

2.4. Soil and Water Conservation

2.4.1. Watershed approach, of late has been considered appropriate to help reduce the pace of degradation and the process of development and conservation of land, water and vegetations in an integrated manner. The strategies envisaged for sustainable water management are:

- ? Rain water harvesting for ground water recharge to stabilize drinking water and irrigation wells
- ? Scientific use of water in canal irrigated areas and reduction of water loss
- ? Rehabilitation of water bodies.
- ? Introduction of water saving irrigation methods like Drip and Sprinkler Irrigation on a large scale
- ? Construction of Community Wells to promote conjunctive use of surface and ground water

2.4.2. With the above strategies, several agencies implement different soil conservation schemes. The following are the schemes implemented by Agricultural Engineering Department

Scheme for Water Harvesting and Run-off Management in the Watersheds of TamilNadu.

2.4.3. Rain water harvesting and runoff management on mini watershed basis is organised in such a way that the moisture regime of the watershed is improved for increased land use and this programme is implemented in Watersheds selected under Comprehensive Wasteland Programme. During 2006-07, an amount of Rs.2468.30 lakh is expected to be spent. It is proposed to continue this programme with a total outlay of Rs.2739.87 lakh.

Soil Conservation in River Valley Catchments

2.4.4. With a view to reduce siltation of the reservoirs, various soil conservation measures are being taken up in the catchments of River Valley Projects. The works are taken up on watershed basis in the priority watersheds prioritised by the All India Soil and Land Use Survey Organisation (AISLUS). This scheme is implemented with financial assistance from both centre and state on 90:10 basis under Macro

Management Mode. During 2007-08, it is proposed to continue the programme to cover 12500 hectare in south Pennaiyar and Mettur river valley catchements with a total outlay of Rs.1250 lakh.

Soil Conservation in Tribal Areas

2.4.5. The objective of the scheme is to improve the economic status of the tribal farmers through integrated development of tribal areas. Land levelling, construction of contour rubble bunds with vegetative hedges and check dams are taken up in tribal areas at Government cost. During 2007-08 , it is programmed to treat 700 Hectares at a cost of Rs 150.00 lakh.

Hill Area Development Programme

2.4.6. The objective of the scheme is to restore and maintain the ecology of the Nilgiris District through integrated watershed development approach. Soil conservation works are being taken up in these watersheds. Besides soil conservation works, landslide preventive measures are also taken up. During 2007-08 an area of 400 hectare is proposed to be covered at a cost of Rs 444.86 lakh.

Western Ghats Development Programme

2.4.7. Soil Conservation is one of the important aspects under Western Ghats Development Programme. During 2007-08, area of 1500 hectare is proposed to be covered with at a cost of Rs 677.00 lakh.

2.4.8. The following programmes are implemented by Agriculture Department for the wasteland development, watershed management and soil testing.

Soil Testing Laboratories and Mobile Soil Testing Laboratories

2.4.9. Soil Testing Laboratories are functioning in the State to analyse the soil samples collected from the farmers' fields in order to advise the farmers on specific fertiliser recommendations on the basis of native soil fertility. There are 19 Soil Testing Laboratories and 16 Mobile Soil Testing Laboratories functioning in different districts.

Comprehensive Wasteland Development Programme

2.4.10. This Comprehensive Wasteland development programme is a massive programme to reclaim 20 L.Ha. over a period of 5 years. This programme has two components viz. 1) Participatory Watershed Development and 2) Development of Government Wastelands by Corporate Homes, Small companies and Federation of Women SHGs. etc.

2.4.11. The Comprehensive Wasteland development programme is under implementation in 23 districts. For development of wastelands, farmers are provided with a subsidy of Rs.8500/- per ha. It is proposed to implement this scheme in an extent of 80,000 ha of wastelands (Farmers' patta lands) at a cost of Rs.81.60 crore.

2.4.12. A sum of Rs. 3500 lakh is expected to be spent during 2006-2007 and a sum of Rs.10000 lakh is proposed for 2006-2007.

Implementation of Watershed Project under Watershed Development Fund through TAWDEVA

2.4.13. Watershed Development Fund scheme is implemented for a period of 6 years from 2004-05. 100 watershed projects are proposed to be implemented at a cost of Rs.60 crore. A sum of Rs.506.25 lakh is expected to be spent during 2006-07 and a sum of Rs.506.25 lakh has been proposed for 2007-2008.

National Watershed Development Programme for Rainfed areas (NWDPR)

2.4.14. NWDPR is implemented in 23 districts of Tamilnadu except Thanjavur, Nagappattinam, Tiruvarur and Kanyakumari. 763 units of watersheds (1 unit=500Ha) area 381500 Ha for Xth plan have been identified in 23 districts and allocation of funds has been made accordingly. The area to be treated during 2006-2007 is 83082 Ha. An amount of Rs.3738.70 lakh is expected to be spent during 2006-07 and an amount of Rs.7500 lakh is proposed for 2007-08.

Preparation and distribution of Bio-Fertiliser packets.

2.4.15. The usage of bio fertilizer is being popularized through Agriculture Department for large-scale adoption. During 2007-08, the production target has been enhanced to 1600 M.T. A sum of Rs.397.04 lakh is expected to be spent during 2006-2007 and a sum of Rs.435.79 lakh is proposed for 2007-2008.

Plan Outlay - Soil And Water Conservation - 2007-08

2.4.16. The agreed outlay for Soil and Water Conservation for the year 2007-08 is Rs.104.67 crore. Of this, an outlay of Rs.20.93 crore is set apart for Scheduled Caste Sub Plan.