

CHAPTER 9

ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND TOURISM

9.1 ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS

Keeping in view the thrust of Ninth Five Year Plan, the Planning Commission would continue to lay emphasis on ensuring environmental sustainability of development process through the social mobilisation and participation of people at all levels. While formulating the Annual Plan outlay for the year 2000-01 (both Centre and State) the major thrust has been on promoting the self sustainability of various organisations such as Central Pollution control Board (CPCB), State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs), Botanical Survey of India (BSI), Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) etc. working under State and Central governments.

ENVIRONMENT

2. The degradation of environment and increasing levels of pollution has been a cause of serious concern as it affects the quality of life of the people, and hinders sustainable development of the country. During the year, 1999-2000, efforts have been made to improve the quality of life and environment through various schemes and programmes, a review of which is given below.

Review Of Annual Plan 1999-2000

Central Pollution Control Board

3. In the environment sector, the pollution control and monitoring have been the focus during 1999-2000. Some of the important activities undertaken by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) included (i) studies relating to solid waste management and sewage treatment and disposal, (ii) ambient air quality monitoring, (iii) assessment of river and water quality and (iv) CPCB has become the member of the Global Eco-labelling Network (GEN). Towards reducing the vehicular pollution, several important steps were taken. These are as follows:

- Supply of unleaded petrol in the National Capital Region since 1-9-1999.
- Supply of low sulphur diesel (0.25 per cent) in the entire country since April, 1999.
- Enforcement of Euro-I norms in Delhi since 1st June, 1999.
- Notification of specifications for 2-T oil for two stroke engine w.e.f. 1st April, 1999 through out the country.

4. During the annual plan 1999-2000, the total outlay for pollution control measures was Rs.23.45 crore, out of which Rs.2.00 crore was for CPCB.

Industrial Pollution Prevention Project

5. This is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme funded by the World Bank which was started in 1995 and will continue up to 2002. During 1999-2000, Rs.18.00 crore has been spent under this scheme.

Taj Protection Mission

6. Under the Taj Protection Mission, 10 projects relating to the protection of environment in and around Taj Mahal are under various stages of implementation. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the 10 projects estimated to cost Rs.222.21 crore. A Mission Management Board constituted under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary, Uttar Pradesh oversees the implementation, monitoring and reviewing of various schemes formulated for the protection of the Taj Mahal. During 1999-2000 Rs.50.00 crore was provided from the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) for different schemes under Taj Protection Mission (TPM). The State Government has released Rs.29.05 crore up to 30.9.1999. However, the physical as well as financial progress under this project is not satisfactory.

Hazardous Substance Management

7. During 1999-2000, an amount of Rs.6.05 crore was allocated towards implementation of the programmes namely, Strengthen Hazardous Substance Management, setting up of Emergency Response Centres, Accident Prevention and Emergency Preparedness, Hazard Analysis Study, Training Programme for Management of Hazardous Chemicals, Bio-Medical Waste Management and Remedy of Contaminated sites (Bichhri). For phase-I of the feasibility study under Bichhri project, an expenditure of Rs.81 lakh has been incurred. However, the progress in terms of remedy of the contaminated site is unsatisfactory.

Survey and Conservation of Natural Resources

8. With the emergence of conservation and sustainable use of bio diversity as a key issue in the country, the need of survey and conservation of Natural resources has become more important. BSI and ZSI have been engaged in such activities. The total allocation for the annual plan 1999-2000 for conservation and survey was Rs.27.60 crore. The progress in terms of base line data generation and inventorisation of species has been very slow.

Annual Plan 2000-01

9. For the annual plan 2000-01, the emphasis is on regular and systematic evaluation of various schemes of the Central Ministry as well as those of the State Governments by independent organisations. In addition, the emphasis has been on the State Pollution Control Boards becoming self-supporting by levying appropriate user charges. An exercise is to be conducted to work out the level of user charges at which these schemes would become self-supporting. The total Plan outlay for Environment and Forest sector for the Central Ministry for year 2000-01 is Rs.850.00 crore (details in Annexure 9.1.1.) The break-up of Central outlay for 2000-01 for Environment & Ecology is given in Annexure 9.1.2.

Abatement of Pollution

10. During 2000-01, CPCB has identified the schemes, which will be operated under the Nine Major project heads. The total outlay for the annual plan 2000-01 is Rs.9.00 crore for CPCB. The CPCB has been advised to monitor household pollution, especially in rural areas. The change in the benzene level is also to be monitored after the phasing out of lead in petrol. This year CPCB will add Carbon Monoxide, Respiratory Suspended Particulate Matter (RSPM), Benzene and Ozone in the list of parameters to be monitored, whereas, at present, only SO₂ NO_x and Suspended Particulate Matter (SPM) are being monitored.

Industrial Pollution Prevention Project

11. Under this externally aided project, it proposed to spend Rs.22.00 crore during the year. The Planning Commission has emphasised the monitoring of the pollution caused by industrial units set up in industrial estates in backward and rural areas and the percolation of industrial effluents into the irrigation system of the areas adjacent to such estates.

Taj Protection Mission

12. During 2000-01, ten on going schemes are to be continued and four new projects have been proposed by the State Government. The physical and financial progress of the project is to be reviewed, in consultation with the MoEF and Government of Uttar Pradesh.

Hazardous Substance Management

13. During the year 2000-0, the on going programmes will continue. The BE for the annual plan 2000-01 is Rs.7.00 crore. However, the slow progress to tackle the problem of hazardous waste disposal has been taken very seriously by the Planning Commission. The report of the High Powered Committee, set up under the Chairmanship of Prof. M.G.K. Menon, to go into the problem of hazardous waste disposal, is likely to be submitted by June, 2000. It is proposed to seek legal opinion on the directions of the Supreme Court regarding the Bichhri Project.

Areas of Concern

Indoor Air Pollution

14. It is estimated that in India, half a million deaths each year are attributed to indoor pollution from traditional bio-mass fuels. An innovative approach needs to be formulated to deal with this problem. It may include promotion of clean fuels to the rural areas in subsidised pattern and to provide free smokeless chulhas to the people. In addition, there is a need to create a mass awareness, specially in rural sector. The policies related to the use of improved cooking stoves need to be strengthened.

Environmental Degradation

15. Concerted efforts need to be made to have a multi-pronged attack on the problem of environmental degradation. In order to improve the air quality, the vehicular emission need to be reduced throughout the country. For this, there is a need to go for CNG operated

vehicles and to develop sufficient infrastructure for transporting LPG through pipelines instead of road transport. As regards the water quality, minimum flow in the rivers for ecological function and rainwater-harvesting need to be mandated as the top most priority. In addition, the problem of coliforms needs to be addressed in a coordinated manner through an integrated approach to inter-alia, slums, solid waste management and well maintained efficient and effective sewerage system.

Climate Change

16. The problem of global warming and climate change is a matter of serious concern, nationally as well as internationally. This problem is multi-disciplinary and the Planning Commission has to play an important role to internalise global warming concerns in the respective sectoral plans of various Ministries/Departments of the Government of India so that a long-term strategy is available for control of Green House Gas emissions as a part of the Plans. However, India is party to the UN – Framework Convention on Climate Change and a Core Group has also been formulated in the Planning Commission to deal with this problem. More effort has to be made in this direction.

Biodiversity Conservation

17. India is one of the 12 mega – biodiversity countries of the world. The base line data on species and genetic diversity, particularly intro specific diversity and their macro and habitats is inadequate. There is a need to develop a complete national database, which would include listing of all species with their location, distribution, description, status and their local uses, if any. For this purpose, the survey organisations could network with other organisations/agencies in terms of policy planning and funding.

Environmental Awareness

18. There is a need for a unified approach for promoting environmental awareness among the people at all levels through mass media. TV and radio being effective media with a wider reach should be utilised for this purpose.

National River Conservation Directorate

19. The National River Conservation Directorate (NRCD) works towards improving the water quality of major rivers through Ganga Action Plan-I & II and National River Conservation Plan. The important works being undertaken by the NRCD include the following.

- Interception and diversion works to capture the raw sewage flowing into the river through open drains and divert them for treatment.
- Sewage Treatment Plants for treating the diverted sewage.
- Low cost sanitation works to prevent open defecation on riverbanks.
- Improved wood crematoria to conserve the use of wood and will help in ensuring proper cremation of bodies throughout the burning ghats.
- River Front Development works such as improving the bathing ghats etc.

Review Of Annual Plan 1999-2000

20. Under the Ganga Action Plan, Phase-I which is nearing completion, an amount of Rs.452 crore has so far been spent as against the project outlay of Rs.462.04 crore. The Ganga Action Plan, phase-II with total project cost of Rs.1276.26 crore includes five components, the progress of which is given below:

- The physical progress achieved under the Yamuna Action Plan so far is 91.34 per cent and it is likely to be completed by June 2000.
- About 269 mld of sewage is targeted to be intercepted, diverted and treated under the Gomti Action Plan and the physical progress achieved under the Gomti Action Plan so far is about 40 per cent and an amount of Rs.8.91 crore has been spent as against the outlay of Rs.58.11 crore.
- Under Damodar Action Plan (DAP), pollution abatement works are being taken up in 12 towns. About 68 mld of sewage is targeted to be intercepted, diverted and treated under DAP.
- Under Ganga Action Plan - Main Stem, the pollution abatement works are being taken up in 29 towns. So far no scheme has been completed under this Action Plan. Out of project outlay of Rs.378.00 crore the expenditure incurred totals to Rs.9.78 crore. About 618 mld of sewage is targeted to be intercepted, diverted and treated under this Plan.
- Ganga Action Plan - Supreme Court is working towards the abatement of pollution in 30 towns targeting to intercept, divert and treat about 162 mld of sewage. Out of the project outlay of Rs.209.90 crore, expenditure incurred is Rs.1.97 crore.
- Under National River Conservation Plan (NRCP), so far 25 schemes have been completed and out of total outlay of Rs.707.04 crore, the expenditure incurred is Rs.73.79 crore. The target of this Plan is to intercept, divert and treat about 1928 mld of sewage.
- Keeping in view the experience gained by the implementation of GAP-I, NRCP has undertaken a series of measures to improve the performance so as to avoid diversion of funds by State Governments i.e. the money will be released directly to the implementing agency; to minimise slippages on account of delays in land acquisition etc.
- A meeting of the Monitoring Committee on the NRCP was held under the Chairmanship of Member (E&F), Planning Commission, to review the progress of NRCP. During the year 1999-2000, three meetings of High Powered Committee on maintenance of Minimum flow in River Yamuna were also held under the chairmanship of Member, Planning Commission.

Annual Plan 2000-01

21. The poor performance of GAP-I has been mainly due to poor operation and maintenance of the assets created under these schemes by the State Governments, and for this purpose, the State Governments have been very clearly directed to allocate a certain part of their annual budget for operation and maintenance. For the Annual Plan 2000-01, the total outlay for NRCD is Rs.210.05 crore, (Annexure 9.1.2) out of which Rs.200.00 crore is for NRCP and Rs.10.00 crore for National Lakes Conservation Programme.

FORESTS

Review Of Annual Plan (1999-2000)

Forestry Research, Education And Training

22. Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education (ICFRE) has launched a National Research Action Plan in co-ordination with State Forest Research Institutes and has prioritised the research activities. It has been felt that dissemination of valuable research findings to the user groups is important and effective extension activities should be taken in collaboration with the State institutions. The World Bank, assisted Forestry, Research, Education & Extension (FREE) project is being implemented by ICFRE. The implementation experience of the FREE project has not been easy. It was classified as a problem project by the mid-term review mission of the World Bank because of poor project achievements, poor disbursement, procurement delays, staffing constraints and failure to comply with critical legal covenants.

Forest Inventory

23. Forest Survey of India (FSI) is involved in the preparation of State of Forest Report (SFR) including National Forest Vegetation Map once every two years using satellite remote sensing data. Six SFRs have been published so far with focus on forest cover and forest cover maps on 1:2, 50,000 scales. In order to ensure that FSI makes more meaningful contribution in the strategic planning for sustainable development of the forest resource in the country and global needs, new objectives have been set will emphasis on preparation of a comprehensive report on state of India's Forests on a 5 year cycle comprising of forest cover estimates and maps on 1:50,000 scale.

Forest Policy

24. National Forestry Action Programme has been formulated with the assistance of UNDP and FAO to operationalise the National Forest Policy, 1988. The programme has been launched and a workshop was held on "International Agencies support to NFAP- India". Separate committees have been constituted in the Ministry for the preparation of Forest Action Plan for the next 20 years and the formulation of a separate Forest Policy for the North-Eastern States.

Forest Protection

25. Forest protection should be accorded the highest priority and hence Planning Commission has suggested that forest protection should be treated as a plan item in the Annual Plan Outlay of the States and sufficient budgetary allocation should be made under this head.

Annual Plan (2000-01)

26. Several new objectives have been set in the Annual Plan for the year (2000-01). The break up of Central outlay for Forests and Wildlife is given in Annexure 9.1.3. It has been proposed to broaden the existing schemes of modern forest fire control methods and a

token amount of Rs.5 lakh has been proposed under the new scheme for strengthening State forest protection machinery.

27. A Task Force was constituted in the Planning Commission for the development of medicinal plants. Based on its recommendations, the following provisions have been made in the Annual Plan.

- Rs.4 crore has been provided for the establishment of 'Vanaspati Vans' in degraded areas.
- Rs.4 crore has been allocated to establish 200 Medicinal Plant Development Areas (MPDA).
- Rs.2 crore has been allocated for establishment of 200 Medicinal Plant Conservation Areas (MPCA) in all eco-systems, forest types and sub-types in Protected Areas.

28. A Task Force on Agro-forestry has been constituted in the Planning Commission to provide policy directives, legal support and equitable marketing system to agro-forestry. The final Report of the Task Force is under preparation.

WILDLIFE

India Eco-development Project

29. The project is implemented in seven Protected Areas with the assistance of the International Development Agency (IDA) and Global Environment Facility (GEF). The main objective of the project is to protect biodiversity through eco-development in seven Protected Areas.

30. A Mission of the World Bank which has done the Mid-Term Review of India Eco-development Project, has observed as follows

Improved Protected Area Management Component

32. Progress has been made under this component in all the sites (very limited in Palamau and Ranthambhor) with some civil works, access track improvement, soil and water conservation measures and habitat improvement works being undertaken. Preparations of Management Plans have not been given priority attention. Except in Gir, where the Management Plan is in operation, and in Buxa and Nagarhole where a draft is available, little progress has been made in the preparation of plans in the other four sites.

Village Eco-Development Component

33. Progress under this component, the heart of the project, is picking up. Eco-development committees have been formed in some villages in all the sites and some micro plans have been completed. Periyar, Gir, Buxa and Pench are well into implementation of microplans. Nagarhole has initiated credibility building investments in revenue villages and six hamlets inside the park, and have recently initiated implementation of 20 microplans. No progress in microplan implementation is seen at Palamau and Ranthambhor.

Education/Visitor Management And Impact Monitoring/Research Component

34. Activities under this component have begun in most sites except that Gir has begun to implement its research programme.

National Afforestation & Eco-Development Board (NAEB)

35. NAEB is the nodal agency for afforestation activities in degraded lands adjoining forest areas. Three major schemes operated by NAEB are:

- Integrated Afforestation and Eco-development Projects Scheme, which is 100 per cent Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
- Area Oriented Fuel-wood and Fodder Project scheme operated on 50:50 sharing between State and Central Governments.
- Plantation of Minor Forest Produce including Medicinal Plants.

Annual Plan (1999-2000)

36. Four key elements are emphasised in the above three schemes. They are promotion of Joint Forest Management, Micro planning, Improved Technologies and Monitoring & Evaluation of the Project. The watershed/catchment area approach will continue to be main basis of the schemes. The physical and financial achievements during the year (1998-99) and anticipated achievements during the year (1999-2000) under the three main schemes are shown in the Annexure 9.1.4. An evaluation by the National Centre for Human Settlements and Environment (NCHSE), Bhopal indicated certain inadequacies regarding people's participation, untimely flow of funds, etc. At present, there is little integration in the Ministry between NAEB and JFM cell.

Annual Plan (2000-01)

37. The Ministry proposes to launch a new scheme called Samanvit Gram Vanikaran Samridhi Yojana (SGVSY), which will be an umbrella scheme and will integrate the common afforestation and eco-development efforts of various ongoing schemes. All the afforestation schemes except the Area Oriented Fuel wood and Fodder Project will be re-structured and would form a component of SGVSY. Ministry also proposes to create Forest Development Agency (FDA) to streamline the fund flow to projects. FDA will provide the funnel mechanism through which assistance under various schemes would flow. The proposed physical and financial targets under the three afforestation schemes are shown in the Annexure 9.1.4.

38. Out of the three schemes run by the NAEB, the first two are similar in nature and must be merged. The Ministry should also consider running the schemes only in those States which do not have an externally aided project, or which has just completed such a project. Running the scheme in many States means dilution of efforts and confining only to a few States will help in ensuring stabilisation of the efforts made earlier in the project.