

CHAPTER III

APPRAISAL OF PERFORMANCE OF MAJOR PROGRAMMES

NATIONAL AFFORESTATION & ECO-DEVELOPMENT BOARD

In 1985, the Government established a National Land Use and Wastelands Development Council under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister. Under this Council, two Boards had been set up: the National Land Use & Conservation Board in the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Wastelands Development Board under the Ministry of Environment & Forests. In 1992, the National Wastelands Development Board was placed under the newly created Department of Wasteland Development in the Ministry of Rural Development with the mandate to develop non-forest wastelands.

Under the Ministry of Environment & Forests, a separate National Afforestation & Eco-development Board (NAEB) was set up with the principal aim of bringing under productive use the degraded forest lands and lands adjoining forest areas so as to restore ecological balance. The broad goals of NAEB are:

- Regeneration of degraded forest lands and lands adjoining forest areas.
- Evolving appropriate mechanisms for ecological restoration and for expanding work of eco-development in degraded forest areas.
- Special emphasis on the ecologically fragile areas like Western Himalayas, Aravallis, Western Ghats etc.
- Increase biomass availability especially of fuelwood and fodder.
- Restore the ecological balance.

For the Eighth Five Year Plan, an outlay of Rs. 275 crores has been approved by the Planning Commission for the NAEB. For 1993-94 an outlay of Rs. 98 crores has been approved.

2. GANGA ACTION PLAN

The Ganga Action Plan was launched in 1986. This was to improve the water quality of river Ganga to the bathing standards, using a multi-pronged strategy. It was to be financed with central assistance as 100 per cent grant-in-aid. This Action Plan envisaged interception and diversion of waste water reaching the Ganga and installation of Sewage Treatment Plants Units for treatment of this wastewater. It also included other pollution control activities such as solid waste management, installation of electric crematoria, river front development and provision of low cost sanitation facilities. In 25 Class-I cities located along with river. The plan also laid great emphasis on public awareness to participate to keep the Ganga clean.

2. An apex body, named as the Central Ganga Authority, was set up under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister to oversee the implementation of the Action Plan and coordinate the efforts of the various agencies involved at the Central and State levels. A steering committee was constituted to monitor the progress of works and to sort out the various agencies involved at the Central and State Action Plan. A Monitoring committee was also constituted to ensure scientific input into the Ganga Action Plan in respect of improvement in the water quality. Ganga Project

Directorate was set up as a part of the Ministry of Environment & Forests to service the Steering Committee, the Monitoring Committee, the Monitoring Committee and the Central Ganga Authority.

3. Most of the schemes of Phase-I of the Ganga Action Plan were targeted to be completed by the end of the VII plan and a total budget provision of Rs. 140 crores was made for this purpose.

4. Under the Ganga Action Plan, a total of around 261 schemes have been sanctioned after the detailed schemes were prepared at a cost of Rs. 348.46 crores and an expenditure of Rs. 322.20 crores has been incurred till the end of December 1992. It is expected that the revised cost of these schemes will go up to Rs. 400 crores approximately. Out of the 261 schemes under the Ganga Action Plan, 192 schemes have been completed. The implementing agencies and the State Governments have been asked to ensure that by December 1993 all of these should be completed. However, 13 schemes mostly relating to interception and diversion and sewage treatment plants are likely to go beyond December, 1993. These schemes have been delayed due to problems in land acquisition, poor response from tenders, litigation by contractors, and law and order problems.