite document for approval of new projects and the same has been prepared and posed to GOI after concurrence and approval of SLNA.

As per decision conveyed by the GOI, the per hectare cost norms for hilly States would be 15000/ per hectare and the cost sharing between Center and State Government would be in the ratio of 90:10. It is also added that the Government of India has sanctioned 36 new projects with a total cost of Rs. 305.75 crore covering 203832 hectares area under IWMP for all the districts in the State during 2009-10. The area identified under these projects would be treated in the period of 4 -7 years as per provisions of new Common Guidelines. The preparation work of Detailed Project Reports (DPR) of these projects are in progress. However, the Projects sanctioned prior to 1.4.2008 would follow the old guidelines.