

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5127
ANSWERED ON:27.08.2001
PROGRAMMES FOR POOR PEOPLE LIVING IN GAME SANCTUARY AREAS
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government have any sub-programmes & which focus on poor people living in Game Sanctuary areas, where means of livelihood is extremely limited;
- (b) if so, the details of such schemes and programmes thereof;
- (c) whether the Government have earlier made available finances for people in similar situations in the Gulf of Manner, a recognised Bio-sphere reserve;
- (d) if so, whether the Government propose to formulate similar scheme for the people living in some Game Sanctuary areas; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R.BAALU)

(a) & (b) Yes, Sir. Government of India has a programme called Eco development around National Parks and Sanctuaries including Tiger Reserves which focus on poor people living in and around National Parks and Sanctuaries including Tiger Reserves. The detailed guideline is enclosed in Annexure I.

(c), (d) & (e) Eco development is a sanctioned component of the Scheme " Bio-sphere reserves". The details of funds released under Bio-sphere reserve scheme to Gulf of Manner in the last three years are given below:

(Rs. in lakhs)

1998-99 1999-2000 2000-2001

8.05 20.40 12.00

ANNEXURE I

ANNEXURE IN RESPECT OF PART (a) & (b) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.5127 TO BE ANSWERED 27-08-2001 REGARDING "PROGRAMMES FOR POOR PEOPLE LIVING IN GAME SANCTUARY AREAS".

SUBJECT:GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CENTRALLY SPONSORED SCHEME: ECO-DEVELOPMENT AROUND NATIONAL PARKS AND SANCTUARIES INCLUDING TIGER RESERVES

To ameliorate the hardship faced by the villagers living in and around National Parks and Sanctuaries due to curtailment of their access for grazing and collection of fuelwood, bamboo, fodder, mfp, etc., due to the setting up of these protected areas, a new Centrally Sponsored Scheme : Eco development around National Parks and Sanctuaries including Tiger Reserves is being launched during the current year (1991-92). The package of programmes designed to meeting requirements of different areas to be implemented under the scheme, will demonstrate the concern of the protected area managers for the socio-economic development of the fringe or buffer zone villages and will result into greater cooperation of the residents of the villages in conservation and management of wildlife. As this scheme will involve substantial innovation and departure from conventional wildlife management with a clear aim of preserving biodiversity, careful planning and a benchmark survey of the conservation related problems of the target villages will be required for putting the scheme on ground. The following guidelines are therefore issued to facilitate the planning and implementation of the Eco development scheme.

1. THE SELECTION OF TARGET AREAS:

Considering the wide-ranging problems the scheme is designed to address, Eco development will 'a priori' be necessary for all villages and settlements located inside and on the fringes of each protected area. However, considering the extent of availability of funds and the currently limited capacity of the wildlife managers to operate the scheme, the targets presently have to be limited to only those protected areas where the man-animal conflicts and the confrontation between the villagers and the protection staff has reached an alarming stage and immediate action is required to remedy the situation. Some of the conditions for deciding the extent of an urgency could be:

- i) Protected area from where extremist engineered disturbances have been reported.
- ii) Areas subject to chronic draughts, floods, fires are other natural calamities.
- iii) Areas where the buffer zones are either non-existent or are in a badly degraded state and are unable even to partly support the demand of the local villagers for fuelwood, fodder, etc.
- iv) Villages shifted out of national parks and resettled particularly outside the core area of a Tiger Reserve.

A question has arisen whether eco development should be extended to villages inside national parks, keeping in view our policy to resettle them outside to obviate man-animal conflict. There is apprehension that extending the development benefits to these villages would provide a disincentive against shifting. While such villages, as a general principle, should not be covered under the scheme, exceptions must be made in those cases where practical problems in shifting a village exist, while the need for harmonizing the relations of the villagers with the Park Staff needs to be given a high priority. This can be decided on the basis of prevailing conditions, including the constraints of enforcing the legal requirements of translocation.

2. ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMES UNDER ECO DEVELOPMENT

Keeping in view the primary objectives of satisfying the basic needs of the local villagers and improving the productivity of the buffer zones of protected areas, there is considerable scope for innovation for designing programmes of ecodevelopment tailored to the needs of specific areas. A survey to ascertain the present socio-economic status of villages or clusters of villages around each protected area, including basic needs, the nature and extent of the conflicts with their wildlife management, etc., will need to be carried out for designing the programmes for ecodevelopment. The NWDB publication "Microplanning: A Tool for social Forestry Implementation" is a useful reference for this purpose. However, certain activities and programmes of generic nature which will be the basic components of ecodevelopment, can be taken up rightway while the survey is being conducted. These programmes can be substantially supplemented and fine-tuned after the results of the survey are known. Thus the ecodevelopment programmes would be carried out in two phases as follows:

PHASE I ACTIVITIES

These are basic ecodevelopment programmes and will comprise:

- i) Survey and preparation of management plans.
- ii) Silvipastoral development.
- iii) Raising of close-spaced fuelwood and fodder plantations of fast growing indigenous species.
- iv) Setting of livestock veterinary centers.
- v) Setting of fixed/mobile dispensaries including vaccination/ family planning clinics.
- vi) Providing safe drinking water.
- vii) Fixing of electrical /solar Street lights.
- viii) Supply of improved Chullas, solar cookers and gas plants.
- ix) Erection of physical barriers, including electric fencing to protect crops, etc. from animal depredation.
- x) Soil conservation measures like gully plugging terracing of cultivated fields, etc.
- xi) Setting up of small irrigation dams/anicuts.
- xii) Training of Staff, volunteers and village-level workers in ecodevelopment and related activities/techniques.
- xiii) Purchase of vehicles and equipment directly concerning the above activities and construction of buildings.

B) PHASE II ACTIVITIES

- i) Insurance of life, crops and property against animal depredation.
- ii) Improved dryland farming techniques.
- iii) Improvement soil productivity through measuring, soil conservation, crop rotation, etc.
- iv) Horticulture suited to local conditions including cultivation of medicinal plants and other mfps.
- v) Farming of domestic animals like pigs and poultry.
- vi) Apiculture, sericulture and pisciculture.
- vii) Setting up of cottage industries based on appropriate technology.
- viii) Providing facilities for marketing of various produce.
- ix) Education and recreation facilities aimed at explaining the role of the protected areas and wildlife management in general in maintaining land productivity, soil regime, etc.
- x) Study of the culture and traditions of the local communities to establish the link between their lifestyles and maintenance of ecological equilibrium.

Additional innovation activities, e.g. as an outcome of the socio-economic survey, can also be taken up with the prior approval of the /Director of Wildlife Preservation, Government of India.

3. IMPLEMENATATION AGENCY

The scheme will be implemented by the Wildlife Wings of the State Forest Departments through the officers-in-charge of the protected areas where ecodevelopment will be carried out. Because of the wide range of activities involved, it will be very essential to take help of different rural development departments the wildlife managers will have to rely on for this purpose are animal husbandry and dairy development, horticulture primary health, agriculture extension soil conservation fishery, tribal welfare, small industries, etc.. while in selected areas experts from these departments may be required to be taken on deputation for, planning/implementing the ecodevelopment programmes, it will be very important to ensure that these departments are actively associated with the scheme. It will therefore be necessary to for a district level coordination committee under the District Collector/Magistrate, with the director of the Sanctuary/national Park as the member secretary. The committee should include representatives of the cooperating departments, the NGOs involved and the concerned Gram Panchayat leaders. The Committee should meet at least one in two months and the minutes of the meetings should be included in the proposals for central assistance under the scheme. The State Government may consider payment of a modest honorarium to the committee members for attending the committee meetings and the expenditure on this account can be charged to the scheme.

Since the ecodevelopment scheme is aimed primarily at the welfare of the forest-side communities, it will be necessary to involve NGOs with proven track records in rural development programmes in the scheme, as also in monitoring the programmes under the scheme. Socio -economic surveys, popularising smokeless Chullas or running of education centers can be directly entrusted to them after an agreement about terms and conditions of such collaboration have been worked out. It would be advisable to have the names of participating NGOs approved by the State Governments.

4. PLANNING FOR ECODEVELOPMENT

As ecodevelopment is integral part of development of a Sanctuary or a national park, it is necessary that activities under the scheme, like other activities for wildlife management are planned adequately both on a perspective (5-10) years) and on an annual basis. It may be difficult to formulate perspective ecodevelopment plan at this stage because of the innovative nature of the plan at this stage because of the innovative nature of the work and lack of adequate information. The wildlife Institute of India will be shortly launching special training programmes in ecodevelopment, concurrent with the setting up of state level planning cells under a new Centrally Sponsored Scheme being initiated for this purpose. It is expected that the State governments will be taking maximum advantage of these new initiatives. For the present it may be useful to add a chapter on ecodevelopment in the management plan of the sanctuary/national park/tiger reserve. The following could be the contents of this chapter.

ECO-DEVELOPMENT

I. BASIC INFORMATION:

- i) Names of villages, with populations and live stock population, proximity to protected areas.
 - ii) Economic status of the residents, their main sources of livelihood.
 - iii) General conditions of the buffer areas, e.g. extent of degradation and capacity to meet the resource demands of the local communities.
2. An analysis of the demand of the local communities for fuelwood, fodder, bamboos, mfp, etc. and the local availability of these resources. This will also cover the extent of reduction in availability of these resources due to establishment of the national Park/sanctuary.
 3. The extent and nature of conflicts between the wildlife management and the villagers. There could be a different account for each villages. If there have been incidence of serious

damage to life and property due to animal depredation, they should be listed.

4. Past attempts at ecodevelopment with analysis of their success.
5. List of activities/programmes proposed for each village or cluster of villages, with budget estimated, yearwise.
6. Development agencies involved in implementing the programmes and the mechanisms to be set up to ensure involvement and coordination of these agencies.
7. NGOs associated with the programmes and nature of collaboration with them. A list of such NGOs should be appended as also a copy of the agreement to be entered into by the NGOs. A list of such for specific activities.
8. Method/mechanism for the monitoring of the ecodevelopment programmes.

5. RECURRING EXPENDITURE

Central assistance will be made available for meeting 50% cost on account of maintenance of buildings, vehicles and other equipment purchased under the scheme and salary etc. of additional/incremental staff appointed for running the scheme.