

Future Initiatives

MoEFCC, MoA, FAO and GEF is in the process of developing a program on "Achieving Transformational Change in Policy and Practice for Sustainable Agriculture and Allied Sectors in India". Primarily linked to the National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture, this program aims to create a strategic 'environmental conservation space' in the field of agricultural sustainability. About 800,000 ha of globally significant biodiversity-rich areas will be brought under climate-smart agricultural practices.

One of the sub-projects of this program aims at stabilising and ecologically restoring Thar's desert ecosystem while improving the living conditions of the local population of Barmer and Jaisalmer in western Rajasthan. The following measures are proposed:

- ❖ Ecological restoration of degraded arid/semi-arid zone pastoral rangelands, revival of traditional community practices of forest, land and water management and effective management of large livestock populations, herders and their requirements.
- ❖ Protecting arid zone farming systems and enhancing livelihood security through plantation of shelterbelts (trees, shrubs and grasses) to address threats to agriculture from shifting sand dunes and wind erosion, as well as the adoption of sustainable agriculture practices including land and water management and building resilience to climate change.
- ❖ Addressing conflicts between wildlife and communities as well as threats to globally significant biodiversity by developing mechanisms and interfaces for community-based enterprises and livelihood-linked conservation for reduced conflicts and enhanced livelihood security within and around the Desert National Park.

The project aims at developing self-sustainable and replicable models for addressing land degradation issues in the desert ecosystem.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India (GoI) is the National Focal Point for the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is the funding mechanism of UNCCD providing incremental financial support for addressing Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought (DLDD) related issues. MoEFCC is India's GEF Operational Focal Point.

The Ministry, in collaboration with other agencies is working towards attaining Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) through various initiatives across the country.



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INDIA SLM Journey



SLM Stories from the Field

- ❖ The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Indian Council of Agricultural Research, WB and GEF have piloted several innovative practices to promote learning, knowledge exchange and informed decision-making for management of natural resources across the country.
- ❖ MoEFCC, FAO and GEF with local partners promoted an innovative approach of natural resource management by empowering local communities with necessary skills and knowledge to adapt to climate variability in seven drought-prone districts of State of Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ MoEFCC, Soil and Water Conservation Directorate, State of Nagaland, UNDP and GEF together piloted a participatory land-use planning tool. This led to the formation of land-use committees, inclusion of women in these committees and Codification of Community land-use decisions, while empowering local decision-making processes to address conservation challenges. The vegetative cover of approximately 34,047 ha of shifting cultivation land across 70 villages has improved, more than 2100 ha of shifting cultivation land has been converted to community forest area, soil erosion rate has decreased from 50 to 26 mt/ha/year and there has been a 20% increase in the average income of 8,523 households. The State Government is scaling up implementation of learning's from the pilot.
- ❖ MoEFCC, Government of Madhya Pradesh, UNDP and GEF successfully involved local communities in rehabilitating degraded bamboo forests. In 2010-11, 789 families were allotted degraded bamboo clumps in more than 4,000 ha for restoration. The income from the sale of bamboo will be shared by these families and the Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs), thus developing ownership and interest within the local community. It is estimated that approximately 0.3 to 0.4 million bamboo will be obtained annually, which can be used by the community as fodder for livestock and as an income-generating resource.
- ❖ MoEFCC, Watershed Directorate of Uttarakhand state, WB and GEF involved vulnerable communities in restoring and sustaining ecosystem functions in the Uttarakhand Himalaya Watersheds as a basis for enhancing income, food and livelihood security. The State Government has authorized Community Forests to undertake conservation activities in Reserve Forest Areas while allowing convergence with line departments.



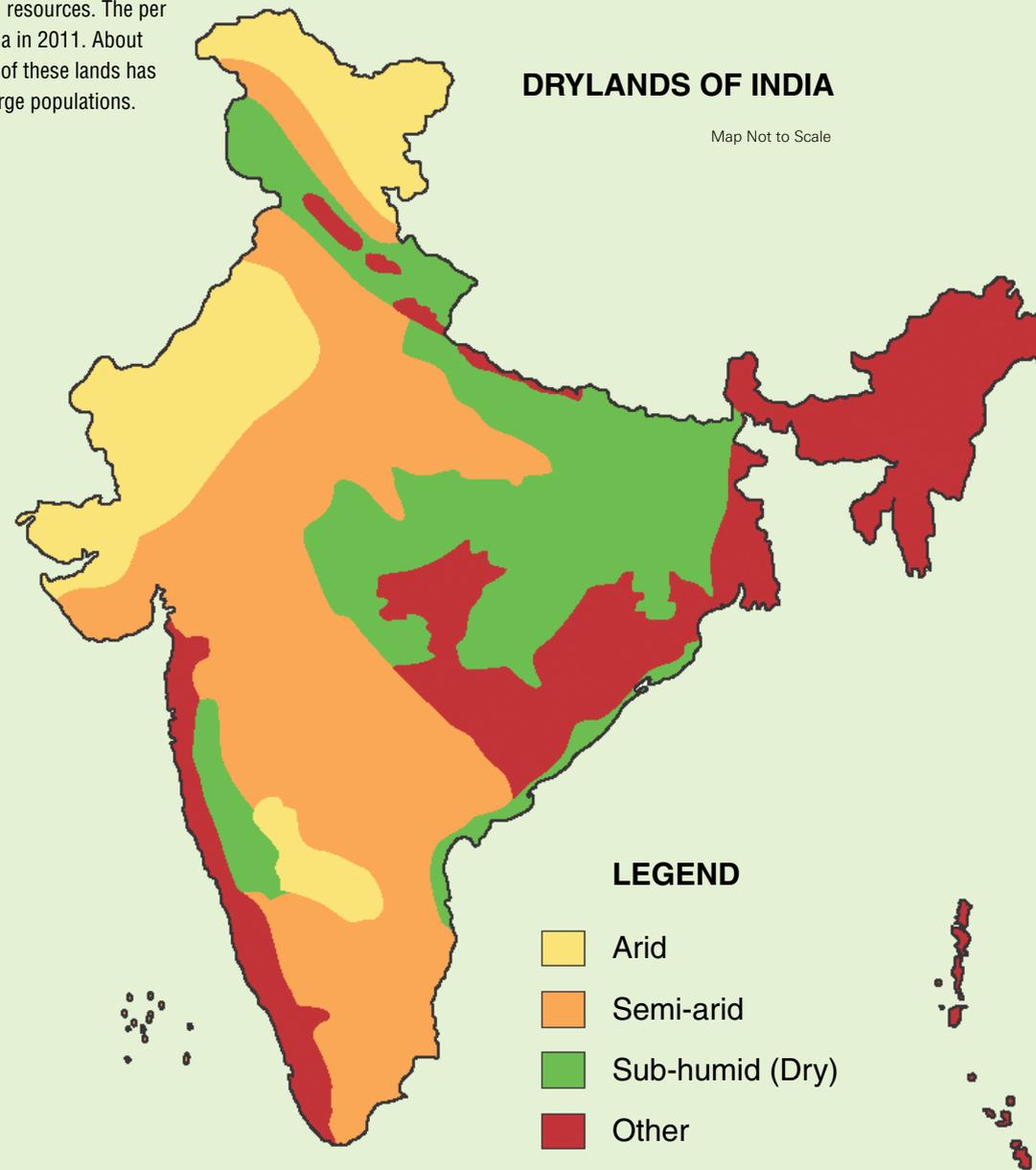
Green India Mission

India, with 2.4% of the world's geographical area, hosts over 17% of human and over 18% of the cattle population of the world, putting a stress on the country's finite land resources. The per capita availability of land in India has declined from 0.89 ha in 1951 to 0.27 ha in 2011. About 69% of the total geographical area of the country is dryland and degradation of these lands has severe implications for the food, nutrition and livelihood security of India's large populations.

The National Mission for a Green India (GIM) is one of the eight Missions outlined under the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC). It aims at increasing forest/tree cover on five million hectare forest and non-forest land, improving the quality of five million hectare of forest cover, improving ecosystems and services including biodiversity, hydrological services and carbon sequestration while augmenting the income of about three million households (around 1 % of total households in India). GIM follows a cross-sectoral convergence approach on "greening" which goes beyond plantation activities. The intervention sites are selected on the basis of vulnerability to climate change and potential of areas for enhancing carbon sinks. The local communities and Joint Forest Management Committees are the main drivers of this program at the grass root level.

The implementation of GIM has commenced in four states namely Uttarakhand, Punjab, Karnataka and Chhattisgarh. The other states in the pipeline are: Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Kerala, Jharkhand, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Sikkim, Tripura and Bihar.

MoEFCC with WB and GEF, is developing an 'Ecosystem Services Improvement Project' which is linked to GIM with the aim of directly treating about 250,000 ha of degraded forestland to enhance forest ecosystem services and improve the livelihoods of forest-dependent communities in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.



Source: Agro-Ecological Subregions of India, NBSS&LLP (ICAR), Nagpur



Government of India's other major initiatives

- ❖ Integrated Watershed Management Programme by Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)
- ❖ Accelerated Fodder Development Programme of MoRD
- ❖ Rainfed Area Development Programme of MoRD
- ❖ National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas of MoRD
- ❖ Soil Conservation in the Catchments of River Valley Project & Flood-prone River of MoRD
- ❖ Reclamation and Development of Alkali & Acid Soils of MoRD
- ❖ Watershed Development Projects in Shifting Cultivation Areas of MoRD
- ❖ Natural Resources Census Project of Department of Space
- ❖ National Afforestation Program of MoEFCC
- ❖ National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture of Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)
- ❖ National Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture of MoA
- ❖ National Livestock Mission of MoA
- ❖ Rashtriya Gokul Mission under National Programme for Bovine Breeding and Dairy Development of MoA
- ❖ Traditional Agriculture Development Programme of MoA
- ❖ National Initiative on Climate-resilient Agriculture of MoA
- ❖ National Agriculture Innovation Program of MoA

Promoting Entrepreneurs

The State Government of Meghalaya is trying to promote local entrepreneurial skills through its Integrated Basin Development and Livelihood Promotion Program (IBDLP). IBDLP is a people-centric program trying to promote alliances with 'entrepreneurs' and 'development partners' to facilitate the sustainable utilization of basin resources, ensuring livelihood security and inclusive growth. The implementation period of IBDLP is co-terminus with the XII plan period (2012-17).

The program has four key elements: knowledge management, natural resource management, entrepreneurship development and good governance. The nine missions under this program are aquaculture, horticulture, livestock, sericulture, tourism, forestry & plantation crops, apiculture, energy and water. Each mission aims to leverage the natural advantages of the state, generate livelihood opportunities for every household and accelerate economic growth. The basic strategy is to strengthen the local population through an area-wise (basin) approach and build the necessary platforms required to deliver inputs for different productive activities. IBDLP seeks to expose stakeholders to practical aspects, which will enable them to exploit proven technology, through the entire value chain, right from the input to the marketing stage.

