

21

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(1998-99)**

TWELFTH LOK SABHA

**MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT
(DEPARTMENT OF WASTE LANDS DEVELOPMENT)**

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS
(1998-99)**

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TWENTY-FIRST REPORT

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**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

COMMITTEE ON URBAN & RURAL DEVELOPMENT

(1998-99)

Corrigenda to the 21st Report

(12th Lok Sabha)

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TWENTY-FIRST REPORT
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(1998-99)

(TWELFTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT
(DEPARTMENT OF WASTELANDS DEVELOPMENT)

*[Action Taken Report on the Second Report of the Committee
on Urban and Rural Development (1998-99)]*



Presented to Lok Sabha on 22.4.1999
Laid in Rajya Sabha on 23.4.1999

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

April, 1999/Chaitra, 1921 (Saka)

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COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
URBAN & RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(1998-99)

Shri Kishan Singh Sangwan — *Chairman*

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Lok Sabha

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- *3. Shri Tariq Anwar
4. Dr. Shafiqur Rahman Barq
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*Nominated w.e.f. 18.3.99 *vice* Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay.

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45. Shri Suryabhan Patil Vahadane

SECRETARIAT

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. Shri G.C. Malhotra | — | <i>Additional Secretary</i> |
| 2. Shri S.C. Rastogi | — | <i>Director</i> |
| 3. Smt. Sudesh Luthra | — | <i>Under Secretary</i> |

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Urban and Rural Development (1998-99) having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present the Twenty First Report on Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Second Report of the Standing Committee on Urban and Rural Development (1998-99).

2. The Second Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 7th July, 1998. The replies of the Government to all the recommendations contained in the Report were received on 6th October, 1998. The replies of the Government were examined and the Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 30th March, 1999.

3. An analysis of the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Second Report of the Committee (Twelfth Lok Sabha) is given in Appendix-II.

NEW DELHI;
14 April, 1999

24 Chaitra, 1921 (Saka)

KISHAN SINGH SANGWAN,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on
Urban & Rural Development.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Committee on Urban and Rural Development (1998-99) deals with the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in their Second Report on Demands for Grants (1998-99) of the Department of Wastelands Development of the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment which was presented to Lok Sabha on 7th July, 1998.

2: Action taken notes have been received from the Government in respect of all the 15 recommendations which have been categorised as follows:—

- (i) Recommendations/Observations that have been accepted by the Government:—

Sl. Nos. 2.6, 2.8, 2.18, 2.20, 2.21, 2.25, 2.27, 2.31, 2.33, 2.35, 3.7 and 3.10

- (ii) Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue:—

Sl. Nos. Nil

- (iii) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee:—

Sl. Nos. 2.4, 2.19 and 3.4

- (iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited:—

Sl. Nos. Nil

3. The Committee will now deal with the action taken by the Government on some of the recommendations in the succeeding paragraphs.

(A) Execution and Implementation of the Various Schemes of the Department of Wastelands Development

Recommendation (Para No. 2.4)

4. The Committee in their earlier recommendation had observed as under:

“The Committee observes that the meagre outlay of Rs. 95.00 crore for the Department of Wastelands Development was reduced to Rs. 66.00 crore at RE Stage during 1997-98. They note with concern the reasons furnished by the Department for the reduction in outlay that they were unable to release proportionate funds under ongoing projects in various schemes and also for want of new projects under IWDP. It is observed that for getting the lesser allocation for the different schemes the responsibility lies on the shoulders of the Department itself. They feel that for getting the proposed outlay the Government should review from time to time the implementation of the various projects undertaken in different States/UTs so as to find out the reasons/shortcomings for the slow implementation of the various projects/schemes. They therefore, recommend that more stress needs to be given to the execution and implementation of the projects/schemes of the Department.”

5. The Ministry in their action taken reply have stated as follows:

“The observations of the Committee have been noted under the IWDP Scheme, the funds are released on project to project basis. The utilisation of funds for wastelands development during 1997-98 was not satisfactory due to low priority accorded to the scheme by the concerned State Govts./DRDAs. The review of implementation of project is carried out from time to time during the course of High Level meetings with the senior officers of the State Govts. at New Delhi. Officers of the Department of Wastelands Development (DOWD) also visit various States to see the progress of implementation of the projects. During such visits necessary corrective measures are also suggested to Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs) for timely and successful implementation of the projects.”

6. The Committee are unhappy to note that the Government instead of taking steps to rationalise the utilisation of funds have tried to justify reduction in the outlay on the ground of low priority accorded to the Scheme by the concerned State Govts./DRDAs. While appreciating the steps taken by the Department to review the implementation of the projects, the Committee would like that Department should take firm steps for successful implementation of the projects in view of the severity and magnitude of vast wastelands in the country.

B. Outlay for Ninth Plan

Recommendation (Para No. 2.6)

7. The Committee had recommended as under:

"The Committee note that keeping in view the estimated requirement of funds of the order of Rs. 8500 crore per annum at the current prices an outlay of Rs. 467.29 crore as finalised by the Planning Commission for 9th Plan is not sufficient. They, therefore, will like to recommend that the outlay of the Department for 9th Plan should be substantially enhanced."

8. The Government in their action taken note have stated as below:

"Taking into consideration the magnitude of the problem of wastelands in the country, the working group for 9th Five Year Plan constituted by the Planning Commission has recommended an outlay of Rs. 3755 crore for treatment of 31.7 lakh ha. of wastelands during the 9th Five Year Plan. For Annual Plan (1997-98) the Group recommended an outlay of Rs. 244.3 crore for development of 4.7 lakh ha. of wastelands. However, during discussion in Planning Commission for Annual Plan (1997-98), the Planning Commission allocated Rs. 95 crore only to this Department for development of Wastelands during 1997-98. Subsequently Planning Commission finalised an allocation of Rs. 467.29 crore to this Department for development of wastelands during 9th Five Year Plan. The observations of the Committee will be brought to the notice of the Planning Commission at the time of consideration of Annual Plans/9th Plan."

9. While noting the efforts made by the Government for getting higher outlay for the different schemes of the Department, the Committee express their concern for the meagre allocation of Rs. 467.29 crore for 9th Plan as finalised by the Planning Commission. Considering the magnitude of the problem of wastelands in the country, they would like that the concern of the Committee should be brought to the notice of the Planning Commission while pursuing for the higher allocation.

C. Involvement of Owners of Private Wastelands in the Respective Schemes of the Department

Recommendation (Para No. 2.19)

10. The Committee had observed as below:

"The Committee also feel that for the development of private wastelands the owners of such lands should also be involved in the process. With a view to encourage owners of private wastelands to develop their wastelands, the Government should consider to provide subsidy on purchase of gypsum as was being done by the Ministry of Agriculture in Uttar Pradesh. The Committee will like to be apprised of the Government's reaction in this regard."

11. The Government in their action taken reply have stated:

"Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Agriculture and Cooperation) is undertaking reclamation of alkaline soils (usar lands) in large areas of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. DOWD undertakes only pilot projects under Technology Extension Scheme with technical and financial support."

12. The Committee note that on their recommendation to involve owners of private wastelands in the process of developing wastelands in the country, the Government have provided the information in respect of existing position of Ministry of Agriculture. The Committee are not satisfied with the reply furnished by the Government and would like that the Government should reconsider their recommendation to involve the owners of private wastelands in the process of developing wastelands

D. Corrective Steps to Improve the Implementation of Various Projects

Recommendation (Para No. 2.33)

13. The Committee had recommended as under:

“The Committee note that DRDAs are not able to pay due attention to the projects undertaken under one of the biggest schemes of the Department *viz.* IWDP thus resulting in slow progress of the scheme. The Committee therefore, recommend that Government should in consultation with State Governments make a study of the work load on DRDAs and to take corrective steps to improve their efficiency so as to bring improvement in the implementation of various projects and schemes funded by the Centre.”

14. The Government in their action taken note have stated as follows:

“Integrated Wastelands Development Project (IWDP) Scheme is being implemented only by those DRDAs where wastelands exist. In order to improve the efficiency of DRDAs, a Committee under the chairmanship of AS & FA was constituted by the Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment. The Committee has since submitted its report to the Govt. The recommendations of the Committee are under active consideration of the Government.”

15. While noting the reply the Committee would like to be apprised of recommendations made by the Committee constituted by the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment to improve the efficiency of DRDAs and final decision taken by the Government in this regard.

E. Physical and Financial Achievement under Integrated Wastelands Development Project Scheme

Recommendation (Para No. 3.4)

16. The Committee in their earlier recommendation had observed as under:

“The Committee note that there is a decline in the achievement of physical and financial targets under the IWDP during

1997-98 as compared to 1996-97. They will like to be informed of the reasons for this shortfall and corrective steps taken by Government in this regard."

17. The Ministry in their action taken reply stated as follows:

"Implementation of IWDP scheme is done through the District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs) which are not according due priority to this programme. The DRDA officials are being sensitized through workshops, seminars and trainings etc."

18. The Committee note that the Government instead of taking the corrective steps to increase the physical and financial achievement under IWDP, the flagship scheme of the Department, have tried to justify the shortfall on the grounds that DRDAs are not according due priority. They take serious note of the way the Government have tried to side-track the recommendation and would like that concrete steps should be initiated to improve the efficiency of DRDAs for the proper execution and implementation of the scheme.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Para No. 2.6)

The Committee note that keeping in view the estimated requirement of funds of the order of Rs. 8500 crore per annum at the current prices an outlay of Rs. 467.29 crore as finalised by the Planning Commission for 9th Plan is not sufficient. They, therefore, will like to recommend that the outlay of the Department for 9th Plan should be substantially enhanced.

Reply of the Government

Taking into consideration the magnitude of the problem of wastelands in the country, the working group for 9th Five Year Plan constituted by the Planning Commission has recommended an outlay of Rs. 3755 crore for treatment of 31.7 lakh has of wastelands during the 9th Five Year Plan. For Annual Plan (1997-98) the Group recommended an outlay of Rs. 244.3 crore for development of 4.7 lakh ha. of wastelands. However, during discussion in Planning Commission for Annual Plan (1997-98), the Planning Commission allocated Rs. 95 crore only to this Department for development of wastelands during 1997-98. Subsequently Planning Commission finalised an allocation of Rs. 467.29 crore to this Department for development of wastelands during 9th Five Year Plan. The observations of the Committee will be brought to the notice of the Planning Commission at the time of consideration of Annual Plans/9th Plan.

[Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment, Department of
Wastelands Development O.M. No. G—33011/53/98—
Admn. (Coord.) dated 6th October, 1998.]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph No. 9 of Chapter—I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.8)

The Committee hope that the NRSA would be able to complete the Survey of remaining districts of the country so as to give the latest and exact information about the extent of wastelands in the country by the stipulated date. They will like to be informed of the completion of the survey by NRSA.

Reply of the Government

NRSA, Hyderabad has reported that they would cover the remaining districts and thereby complete the district level wastelands mapping by the end of December, 1998. Thereafter, DOWD propose to organise a National Level Workshop involving land use—line Departments on interpretation and use of Remote Sensing Satellite Imageries and data products for wastelands development.

[Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment, Department of Wastelands Development O.M. No. G—33011/53/98—Admn. (Coord.) dated 6th October, 1998]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.18)

The Committee note that as at present Government neither have the data nor any plan for the development of wastelands which are under the ownership of private individuals. They further note that no efforts appear to have been made by the Government to channelise institutional credit and corporate investment for the development of wastelands. The Committee, therefore, recommend that Government should procure data in respect of wastelands under private ownership so that a proper programme could be chalked out for the development of such wastelands.

Reply of the Government

For building up the data base on various types of wastelands including that under private ownership, DOWD had already entrusted the work of preparation of district level mapping of wastelands to

NRSA, Hyderabad. The data covering the entire country is expected to be made available by the end of December, 1998 and thereafter DOWD will be in a position to provide the data to various user agencies/line departments at the District level.

[Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment, Department of
Wastelands Development O.M. No. G—33011/53/98—
Admn. (Coord.) dated 6th October, 1998]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.20)

They also recommend that Government should make all possible efforts to tap the institutional credit as well as corporate investment for the development of wastelands.

Reply of the Government

Institutional credit and corporate investment can be utilised under Investment Promotional Scheme (IPS) of the Department. The scheme has since been restructured and re-introduced from August, 1998 for implementation during 9th Plan.

[Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment, Department of
Wastelands Development O.M. No. G—33011/53/98—
Admn. (Coord.) dated 6th October, 1998]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.21)

The Committee have been stressing again and again that the Investment Promotional Scheme should be restructured so that this scheme could achieve the objective for which it was launched. In response to the recommendations contained in Third Report of the Committee (1996-97), the Government stated that they were making efforts to restructure the Scheme. At the same time, they also stated that the Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure) have enlisted this Scheme for weeding out during Ninth Five Year Plan period. In this background the Committee note that at last the Government have restructured the Scheme for meeting the objective and are going to reintroduce the restructured scheme during 1998-99. The Committee hope that the Investment Promotional Scheme which is reported to be restructured for reintroduction during 1998-99 will be able to contribute effectively in the development of wastelands under private ownership.

The like to be informed of the salient features of the restructured scheme as and when launched.

Reply of the Government

The restructured IPS has been restored during August, 1998. The salient features of the Scheme are as follows:—

- The scheme covers all kinds of lands belonging to private individuals including farmers, companies, trusts, Central and State Governments, Governments Undertakings, Cooperatives etc.
- The scheme attracts/mobilises/channelises funds from corporate bodies, financial institutions/banks and investment by the beneficiaries.
- To ensure availability of funds in the rural areas, more financial institutions, namely Land Development Banks, Cooperative Banks and Regional Rural Banks located in rural areas have been included.
- Priorities are given to Small and Marginal farmers and SCs/STs with maximum Central subsidy funding support ranging from 30—50% of the project cost.
- Companies/Industrial Houses, Individual/Groups of promoters are eligible to avail of maximum subsidy of Rs. 25 lakhs.
- Beneficiaries of SCs/STs need not make any promoter's contribution.
- Provision for project formulation assistance of 1% of the project cost.
- Provision for promoting/mobilising group of farmers and linkages with banks/financial institutions, at 3% of the project cost.
- No provision for investment towards non-productive activities such as farm-houses, farm-roads, administrative buildings, laboratories, labour shed, goat rearing/sheep rearing, etc.

- Financial support for (a) on-farm development activities which include soil and water conservation such as land smoothening, (b) need-based irrigation including wells and pump-sets, (c) fencing, and (d) plantations, inter-cropping etc.
- Funding support extended for pasture development and promotion of medicinal plants in addition to silvi & horti, plantations.
- The upper limit of the project cost per ha. including subsidy shall be restricted to Rs. 20,000/—
- Procedure for submission of proposals for grant of subsidy simplified without routing through State Government.
- Subsidy to be released in two installments with the first being 60% and second at 40% of the total subsidy.

[Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment, Department of Wastelands Development O.M. No. G—33011/53/98—
Admn. (Coord.) dated 6th October, 1998]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.25)

The shortfall in the forest cover is not a healthy sign as it results in various environmental problems. The Committee, therefore, recommend that with a view to have the prescribed minimum area under tree cover, the Government in Coordination with their various wings, should evolve a programme to provide a tree cover in non-forest wastelands, lying outside forest lands.

Reply of the Government

The concern of the Committee has been noted. The guidelines of the IWDP envisage that tree plantation activities should be undertaken vigorously in non-forest wastelands. DOWD has issued a circular on 20.3.1998 informing the States that forest lands farming part of watershed may also to be treated simultaneously in the projects sanctioned under various Area Development programmes of the Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment).

[Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment, Department of Wastelands Development O.M. No. G—33011/53/98—
Admn. (Coord.) dated 6th October, 1998]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.27)

The Committee feel that lack of training for various level of functionaries involved in the implementation of wastelands development can be one of the reasons for the slow progress of the implementation of various projects undertaken by the Department. They appreciate that 5% of the project funds as per the new watershed guidelines are specifically earmarked for training. They recommend that more and more training programmes should be arranged for the benefit of functionaries. The Department should also coordinate with the training institutes like NIRD in this regard. It should also be monitored and ensured that the earmarked funds are used fully and specifically for training purposes.

Reply of the Government

As already stated in the written replies, 5% of the project funds under Integrated Wastelands Development Projects (IWDP) scheme are earmarked for training for watershed development as envisaged under the common guidelines for watershed development. Department had set up a Committee on Training under the chairmanship of Shri V.B. Eshwaran, Secretary (Retd.) to go into all aspects of training for watershed development. The Committee has since submitted this reports to the Government. The Committee, *inter-alia* has recommended that SIRDs/Nodal Training Institutions as identified by the State Govts. should be utilised for training of watershed development functionaries and financial support provided by the Central Government for creation of infrastructure, recruitment of faculty etc. The DOWD has accepted this recommendation of the Committee and has requested the State Governments to forward proposals for financial support of training institutions. Sufficient funds have also been provided to NIRD for imparting training to Senior State/District level functionaries involved in watershed development programmes.

[Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment, Department of
Wastelands Development O.M. No. G—33011/53/98—
Admn. (Coord.) dated 6th October, 1998]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.31)

The Committee observe that as admitted by the Secretary during his evidence, there are number of Schemes which are being

implemented by various Departments/Ministries of Government of India, without any visible effort to avoid duplication. With a view to have better and coordinated implementation of various schemes, they recommend that the Cabinet Secretariat should expedite decision on the proposal submitted in this regard by Department of Wastelands Development. They will like to be informed of the decision.

Reply of the Government

The Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment has already initiated action for unification of all Area, Development programmes under one Division of the Ministry. As regards merger of all land based activities under various Ministries of the Government of India, Cabinet Secretariat will be reminded to expedite the decision.

[Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment, Department of Wastelands Development; O.M. No. G—33011/53/98—Admn (Coord) dated 6th October, 1998]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.33)

The Committee note that DRDAs are not able to pay due attention to the project undertaken under one of the biggest schemes of the Department *viz.* IWDP thus resulting in slow progress of the scheme. The Committee therefore, recommend that Government should in consultation with State Governments make a study of the work load on DRDAs and to take corrective steps to improve their efficiency so as to bring improvement in the implementation of various projects and schemes funded by the Centre.

Reply of the Government

Integrated Wastelands Development (IWDP) Scheme is being implemented only by those DRDAs where wastelands exist. In order to improve the efficiency of DRDAs, a Committee under the Chairmanship of AS&FA was constituted by the Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment. The Committee has since submitted its report

to the Govt. The recommendations of the Committee are under active consideration of the Government.

[Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment, Department of
Wastelands Development O.M. No. G—33011/53/98—
Admn. (Coord.) dated 6th October, 1998]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph No. 15 of Chapter-I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.35)

The Committee recommend that for taking the full benefit of the advanced technology available in the field and used by other countries a comparative study of the achievement made in the field under the scheme should be made by the Government with reference to the achievements made by other countries in the field of wastelands development.

Reply of the Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted. A comparative study of the achievements made in wastelands development in India *vis-a-vis* advance technology available in other countries in the field will be carried out in consultation with concerned ministries/departments of Govt. of India and State Governments. DOWD is already implementing two pilot projects in Rajasthan for transfer of Israeli technology on the Jojoba plantations. The main objective of the project is to study the feasibility of the Jojoba plantation in arid zone. The design, layout of drip system, planting of materials, agro management practices etc. are undertaken as per the Israeli technology.

[Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment, Department of
Wastelands Development O.M. No. G—33011/53/98—
Admn. (Coord.) dated 6th October, 1998]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.7)

The Committee recommend that monitoring of various schemes of the Department should be strengthened so that all information relating to a scheme is furnished to them by the Implementing Agencies in time. They also recommend that the Performance Budget of the

Department should contain information regarding funds released by Centre, expenditure incurred and unspent balance if any, about a scheme sanctioned by them.

Reply of the Government

There is an inbuilt provision for Monitoring and Evaluation of projects under various schemes of the Department. Independent Evaluators are also deputed by this Department for evaluation of various projects before release of the second or subsequent instalment of the Project Fund. Impact assessment of completed projects are also undertaken through reputed Institutions/N.G.Os. etc. Recently, the Department has written to State Governments for setting up of a permanent Monitoring and Evaluating Cell at the State level for monitoring and evaluation of various Area Development Programmes.

The Committee's observation that the Performance Budget should contain information regarding funds released by Centre, expenditure incurred and unspent balance if any has been noted and in future this information will be incorporated in the performance budget.

[Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment, Department of Wastelands Development O.M. No. G-33011/53/98—Admn. (Coord.) dated 6th October, 1998]

Recommendation (Para No. 3.10)

The Committee note that the outlay earmarked for the schemes of the Department other than IWDP is marginal. Besides the performance is also not very encouraging. They would like to recommend that Government should give a fresh thinking to these schemes and try to find out the shortcomings in their implementation so that corrective steps could be taken by them to make these schemes effective.

Reply of the Government

The observation of the Committee has been noted. Position in regard to schemes other than IWDP is as follows:

(i) Support to NGOs/VAS:

This scheme has been transferred to CAPART during 1997-98. The Department is left with only 274 ongoing

projects which are being implementing by Cooperatives/ Trusts etc. All these projects are being reviewed and corrective measures for timely implementation of the projects are being taken. Necessary action, wherever required, against the defaulting NGOs is being taken on case to case basis.

(ii) Technology Development, Extension & Training Scheme (TDET):

The objective of the TDET Scheme is to provide scientific inputs and extending the technologies for wastelands development on sustainable basis. The scheme provides support to IWDP scheme and there is not much scope for enhancing the budgetary allocation. ICAR has advised that for the scheme of this nature, about 10% of the cost of development schemes *viz.* IWDP should be provided every year. As such, the allocation of Rs. 8 crore for TDET scheme during 1998-99 is about 10% of the budget of IWDP scheme.

(iii) Investment Promotional Scheme (IPS):

This scheme in its original form has been discontinued on the basis of direction of the Standing Committee of Parliament. The Scheme has since been restructured and revised guidelines issued in August, 1998. Chief Secretaries of State Governments have been requested to give wide publicity and provide technical assistance for implementation of this scheme. NABARD has been requested to pursue the nationalised banks for flow of credit support. During 1998-99 an amount of Rs. 1.60 crore has been allocated for implementation of this scheme. There is a scope for utilisation of more funds under the Scheme in the coming years.

(iv) Wastelands Development Task Force:

This scheme has since been discontinued during the 9th Five Year Plan. However, the existing project at Murena (MP) will continue to be funded. It has been decided to complete the existing project by the end of March, 1999 and windup the scheme.

[Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment, Department of Wastelands Development O.M. No. G-33011/53/98— Admn. (Coord.) dated 6th October, 1998]

CHAPTER III

RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF GOVERNMENT'S REPLIES

— NIL —

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

Recommendation (Para No. 2.4)

The Committee observes that the meagre outlay of Rs. 95.00 crore for the Department of Wastelands Development was reduced to Rs. 66.00 crore at RE Stage during 1997-98. They note with concern the reasons furnished by the Department for the reduction in outlay that they were unable to release proportionate funds under ongoing projects in various schemes and also for want of new projects under IWDP. It is observed that for getting the lesser allocation for the different schemes the responsibility lies on the shoulders of the Department itself. They feel that for getting the proposed outlay the Government should review from time to time the implementation of the various projects undertaken in different States/UTs so as to find out the reasons/shortcomings for the slow implementation of the various projects/schemes. They, therefore, recommend that more stress needs to be given to the execution and implementation of the projects/schemes of the Department.

Reply of the Government

The observations of the Committee have been noted. Under the IWDP Schemes, the funds are released on project to project basis. The utilisation of funds for wastelands development during 1997-98 was not satisfactory due to low priority accorded to the scheme by the concerned State Govts./DRDAs. The review of implementation of projects is carried out from time to time during the course of High Level meetings with the senior officers of the State Govts. at New Delhi. Officers of the Department of Wastelands Development (DOWD) also visit various States to see the progress of implementation of the projects. During such visits necessary corrective measures are also

suggested to Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs) for timely and successful implementation of the projects.

[Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment, Department of
Wastelands Development O.M. No. G-33011/53/98—
Admn. (Coord.) dated 6th October, 1998]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph No. 6 of Chapter-I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.19)

The Committee also feel that for the development of private wastelands the owners of such lands should also be involved in the process. With a view to encourage owners of private wastelands to develop their wastelands, the Government should consider to provide subsidy on purchase of gypsum as was being done by the Ministry of Agriculture in Uttar Pradesh. The Committee will like to be apprised of the Government's reaction in this regard.

Reply of the Government

Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Agriculture and Cooperation) is undertaking reclamation of alkaline soils (usar lands) in large areas of Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. DOWD undertakes only pilot projects under Technology Extension Scheme with technical and financial support.

[Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment, Department of
Wastelands Development O.M. No. G—33011/53/98—
Admn. (Coord.) dated 6th October, 1998]

Comments of the Committee

(Please See Paragraph No. 12 of Chapter-I of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 3.4)

The Committee note that there is a decline in the achievement of physical and financial targets under the IWDP during 1997-98 as compared to 1996-97. They will like to be informed of the reasons for

this shortfall and corrective steps taken by Government in this regard.

Reply of the Government

Implementation of IWDP scheme is done through the District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs) which are not according due priority to this programme. The DRDA officials are being sensitized through workshops, seminars and trainings etc.

[Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment, Department of
Wastelands Development O.M. No. G-33011/53/98—
Admn. (Coord.) dated 6th October, 1998]

Comments of the Committee

(Please See Paragraph No. 18 of Chapter-I of the Report)

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL
REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT ARE STILL AWAITED

— NIL —

NEW DELHI;
14 April, 1999

24 Chaitra, 1921 (Saka)

KISHAN SINGH SANGWAN,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on
Urban & Rural Development.

APPENDIX-I

COMMITTEE ON URBAN & RURAL DEVELOPMENT (1998—99)

EXTRACTS OF THE MINUTES OF THE THIRTY NINTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 30TH MARCH, 1999

The Committee sat from 1430 hrs. to 1600 hrs. in Committee Room 'E', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Kishan Singh Sangwan — *Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Tariq Anwar
3. Shri Padmanava Behera
4. Shrimati Malti Devi
5. Shri Ramkrushna Suryabhan Gavai
6. Shri Mitha Lal Jain
7. Shri Rameshwar Patidar
8. Shrimati Jayanti Patnaik
9. Shri Gaddam Ganga Reddy
10. Dr. Y.S. Rajasekhar Reddy
11. Shri Nikhilananda Sar
12. Shri I.M. Jayaram Shetty
13. Shri Vithal Baburao Tupe
14. Dr. Ram Vilas Vedanti
15. Shri K. Venugopal

Rajya Sabha

16. Shrimati Shabana Azmi
17. Shri Nilotpal Basu
18. Shri John F. Fernandes
19. Prof. A. Lakshmisagar
20. Shri Jagdambi Mandal
21. Shri O.S. Manian

SECRETARIAT

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-------|------------------------|
| 1. Shri S.C. Rastogi | — | <i>Director</i> |
| 2. Shrimati Sudesh Luthra | — | <i>Under Secretary</i> |
| 2. ***** | ***** | ***** |
| 3. ***** | ***** | ***** |
| 4. ***** | ***** | ***** |

5. The Committee then considered the following memoranda regarding draft Action taken Reports and adopted the reports appended to these Memoranda:

- (i) Memorandum Number 16 regarding Action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the 2nd Report (Twelfth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants 1998—99 of the Department of Wastelands Development (Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment).
- (ii) *****

6. A verbatim record of the proceedings was kept.

The Committee then adjourned.

****Relevant portions of minutes, not related to the subject have been kept separately.

APPENDIX-II

[Vide Para 3 of the Introduction]

ANALYSIS OF THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE SECOND REPORT (12TH LOK SABHA)

I.	Total number of recommendations	15
II.	Recommendations that have been accepted by the Government: (Para Nos. 2.6, 2.8, 2.18, 2.20, 2.21, 2.25, 2.27, 2.31, 2.33, 2.35, 3.7, & 3.10)	12
	Percentage to the total recommendations	80%
III.	Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies: (Para Nos. Nil)	
	Percentage to the total recommendations	Nil
IV.	Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee: (Para Nos. 2.4, 2.19, & 3.4)	3
	Percentage to the total recommendations	20%
V.	Recommendations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited: (Para Nos. Nil)	
	Percentage to the total recommendations	Nil