

National Afforestation Programme

Forests in India are a crucial natural resource and are the lifelines of a significant rural industry. India produces a range of processed forest (wood and non-wood) products ranging from wood panel products, pulp along with various drugs and medicinal plants. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization, U.N, wood based processing industries consume more than 30 million cubic metres of industrial wood in India. India is also the world's largest consumer of fuel-wood. Hence, protection of forests becomes even more pertinent, and concerted efforts are required to ensure the success of afforestation programs.

Extent of the Problem

- 23.07% of land area in India is under forest cover compared to 33% forest cover in USA(World Bank-2011).
- India is home to 12 % of world's recorded flora, some 47000 species of flowering and non-flowering plants.(MOEF)
- 41% of the total forest in India is already degraded, 70% of the forests have no natural regeneration, 55% of the forests are prone to fire.(National Forest Commission Report, 2006)
- 350-400 million of our population is forest dependent.(MOEF, 2006)

Objectives

- Protection and conservation of natural resources through active involvement of the community. This would include involving people right from the village level to manage the natural resources in and around the village.
- Controlling land degradation due to floods, unsustainable farming methods etc, excessive deforestation and loss of biodiversity.
- Improving the quality of life of people living in and around forest areas and improving their self-sustenance by provision of alternate livelihood options.
- Skill enhancement and capability generation for improving employability of rural people.
- Promotion of agro-forestry and development of Common Property Resources.

Framework for Implementation

The Scheme is implemented in a participatory manner using a two-tiered set up, namely the Forest Development Agencies(FDA) and Joint Forest Management Committees(JFMCs). The forest department in a state is administratively divided into territorial circles, each headed by a Conservator of forests. These are further divided into territorial and wildlife divisions. Forest divisions form the basic unit of forest administration and management.

Village Level

Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs)

It consists of a **general body**, whose members are all adults of the village subject to their willingness, and an **executive body**, which would have block forest officers as member secretaries. The President of the general body, elected by the villagers, in consultation with member secretaries of the executive body, would appoint the Treasurer. The bank account of the JFMC would be jointly operated by the treasurer and the member secretary.

JFMC would be responsible for preparation of micro-plans, choice of species to be planted, suggesting physical and financial targets, awareness generation programmes, etc.

Forest Division Level

Forest Development Agencies (FDAs)

It would be registered as Federation of all JFMCs within a territorial/wildlife forest division under Societies' Registration Act. The general body would be chaired by the Conservator of forests and would comprise of Presidents of JFMCs, non-official representative nominated by Panchayats and forest officers. The executive body comprises of the Divisional forest officer along with ex-officio members such as District Development Officer, Tribal Welfare Officer, etc.

The FDAs would be responsible for approval of plans for afforestation in forest fringe villages, evolving rules for funds created, developing guidelines for employment generation activities, coordination with District Rural Development Agencies to converge various schemes with afforestation scheme and coordination and monitoring the activities of constituent JFMCs.

Funding Mechanism



The cost norms have been worked at the wage rate of Rs 75/day. Escalation in the cost will be allowed only after ensuring that the wage rate in the state exceeds the limit of Rs 75/day. The cost norms are in terms of Rupees per Hectare

Sl. No.	Intervention	Plantation including Maintenance	Soil and Moisture Conservation	Monitoring & Evaluation	Overheads	Entry Point Activities	Total
1.	Aided Natural Regeneration(200 plants/hectare)	9750	1460	975	975	4000	17160
2.	Artificial Regeneration (1100 plants/ hectare)	17100	2565	1710	1710	4000	27085
3.	Pasture Development/ Silvopasture*(400 plants/hectare)	11100	1665	1110	1110	4000	18985
4.	Bamboo plantation (625 plants/ha.)	9300	1395	930	930	4000	16555
5.	Planting of canes (625plants/ha.)	11100	1665	1110	1110	4000	18985
6.	Mixed Plantations of trees having MFP** and medicinal value(1100 plants/ha.)	17100	2565	1710	1710	4000	27085
7.	Regeneration of perennial herbs and shrubs of medicinal value. (2000 plants/ha.)	20400	3060	2040	2040	4000	31540

*Silvopasture- Practice of combining forestry and grazing of domesticated animals in a mutually beneficial way.

**MFP (Minor Forest Produce)- This includes non timber forest produce such as bamboo, reeds, edible plants, etc.

Earning Credit through Environmental Conservation, Andhra Pradesh

Chedwai Joint Forest Management Committee(JFMC), of Kaghaznagar in Andhra Pradesh gained appreciation for environmental leadership on 1st December, 2004, by selling carbon credits to the World Bank. A cheque of Rs 24,000 and a certificate for environmental leadership was handed to the President of the JFMC. The same village was earlier notorious for smuggling of valuable teak wood from government forest to hill plain areas. The JFMC was formed in 1996, and now the same communities have become forest protectors and tree growers. They planted Kanuga (*Pongamia pinnata*) plants, through which oil is extracted, and used as a bio-fuel. This gave a boost to the village livelihood. Also, an equivalent of 200 tonnes of Carbon Dioxide as an emission was purchased by the World Bank from Chedwai under Clean Development Mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol.

Multi-faceted impact of JFMC, Kerela

Elapeedikka JFMC of Kerela has been facilitating the State Tribal Development Department in the construction of houses for the tribals in the village along with assisting the Kerela State Literacy Mission Authority in conducting adult education classes in the JFMC area. It also organizes adventure trekking through Nehru Yuva Kendras which is affiliated under Women Development Corporation which organizes training programmes for women. Furthermore, the JFMC also undertakes nursery work of supplying seedlings of Casuarina, Bamboo, and Acacia Auriculiformis to the contract farmers of Hindustan Newsprints Ltd. It also facilitates assistance in the form of micro-insurance to the members through the United India Insurance Co Ltd, which covers medical and life insurance. The JFMC also takes up agro-farming through its members for the Khadi Village and Industries Board.