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**STANDING COMMITTEE
ON URBAN AND RURAL
DEVELOPMENT**

(1995-96)

TENTH LOK SABHA

**MINISTRY OF RURAL
AREAS & EMPLOYMENT**

NATIONAL WASTELANDS DEVELOPMENT

TWENTY-THIRD REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

February, 1996/Magha, 1917 (Saka)

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON
URBAN AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(1995-96)

(TENTH LOK SABHA)

NATIONAL WASTELANDS DEVELOPMENT
MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS & EMPLOY-
MENT

*[Action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the
Seventh Report of the Standing Committee on Urban & Rural Development
(10th Lok Sabha)]*



11 MAR 1996

Presented to Lok Sabha on.....
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LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON URBAN & RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(1995-96)**

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* Ceased to be a Member of the Committee consequent upon his appointment as Minister in the Council of Ministers w.e.f. 11 June, 1995.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Urban & Rural Development (1995-96) having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Twenty-Third Report on the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Seventh Report of the Standing Committee on Urban & Rural Development (Tenth Lok Sabha) on "National Wastelands Development".

2. The Seventh Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 11th May, 1994. Replies of the Government to all the recommendations contained in the Report were received on 14th November, 1994. The Committee took evidence of the officials of Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment on 26th September, 1995. The Committee considered and adopted this Report at their sitting held on 4th January, 1996.

3. An analysis of the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Seventh Report of the Committee is given in Appendix III.

NEW DELHI;
7 February, 1996

18 Magha, 1917 (Saka)

PRATAPRAO B. BHOSALE,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on
Urban and Rural Development.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

1. This Report of the Standing Committee on Urban & Rural Development (1995-96) deals with the action taken by the Government on recommendations contained in their Seventh Report on 'National Wastelands Development' which was presented to Lok Sabha on 11th May, 1994.

2. Action Taken notes have been received from Government in respect of all the 26 recommendations which have been categorised as follows:—

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

Sl. Nos. 1.14 to 1.17, 2.17 to 2.20, 2.22, 2.23, 2.25, 3.13 to 3.17 and 3.20 to 3.23

- (ii) Recommendations/observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies:—

Sl. No. 2.16 and 3.18

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

Sl. Nos. 3.19

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

Sl. Nos. 1.13, 2.21 and 2.24

3. The Committee require that final replies in respect of the recommendations for which only interim replies have been given by the Government should be furnished to the Committee within three months of the presentation of this Report.

4. The Committee will now deal with Action Taken by Government on some of the recommendations.

A. Development of Wastelands

(Recommendation Para 1.13)

5. The Committee found that the Ministry of Rural Development under whose charge the Department of Wastelands Development has been placed has the overall responsibility for the development of non-forest wastelands as also responsible for laying down broad policy formulations in this regard. The Committee were of the opinion that the strategies being evolved for developing more and more wasteland in the country should be quite clear and comprehensive.

6. The Government in their reply have stated that the Department of Wastelands Development came into being in under the Ministry of Rural Development in July, 1992 and the National Wastelands Development Board (NWDB) was constituted thereafter.

Against the background of the observations and recommendations of the Standing Committee and keeping in view the very large potential for substantial increase in biomass production and employment generation and the imperatives of land and water management for sustainable development through regeneration of wastelands, a high level Committee on Wastelands Development was constituted on 07.11.94 under the Chairmanship of Shri Mohan Dharla to examine the basic issues involved in their long-term national developmental perspective about the limited perceptions of Government Departments and evolve an appropriate strategy and action plan.

7. When the Committee asked as to the present status of the report of the high level Committee headed by Shri Mohan Dharla, Secretary, Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment stated during the evidence as under:

"This Committee was originally expected to give its report in six months but the Chairman was hospitalized for a long time and therefore, there had been some delay. The Drafting Sub-Committee has also met twice and now its three of the four chapters are ready. Now, it is expected by the end of October, 1995."

8. When asked further if there was any possibility of getting an interim Report on some important areas of action by the high level Committee, in the event of further delay in submission of the report, the witness stated further as follows:—

"We do not anticipate any delay in submission of the Report. Our Joint Secretary services in that Committee and we do not anticipate any delay."

9. While noting that pursuant to the Committee's observation that new and comprehensive strategies be evolved for developing more and more Wasteland in the Country, the Government have constituted a high level Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri Mohan Dharla to inter-alia evolve an action plan for development of Wastelands in a specific time frame. The Committee, however, observe that the Mohan Dharla Committee is in the process of finalizing its report and that the Government was expecting this high level Committee to submit its Report by end of October, 1995.

The Committee understand that the Report of the Mohan Dharla Committee has been received by Government in December, 1995. They, therefore, urge that Government should process the recommendations of the Mohan Dharla Committee without further delay and implement the same

expeditiously. The Committee may also be informed of the action taken thereon within four weeks of the presentation of this Report.

B. Plan Allocations for Department of Wastelands Development

(Recommendation Para 1.14)

10. The Committee had noted that a budget of Rs. 26.41 crores for the year 1992-93 and Rs. 50 crores for the year 1993-94 was allocated to the Department while the Department of Wastelands Development posed a demand of Rs. 1165.00 crores for Eighth Five Year Plan at the rate of Rs. 233.00 crores per year.

11. The Ministry, in their reply have stated that it agreed with the observations of the Committee.

12. The Committee find that though Government agreed with the observation of Committee, they are constrained to observe that no concrete steps have been taken or are proposed to be taken to provide proper budgetary allocations to meet the huge task of developing about 936.90 lakh hectares of non-forest wastelands in the country. They further find it disturbing that Government did not take any action on the Committee's earlier recommendation contained in their Sixth Report on Demands for Grants (1994-95). Furthermore, they observe that the budget grant for 1995-96 remained stagnant at Rs. 60 crores as in the year 1994-95. They, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation and desire that allocations for the purpose of developing wastelands be substantially enhanced in the year 1996-97.

C. Conservation of Land & Water Resources

(Recommendation Para 2.21)

13. The Committee has observed that in the absence of comprehensive and periodic surveys in the country the precise quantum of soil erosion is not known. The Committee were of the view that this was one of the major causes of land degradation. There should be proper management for wind, water and flood erosion. The Committee, therefore, had recommended that a detailed study in regard to this problem may be done and the objectives should be the appraisal of erosion problem and conservation of land and water resources.

14. In their reply Government have stated that the matter of conservation of land and water resources had been taken up with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

15. Asked as to what studies have been undertaken and the details of the steps taken to address the problem of soil erosion and conservation of land, the Secretary stated during evidence as under:

"If we start making a survey for each kind of degradation then it will be an enormous exercise requiring very large resources and time. But the National Bureau of Soil Survey and Landuse Planning, Nagpur

under the Ministry of Agriculture on the basis of pilot projects, has prepared maps of lands which are in different states of degradation. They have given estimates about it. They have also said in which area which kind of degradation of land has taken place. They have categorized the degradation of land in 20 categories of both wind and water from low to high intensity of degradation and these maps are available. When watershed is taken up for improvement then depending upon the nature of degradation, the plan for the watershed development is prepared. There are a number of institutes which give training in the field of watershed management and checking of degradation of land. One is the Soil and Water Conservation Research and Training Institute (ICAR) in Dehradun. Another such institute is in Jodhpur. Both these institutes have been carrying out short-term, medium-term and long-term programmes and imparting training to staff. The adequate number of trained officers of Department of Agriculture are available in all the States and therefore, the knowledge about how to treat a particular watershed is available with all the States.

We have recently sanctioned two pilot projects also which will be undertaken by the two universities under the ICAR. Our aim is to pool all the different kinds of expertise and see to it that we develop a package of practices which can be standardized and then can be propagated throughout the country."

16. The Committee note that pursuant to its recommendation that a detailed study with regard to the problem of soil erosion and conservation of land and water resources may be undertaken, Government have taken up the matter with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. The Committee understand that based on the land maps prepared by the Bureau of Soil Survey & Landuse, the degraded lands have been categorised under 20 categories of both wind & water from low to high intensity of degradation. Based on the nature of degradation of land, the watershed development plans are prepared as also that a number of institutes are providing training in the field of wasteland management and checking of land degradation. The Committee, therefore, desire that the varied expertise gained in this area from different Universities may be pooled together and based on that a package of standardised practices be formulated and may be propagated throughout the country at the earliest in order to check the growth of wastelands and also to conserve land and water resources. They would like to be apprised of the steps taken by Government to arrest the problem of soil erosion caused by wind, water and deforestation in various States where soil erosion is growing alarmingly.

D. Treatment of Catchment Areas

(Recommendation Paras 2.22 & 2.23)

17. The Committee had observed that where the percentage of rainfall is higher and land is uneven, the percentage of soil erosion is much more.

Effective measures will have to be adopted to prevent the flow of water and soil erosion. The Committee recommended that emphasis be laid on water retention measures and a dense vegetative cover be created in the areas where the problem of soil erosion is acute due to run off water. It is also necessary to create a dense vegetative cover in the watershed areas because in the absence of impediments to the rushing water, we are having more and more flash floods every year. A better coordination between the Agriculture, Forest and Wasteland Development Departments and the other departments dealing with Water Resources was emphasised.

The Committee were also of the view that due to depletion of vegetative cover and extensive soil erosion the siltation of big reservoirs is taking place at an alarming rate and causing deterioration of their life span. The Committee recommended that it is absolutely necessary to protect these projects from siltation and to give special attention to the treatment of catchment areas.

18. In their reply, the Government have stated that it agreed with the observations and recommendations of the Committee. The matter has been taken up with the Ministries of Environment and Forests, Agriculture and Water Resources. These Ministries have been requested to initiate action on the recommendations of the Committee.

19. When asked about the manner in which accountability of the Department of Wastelands Development is being ensured, it being the nodal Ministry for Development of Wastelands, the Secretary stated during evidence as under:—

“We are in close consultation with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment and Forests to pool the knowledge available in all these departments, to see that our work is being done in coordinated manner.”

20. Asked to elaborate further, the Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment in a written reply stated as follows:

“Coordination is being ensured among the Agriculture, Forest and the Department of Wastelands Development through various mechanisms:

(i) The Secretary Agriculture and Secretary Ministry of Environment and Forests are members on the Board of National Wastelands Development Board;

(ii) In the formulation of important guidelines the Department formally consults all Ministries;

(iii) In the sanctioning of Schemes under Technology Extension the ICAR is a Member of the Sanctioning Committee and is also consulted formally on the schemes; and

(iv) Under the Common Guidelines for Watershed Development both at the State and at the district level Committees are to be set up

which would include representatives of the State Agricultural Universities, Agriculture, Irrigation, Forests and Soil Conservation Departments”.

21. When asked whether ‘treatment of catchment area’ is included to the cost of irrigation projects and if the Ministry is in any way associated with regard to appraisal of projects as also the steps taken with regard to treatment of catchment areas, the Secretary, Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment stated during evidence as follows:—

“I would like to submit that the Central Water Commission has issued guidelines for treatment of lands likely to be affected due to construction of river valley projects. The guidelines provide that the cost of treatment in respect of the land affected due to submergence should provide for acquisition and payment of compensation. Then land affected due to soil erosion and the land under direct drain should be charged to the concerned project.

The policy of the Ministry of Water Resources is that they take care of the area which is immediately drained. Efforts are needed to check the problem of the soil that will be brought from all over the catchment area and not just from the area which is directly draining into the system is very valid one. While we agree with you, we will get in touch with the Ministry of Environment and Forests and ask them as to what they have done in this regard. I have some information that they do take care of this aspect of siltation of dams under these projects.

As you know, the Ministry of Environment is charged with the responsibility of giving environmental clearance, we are not formally associated with the proposals. They consider the issue of giving environmental clearance.

Many times they are insisting on plantation in the catchment to reduce silt loads. As you have pointed out and correctly so we have not represented in any of those committees. We will ask them whether they can themselves take care of the entire aspect. We would also ask them to associate us or at least ask our comments on such projects”.

22. It is disquieting to observe from the replies furnished by Government to these recommendations that apart from taking note of the observations of the Committee with regard to treatment of catchment areas etc. and taking up the matter with the Ministries of Agriculture, Environment & Forests and Water Resources nothing concrete has emerged either by way steps to resolve the problems of soil erosion and creation of vegetative cover to arrest the recurrence of flash floods or any plan of action has been devised or put into operation to salvage the situation, though the Department of Wasteland Development of the Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment is the nodal Ministry in this regard.

They further find that the Ministry have replied to the Committee's queries in very general terms and not specified about the measures contemplated by Government. It is disturbing to find that the Department of Wastelands Development is not being formally associated in the clearance and appraisal of irrigation projects. The Committee are of the opinion that effective measures to provide vegetative cover, arresting of soil erosion and siltation of big reservoirs and dams would definitely go a long way in increasing the life span of dams as well as contributing to the irrigation potential of big reservoirs. The Committee desire that the Department of Wasteland be associated with the appraisal procedure alongwith Central Water Commission and Ministry of Environment & Forests in respect of clearance of irrigation projects. They would like the Ministry to apprise it about the specific measures initiated with regard to the Committee's earlier recommendation on the subject by the Ministries of Agriculture, Environment & Forests and Water Resources.

E. Building of Shelter-Belts in Wastelands
(Recommendation Para 2.24)

23. The Committee opined that there is urgent need to check wind erosion where the land is becoming degraded due to it. Adoption of technologies for sand stabilization, soil and moisture conservation can go a long way in improving soil environment for higher and sustained plant production. Building of shelter-belts in Wastelands during rainy season depending upon the type of the plants to be grown and soil conditions, raising of micro-crop shelter-belts with irrigation facilities wherever available can be very useful in reducing the speed of hot dry winds, evaporative loss from the soil and the crop surfaces and in checking erosion and movement of sand.

24. The Government in their reply stated that the Technology Package suggested by the Committee for sand stabilization, soil and moisture conservation and increasing productivity have been conveyed to the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Department of Agriculture and Cooperation and to the Technical Committee formulating the Technical manual for the implementation of the guidelines.

25. The Committee note that pursuant to their recommendation that technologies be adopted for checking land degradation due to wind erosion, Government have conveyed the technology package suggested by them to the Ministry of Environment & Forests and the Technical Committee for formulation of the technical manual for implementation of these guidelines. However, they are constrained to note that the reply of Government has not indicated the steps that have been taken or are being taken to build shelter-belts in wastelands during rainy season etc. as also the guidelines formulated in this regard. The Committee, therefore, would like to be apprised of the guidelines issued and the main features of the technical manual drawn in this respect. They also desire to be apprised of the steps

taken by Government for building of shelter-belts in wastelands during rainy season as recommended by them in their earlier report on the subject. The action taken in this regard may be intimated to them within three months of the presentation of this Report.

F. Land Reclamation measures in Mining Areas

(Recommendation Para 2.25)

26. The Committee opined that indiscriminate mining activity also leads to destruction of the biological potential of the land which can ultimately turn to a wasteland. The effects of such mining activities are degradation of land, reduction in agricultural land, land subsidence, development of salinity and vegetation degradation. In this regard, the Committee suggested ameliorative measures to rehabilitate the land after cessation of mining activity. It is essential that due attention be given to the hazards associated with the mining activities and to evolve appropriate reclamation measures.

27. In their reply Government have stated that the observations and recommendations have been taken up with the Department of Mines.

28. The Committee note that the Ministry had earnestly taken up the matter of land degradation due to indiscriminating mining activities with the Department of Mines. However, they have not been apprised of the measures taken either by the Ministry themselves or the Department of Mines in this regard. They, therefore, desire that they be informed of the action taken by the Department of Mines as well as the Ministry to reclaim land in mining areas as it involves the productive potential of land within three months of the presentation of this Report.

G. Evaluation of Technology Transfer Programmes

(Recommendation Para 3.19)

29. The Ministry had stated that technology development and extension is part of IWDP Scheme. The Committee had recommended that the focus may be on research and extension, especially to develop low cost technologies. Available and proven technologies should be transferred on a large scale. The Agricultural Universities and other Institutes through which the projects are under execution may be asked to suggest suitable remedies for the treatment of problem lands keeping in view the local needs and resources available. The effects of technologies transferred under the lab to land programmes may be evaluated on regular intervals, continuous identification of technological, social, financial and natural constraints of technology transfer processes may be made through survey and research.

30. The Ministry in their reply stated that the suggestions made by the Committee regarding Technology Extension form part of the Technology Extension Scheme. The broad areas that can be taken up under the Scheme are:

(a) testing of various agro-forestry models in different agro climatic zones of the country;

(b) testing cost effective technologies for increasing productivity of saline/alkaline soils through vegetative methods; and

(c) bridging the technological gaps in the reclamation of wastelands belonging to the Government, community and private lands. These projects are generally implemented by ICAR, Research Centres, State Agricultural Universities and Educational Institutions.

31. The Committee are not satisfied with the evasive and incomplete reply of the Government in that it is silent on their suggestion for undertaking periodic evaluation of the Land to Lab Programmes and also identification of the constraints being encountered in the technology transfer processes through survey and research. Further, the reply has not indicated the areas in which Technology Extension Schemes have been taken up for implementation. The Committee emphasize that Government should initiate early action in this regard. They desire to be apprised of the action taken in this matter at the earliest.

H. Reclamation, Greening and Distribution of Wastelands

(Recommendation Paras 3.21 & 3.22)

32. The Committee had recommended that Government should identify the semi-arid/semi-fertile wastelands and the same be distributed immediately to landless/rural poor (mainly Tribals/SC) to enable them earn their livelihood. The Committee further recommended that the Wastelands which are reclaimable with reasonable efforts and minimum investments should be reclaimed by the Government and be given to the landless agricultural labourers/workers on priority basis. On the other hand, the wastelands which are badly damaged and where the Government finds itself helpless in the matter of providing adequate funds for development, such land should be entrusted to Cooperatives, NGOs or Corporate Sector to develop it.

The Committee had felt that a massive campaign be launched for reclamation and greening of the wastelands. State Governments be approached for taking suitable measures for encouraging reclamation of wastelands and raising productivity of the land. Identification of badly damaged land, should be done without delay. The Committee had suggested that the land should be given on lease, while the ownership should remain intact with the original owner and the investors may be allowed to take the produce with the condition that the land usage will not be allowed to be changed for any other purpose.

33. In their reply, Government have stated the State Governments decide on policies regarding distribution of land. Further the recommendation regarding campaign for greening of wastelands has been noted for follow-up. The Land Reforms Division of the Department of Rural Development has been requested to examine the matter regarding distribution and leasing of land in consultation with State Governments.

34. The Committee note that their suggestion for distribution and leasing land had been earnestly taken up by Government with the Department of Rural Development. However, they regret to note that no mention has been made in the reply of the measures taken for identification of semi-arid/semi-fertile wastelands for further distribution to landless/rural poor including tribals and Scheduled Castes people. Further, there is no mention of the steps taken for reclaiming the reclaimable wastelands as also the involvement of Cooperatives, NGOs or Corporate Sector for development of wastelands which the Government is not in a position to reclaim or develop owing to paucity of funds etc. It need hardly be stressed here that speedy action is called for in the matter of implementation of the Committee's suggestion of distribution and leasing of wastelands. They further emphasise that to attain these objectives close coordination with State Governments is maintained so that the process of reclamation is achieved and the landless labourers/agricultural workers are benefited at the earliest with reasonable efforts and minimum investments. This is all the more imperative when viewed in the context of this Ministry being the nodal agency for development of wastelands even though the matter of distribution of land falls in the domain of the States. The Committee would like to be informed of the progress made as a result of Governments efforts in this regard.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT

(Recommendation Para No. 14)

The Committee note that the Department of Wastelands Development has posed a demand of Rs. 1165.00 crores for Eighth Five Year Plan which comes to Rs. 233.00 crores per year but a budget of Rs. 26.41 crores for the year 1992-93 and Rs. 50 crores for the year 1993-94 was allocated to the Department.

Reply of the Government

This Department agrees with the observations of the Committee.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H-11011/5/94-Parl. dated 14.11.1994]

Comments of the Committee

Please see Paragraph No. 12 of Chapter I of the Report.)

(Recommendation Para No. 1.15)

The Committee are of the view that Wastelands Development is a huge task and needs utmost attention. As the Department has the responsibility to develop two third of the total wastelands in the country, it should have posed more demand to the Planning Commission. The average rate of assistance for the development of Wastelands per hectare come to Rs. 10,000 and the Department has the responsibility for developing approximately 936.90 lakh hectares. Therefore, the Committee recommends that the Department should be given more budget in view of the enormous task it has.

Reply of the Government

The observations of the Committee have been taken note of and were also brought to the notice of the Planning Commission while making submission for funds allocations to the Department under the Annual Plan for 1995-96. These recommendations form an important part of the draft plan of the Department and would be emphasised as and when the Planning Commission calls representatives of the Department for discussions.

2. In this context, attention of the Committee is drawn to the fact that the Ministry of Rural Development has prepared Common Guidelines for all the area development schemes being implemented by the Ministry. These schemes include Drought Prone Area Programme/Desert Area Development Programme/Intensified Jawahar Rozgar Yojana/Integrated Wastelands Development Programme. The Common Guidelines flow from the Hanumantha Rao Committee Report and adopt Watershed Development approach as the over aradling principle for developing degraded lands in the country. The current indications are that

under the overall umbrella of the Ministry of Rural Development about Rs. 2,000 crores would be available in 1995-96.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H-11011/5/94-Parl. dated 14.11.1994]

Recommendation Para No. 1.16

The Committee are also of the view that the question of Development of Wastelands is intimately linked with the poverty alleviation, productive activities, employment generation and promotion of environment in the country. The Committee strongly recommend that the Planning Commission should clearly indicate the plan-wise/year-wise allocation of funds to this Department because the present pace of development and the amount available for this task will take more than hundred years to develop the existing non-forest wastelands for sustainable use. The country cannot afford to wait for such a long time. Thus, the Committee recommend that efforts should be made to complete the task within a span of 10-15 years.

Reply of the Government

The Department agrees with the observations of the Committee with regard to Magnitude of the problem, substantial requirements of funds and the linkages with poverty alleviation and other development and environment improvement programmes.

2. As indicated earlier, high level committee on wastelands development has the following reference:

- (i) evolve a comprehensive strategy and action plan for the development of wastelands in non-forest areas with reference to a time frame of 10-15 years;
- (ii) assess the level of financial resources required and suggest the ways and means and sources of raising them.

3. In the medium term, the Ministry of Rural Development under which the Department of Wastelands Development functions has taken definite initiatives for enlarging extent and reach of wastelands development programme by issuing common guidelines for development of wastelands/drought desert areas by adopting Watershed Development approach with the basic objective of land and water resource management for sustainable production.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H-11011/5/94-Parl. dated 14.11.1994]

Recommendation Para No. 1.17

The Committee also recommend that the Department of Wastelands Development should fully utilise the budget allocations and a proper planning and monitoring at regular intervals should be carried out so that the schemes are implemented more effectively.

Reply of the Government

As indicated earlier, the Department came into being in the second half of 1992 and started functioning towards the close of the year. During 1992-93 and 1993-94 the DoWD had to devote considerable time and energy to establish itself and launch the NWDB on its course, by arranging accommodation, recruiting personnel and organising various divisions within the Department. While grappling with teething troubles, the Department endeavoured to utilise the funds in full.

2. The funds utilisation position of the DoWD in the last two years has been as follows:

(Rs. in crores)

Year	Budget	Expenditure	Percentage
1992-93	26.41	24.90	94.28%
1993-94	50.00	49.96	99.92%

An amount of 60.00 crores has been allocated to this Department for 1994-95. The entire amount is likely to be utilised by 31.03.1995. As such this Department has taken effective steps to utilise the amounts allocated to it by the Planning Commission. The details of the monitoring system evolved by this Department to effectively implement the schemes is discussed in detail against recommendation/observation para 3.14.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H-11011/5/94-Parl. dated 14.11.1994]

Recommendation Para No. 2.17

The Committee further recommend that the Wastelands in the country may be got realistically identified and create a reliable data base with a view to ascertain that which particular Wastelands can be salvaged and made cultivable. In addition, maps may be prepared to be used for identifying areas to be taken for micro-planning. Field surveys should be done to collect data and prepare plans on Watershed basis keeping in view the factors like land capability, site conditions and local needs.

Reply of the Government

Discussions have also revealed that while the NRSA maps present information about different categories of wastelands, information about drainage lines, underground hydrological profiles, vegetative cover, relationship on physical contours, with human habitation are generally not available. In order to get this information, the Department and the Rural Development Ministry is in the process of discussion with ISRO and NRSA. A decision has been taken to utilise the new technology and Geographical Information System (GIS) for taking up micro planning at a block level. This information is available in different layers of maps and

data on soil profile, hydrological profile, vegetative cover can be overlaid over each other to give a composite picture in the GIS system.

2. In order to fully utilise this system there would be need for training of ground staff, availability of funds and manpower. To start with, the Ministry has decided to take up GIS based planning in 80 blocks of the 92 in DPAP districts of the country. The selection of these blocks is generally based on the criteria that blocks with larger percentage of area under wastelands will be taken up for mapping first. This work has been assigned to NRSA who would be completing this within one year with NRSA funds.

3. Based on this exercise which is a pilot programme, further extension of this programme to other areas will be considered.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H—11011/5/94-Parl dated 14.11.1994]

Recommendation Para No. 2.18

The Committee find that the pace of progress in the field of Wastelands Development has been rather slow and limited in scope. There is a lack of proper coordination between Centre and States. Though, some important initiatives have been taken in some States but at the national level this has not been given a sincere thought. The Committee feel that the whole approach to the problem should be to impart a sense of urgency and make qualitative changes in all the on-going programmes operating in the field.

Reply of the Government

This point relates to three separate issues.

(i) The first issue relates to the pace of progress. The Committee has felt that the pace of progress is rather slow and limited in scope. As far as NWDB is concerned the facts showing the progress and the funds availability every year are given below.

Year	Financial (In crores)	Physical (in ha.)
1992-93	16.73	27,000
1993-94	44.48	50,000
1994-95	49.20	55,000

It would be seen that progress is strictly based on funds availability. It is submitted that in view of the fact that the universe which the NWDB has to tackle is about 95 million hectare, the progress is insignificant. This progress can only be further speeded up with the availability of funds to the NWDB.

(ii) The second point relates to the suggestion that there is lack of proper coordination between the Centre and the States. Here it is submitted that all schemes of the Board are implemented with the cooperation of the State Governments. For instance more than 80% of the funds of the NWDB are sanctioned for the Integrated Wastelands

Development Project. The scheme is prepared by the DRDA and forwarded by the State Government to NWDB for approval. The scheme is implemented through the DRDA, Monitoring reports are sent by the DRDA through the State Governments. State Governments have been requested to set up State Level Monitoring and Review Committees. It would be seen that a high degree of coordination exists between the Centre and the States in this major Scheme of the Department. The coordination is further enhanced by Conferences at State level held often under the chairmanship of Col. Rao Ram Singh, MOS. Similar Conferences are held by the Additional Secretary and the Joint Secretary concerned.

Before launching new schemes wide scale consultations are held with the State Governments and the schemes changed/amended/improved as per the suggestions flowing from the State Governments.

(iii) (a) The third point relates to the comments that NWDB should impart a sense of urgency and make qualitative improvement on all the on-going projects already started in the field. In this point it is submitted that NWDB had inherited the following schemes:—

- (i) Integrated Wastelands Development Project Scheme including Technology Extension.
- (ii) Grant in Aid Scheme.
- (iii) Decentralised Peoples Nurseries.
- (iv) Margin Money Scheme.

(b) After the Board has considered these Schemes and in keeping with its amended mandate, the schemes have been amended as follows:

(i) The scope of IWDP Scheme has been expanded to include development of private lands which comes within the watershed and commercial plantations like cashew, rubber, tea, Jojoba etc. can be taken up.

(ii) A new scheme for Technology Extension has been approved. In the erstwhile NWDB, Technology Extension formed a part of the IWDP scheme, but in view of the new thrust that NWDB wanted to give to different schemes, it was decided to create a new scheme. This would give technical support to NWDB schemes.

(iii) The Margin Money Scheme was operated by the erstwhile NWDB scheme for eight years with limited success. Keeping in view the experience of the scheme, a new scheme called 'Investment Promotional Scheme' has been finalised.

(iv) The Grant in Aid Scheme has been under operation in its present form since 1985. It is in the process of being re-drafted and will reflect the new concerns and thrust of the Department.

(v) It has been decided to create the Wastelands Development Task Force to develop inhospitable, degraded and inaccessible ravine areas in Morena district (MP). This is a new initiative of NWDB.

It may kindly be seen from the above discussion that the Department has made efforts in imparting a sense of urgency and making qualitative changes in the schemes under implementation.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H-11011/5/94-Parl. dated 14.11.1994]

Recommendation Para No. 2.19

To check further degradation and denudation of land is an important task. On the one side we are trying to reclaim the Wastelands and on the other side more and more land is turning waste. The Government have not been able to contain this trend. Every year the cultivable land is being reduced. Due to rise in population there is a fall in the per capita land. According to one report the per capita availability of agricultural land which stood at 0.48 hectare in 1951 will be reduced to One Third, that 0.16 hectare in 2000 AD. The Departments concerned with the Land are not performing their jobs in proper coordination. Most of the schemes are salary oriented. The Committee need hardly emphasise that there should be proper planning for developing Wastelands and all the Departments should make integrated efforts in this direction to have an effective coordination at the district level throughout the country.

Reply of the Government

One of the responsibilities entrusted to NWDB is to "coordinate and monitor action plan for activities related to such wastelands in order to upgrade land quality in a systematic and cost effective manner."

2. In this connection NWDB had recently taken steps to implement this part of its mandate. This would be a dynamic and on-going process. As a first step a letter has gone from Secretary (RD) to all concerned Secretaries in Government of India and Chief Secretaries of the State Governments to send details about all such programmes being taken to develop non-forest wastelands in the country. This would include schemes funded by Government of India exclusively in collaboration with the State Governments, externally aided programmes as also schemes funded exclusively from the State Government's budgets.

3. On receipt of information, it will be synthesised and efforts will be made to take an integrated view about development of wastelands in the country.

4. The Ministry of Rural Development adopted common guidelines to ensure coordination and convergence of different programmes being implemented by it at the District/project implementation level.

5. It has been decided that the five programmes mentioned above viz. DPAP, DDP, IWDP, I-JRY (50%) and Employment Assurance Scheme (50%)

will take up Watershed development on mutually exclusive basis at the village level. Thus, a village/watershed would either be covered under DPAP or DDP or IWDP or I-JRY (50%) or EAS (50%) for its source of funding for taking up all the activities envisaged in the watershed development project. The implementation of the projects would be governed by these guidelines which shall be common for all watershed development projects under all the five programmes of the Ministry of Rural Development.

6. The common guidelines while outlining the broad contours of various implementation stages of the watershed development projects, provides sufficient operational flexibility at the State District and project levels to enable them to respond to differing situations and aspirations of the village communities and user groups.

7. The Watershed Development Programme in Drought Prone/Desert/Non-forest wastelands Areas will be implemented by taking up projects for development of watersheds of 500 hectares each (approximately) in every village in a phased manner. The aims of any project or activity comprise of a set of purposes or goals describing the benefits that would flow out the project and the likely groups of people who would benefit and end result in concrete physical terms that would be achieved by the end of the project, and a set of norms or criteria which are measurable and quantifiable to assess whether the end result has successfully achieved the purposes or not. For each such Watershed Development project, the project Objectives are as under:—

(i) To promote the economic development of the village community which is directly or indirectly dependent on the watershed through:—

(a) Optimum utilisation of the watershed's natural resources like land, water, vegetation etc. that will mitigate the adverse effects of drought and prevent further ecological degradation.

(b) employment generation and development of the human and other economic resources of the village in order to promote savings and other income-generation activities.

(ii) To encourage restoration of ecological balance in the village through:—

(a) Sustained community action for the operation and maintenance of assets created and further development of the potential of the natural resources in the watershed.

(b) Simple, easy and affordable technological solutions and institutional arrangements that make use of, and build upon, technical knowledge and available materials.

(iii) Special emphasis to improve the economic and social condition of the resource-poor and the disadvantaged sections of the watershed community such as the assetless and the women through:—

(a) More equitable distribution of the benefits of land and water resources development and the consequent biomass production.

(b) Greater access to income generating opportunities and focus on their human resource development.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H—11011/5/94-Parl. dated 14.11.1994]

Recommendation Para No. 2.20

The Committee recommend that the Wastelands Development should be done by evolving mechanism for integrated development of Wastelands in a cost effective manner and to meet the needs of the people in the rural areas in respect of fuelwood and fodder and other products like crops and fruit bearing trees. The Committee are of the opinion that it is essential to take up large scale and need-based programmes for community and Farm Forestry on nonforest lands, including Private Wastelands.

Reply of the Government

All the Wastelands Development Schemes such as Integrated Wastelands Development Scheme, Grant-in-Aid Scheme, Technology Extension Scheme, Investment Promotional Scheme, Wastelands Development Task Force has integral component of fuelwood, fodder and fruit bearing tree plantations in non-forest lands including private lands.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H—11011/5/94-Parl. dated 14.11.1994]

Recommendation Para No. 2.22 & 2.23

The Committee observe that where the percentage of rainfall is higher and land is uneven, the percentage of soil erosion is much more. Effective measures will have to be adopted to prevent the flow of water and soil erosion. The Committee strongly recommend that much emphasis should be laid on water retention measures and a dense vegetative cover may be created in the areas where the problem of soil erosion is acute due to run off water. It is also necessary to create a dense vegetative cover in the watershed areas because in the absence of impediments to the rushing water, we are having more and more flash floods every year. Floods result not only in loss of enormous quantities of good soil but of water as well through excessive run off. If there had been dense vegetative cover, more water would have seeped into the soil to augment groundwater. In addition, a better coordination should be maintained between the Agriculture, Forest and Watershed Development Departments and the other Departments dealing with Water Resources.

The Committee are also of the view that due to depletion of vegetative cover and extensive soil erosion the siltation of big reservoirs is taking place at an alarming rate and causing deterioration of their life span. Thus,

irreparable loss to our most valuable and irreplaceable potential for irrigation and power. The Committee recommends that it is absolutely necessary to protect these projects from siltation and to give special attention to the treatment of catchment areas.

Reply of the Government

The Department agrees with the observations of the Committee. The matter has been taken up with the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Water Resources. These Ministries have been requested to initiate action on the recommendations of the Committee.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. M—11011/5/94-Parl. dated 14.11.1994]

Comments of the Committee

[Please see Paragraph No. 22 of Chapter I of the Report.]

Recommendation Para No. 2.25

In the opinion of the Committee indiscriminate mining activity also leads to destruction of the biological potential of the land which can ultimately turn to a Wasteland. The effects of such mining activities are degradation of land, reduction in agricultural land, land subsidence, development of salinity and vegetation degradation. In this regard, the Committee suggests that it would pay dividend to consider ameliorative measures to rehabilitate the land after cessation of mining activity. It is essential that due attention be given to the hazards associated with the mining activities and to evolve appropriate reclamation measures.

Reply of the Government

The observations and recommendations have been taken up with the Department of Mines.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H-11011/594-Parl. dated 14.11.1994]

Comments of the Committee

[Please see Paragraph No. 28 of Chapter I of the Report.]

Recommendation Para No. 3.13

The Committee stress that the Development of wastelands should-not be undimensional and limited in scope. There should be integrated land use planning and planning capability shall be built up from below, starting from the village. Emphasis should be on conservation, Ecological Restoration and Natural Regeneration. Efforts should be made to meet the ever-increasing needs of fuelwood, fodder and timber production. The Committee further stress that suitable remedies for reclamation of each

type of wastelands should be evolved and local people should be involved in the process.

Reply of the Government

The observations of the Committee regarding planing to start from the village level has been incorporated into the guidelines for Integrated Wastelands Development Projects Scheme. In this scheme capability building, micro-planning, involvement of the people are also emphasised. The effort is to involve the people in the preparation of the project, plantation, management of assets created and in the distribution of its fruits. Similarly, in the case of GIA Scheme, the project is prepared at the village level by an NGO and wide ranging consultations with the people are affected.

The main objective of these projects is to increase the availability of fuelwood, fodder and timber to the rural people. For this purpose, the IWDP Scheme and GIÁ Scheme are supported with technology packages developed under the Technology Extension Scheme. Moreover, each State has developed its own technology package based on the local agronomic and climatic conditions.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H-11011594-Parl. dated 14.11.1994]

Recommendation Para Nos. 3.14 & 3.15

The Committee note that the schemes launched by the Ministry of Rural Development have not been able to make sufficient impact. A close monitoring is required in the case of on-going projects. Though, the details regarding amount released for the projects have been provided but information about utilisation of the funds has not been mentioned.

The work of evaluation of the Projects has also not been found satisfactory. So far, only one evaluation report has been received. The Committee recommend that effective steps should be taken to strengthen the monitoring system to ensure the proper implementation of the scheme and utilisation of funds for the purpose as well as evaluation of the project to check whether they are progressing in the right direction or not so as to get the desired results.

Reply of the Government

The Department has evolved proper strong monitoring system as detailed below:

(i) The IWDP Scheme is monitored on quarterly basis through QPRs received from the DRDAs/State Governments. A standard format has been provided for sending the monitoring reports in which report on key indicators is being received from the State Government. The monitoring reports show an achievement of 37,072 ha. under the IWDP Scheme upto March, 1994. However, since the new projects in 1993-94 were sanctioned

after the monsoon period the full effect of the physical progress of these projects would be available only by December, 1994.

(ii) *Evaluation*: A decision has been taken to have an in-depth evaluation of the projects under IWDP Scheme after every alternate monsoon. IWDP Scheme are taken up on wastelands which generally consist of highly degraded soils where rainfall is average and soil erosion intense. Vegetal cover is generally non-existent. To take up an in-depth evaluation every year would therefore not be very useful. So far evaluation work of 7 projects has been taken up. Three reports regarding the IWDP project in Indore (MP), Surendra Nagar (Gujarat) and Sikkim have already been received.

(iii) State Governments have been requested to set up a State level "Monitoring and Review Committee" under the Chairmanship of the Chief Secretary/Secretary (RD) to have an in-depth review of the progress of the IWDP Scheme in each State.

(iv) Under the Area Officers Scheme of the Ministry of Rural Development, Officers have been deputed to different States to tour, once a quarter and review the progress of all the schemes of Rural Development Ministry being implemented. This review is at the District level. The area Officers review the IWDP scheme also.

(v) Officers from NWDB are deputed from time to time to make visits to IWDP Projects. So far visits to IWDP Projects in Nashik, Tumkur, Hamirpur, Mohindergarh, Rewari, Jhansi, Ahmednagar, Udhampur, Jhabua, Kalahandi, Koraput have taken place.

(vi) The general impression received from these visits are:

(a) Because of agro-climatic conditions like drought, highly degraded lands, the physical progress in all the projects is not uniform.

(b) The quality of work being executed is satisfactory.

(c) The watershed approach has been by and large accepted in most of these project, though further refinement could be possible.

(d) The involvement of the people varies from very good to satisfactory.

(e) The flow of its fruits to the rural community in terms of grasses has started after the monsoon. Others will flow after 3 - 5 years.

During 1993-94 the system of Monitoring & Evaluation that was followed in respect of Grant-in-Aid Scheme is detailed below:

(i) The projects before approval are to undergo pre-appraisal in NWDB. After this they are sent for appraisal to the DRDA/State Forest Department. The DRDA sends its comments on the capability, credibility, technical feasibility and availability of the land for the project. On receipt of this information and based on the technical content of the scheme the project is cleared for first release.

(ii) Subsequent releases are made only after physical verification and monitoring is done through an evaluator.

Monitoring and Evaluation: During 1993-94, 34 projects were evaluated.

In addition, a quarterly progress report based on the monitoring information received is prepared and corrective action is taken thereon.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H-11011/594-Parl. dated 14.11.1994]

Recommendation Para No. 3.16

The Committee further recommend that as the monitoring is being done by the DRDA's/State Governments, they should be asked to ensure the progress of work done under the scheme and fix up the responsibility on the concerned defaulting officers and take the appropriate necessary action in the matter. The Committee desire that the Ministry of Rural Development should effectively discharge its role of proper management for the implementation of the scheme in letter and spirit.

Reply of the Government

The DRDAs/State Governments have been requested to monitor the projects being undertaken in the districts. Efforts are being made through the State Governments to ensure proper implementation of schemes.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H-11011/594-Parl. dated 14.11.1994]

Recommendation Para No. 3.17

The Committee feel that the Government departments alone cannot do much in this field unless they are not asked to receive cooperation of the local people. No programme, howsoever, well conceived it may be, cannot succeed without the active participation of the people. People's involvement in the Wastelands Development Projects is necessary. The Committee would like to recommend that a general awareness should be created among the people for the successful implementation of the various programmes/projects for the development of Wastelands in the country. Efforts may be made to improve communication by employing modern communication media for reducing the knowledge constraints.

Reply of the Government

The recommendations of the Committee regarding raising of awareness programme is being implemented by the DOWD, in both the GIA Scheme and IWDP Scheme. There is a provision for funding the awareness raising programmes at the NWDB level. In addition, the following activities have been taken up under awareness raising.

- Publication of literature on wastelands development, important activities of the Department, Technology Bulletins, Phamplets to highlight specific projects.

- Making short-duration films on on-going wastelands development projects.
- Organising training for NGOs/farmers/National Service Scheme (NSS) Coordinators and field level workers.
- Institution of a national award, namely, 'Rajiv Gandhi Parti-Bhoomi Mitra Award' with the objective of according recognition to the outstanding work done by individual and institutions for development of non-forest wastelands.
- Holding of seminars on important activities and schemes of the Department.
- Holding of training programmes on different schemes of the Department.
- Logo competition was held after the creation of the new Department.
- Through the print media new initiatives, activities and schemes of the Department are highlighted.
- Under the Grant-in-Aid scheme, 10% of the funds are earmarked for administration and awareness raising activities. Similarly, a component under the Integrated Wastelands Development Project Scheme is meant for awareness raising and eliciting people's involvement. A specific programme also exists under the Technology Extension Scheme for holding farmers training and 'farm days'.
- Tapping the electronics media for wide coverage of activities of the Department.
- Participating in the multi-media campaign being organised by the Ministry of Rural Development.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H-11011/5/94-Parl. dated 14.11.1994]

Recommendation Para No. 3.20

It has been observed that the experiment of Cooperative Societies and Voluntary Agencies is not that encouraging as expected. The Ministry have also admitted that some voluntary agencies have not been able to cope up with the job taken by them. In this regard it is suggested that the projects and Grants should not be sanctioned to those Cooperative Societies or voluntary agencies which are not competent and Ministry should be more careful about it. Care should be taken to release the Grant to those voluntary agencies only who have done good work and have excellent track record and are actively involved in the developmental process. Cooperation of established Cooperative Societies who are willing to do the job of Wastelands Development should be encouraged and assisted.

Reply of the Government

This paragraph deals with two separate groups of NGOs — Cooperative Societies and Voluntary Agencies. The term VA is a generic word encompassing within its fold organisations registered under the Societies/Trust/Cooperative Acts. All these are eligible for funding under the Grant-in-Aid Scheme.

2. With regard to the Cooperative societies, two organisations in the country, namely, Indian Farmers Fertilizers Cooperative Society (IFFCO) and the National Tree Growers Cooperative Federation have formed a large number of Tree Growers Cooperative Societies. Brief details of these cooperatives are given below:—

The National Tree Growers' Cooperative Federation Limited (NTGCF), under the auspices of the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) has made pioneering efforts in promoting and organising Tree Growers' Cooperatives as sustainable and viable cooperative structure on the Anand cooperatives model. The Project is operational in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Orissa Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. As on 30/06/1994, 251 tree growers' cooperatives have been organised with the membership of 21,769 farmers. The total revenue land under plantation is 3310 hectares. The details of progress of tree growers' cooperatives in these States are given below:

States	Total TGCS organised	Total member- ship	Area of waste- lands covered	Private plant- ation
Andhra Pradesh	36	1923	509	0
Gujarat	56	5878	753	109
Karnataka	32	3029	258	169
Orissa	41	3844	763	18
Rajasthan	82	6972	1024	718
Uttar Pradesh	4	123	3	0
Total:	251	21769	3310	1014

Indian Farmers Fertilizers Cooperative Limited (IFFCO) has been promoting farm forestry through creation of cooperative institutions at the village level. The project is operational in the States of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh since 1987. In these three States, the plantation work was commenced in the selected villages on the wastelands of small farmers and panchayats and on government revenue wastelands.

The details of cooperative societies established and lands identified for tree planting are shown in the table below:

(Area in hectares)
(as on 31.12.1993)

State	Districts	Number of Village level coop. societies	Farmers lands	Pancha-yati lands	Govt. revenue lands	Total
Uttar Pradesh	Sultanpur	8	956	497	—	1453
	Rai Barailly	4	364	399	—	763
	Allahabad	3	212	85	—	297
	Pratapgarh	4	323	190	—	513
Rajasthan	Udaipur	12	1139	1407	—	2546
Madhya Pradesh	Sagar	5	—	—	326	326
TOTAL:		36	2994	2578	326	5898

3. The Cooperatives themselves are managing themselves their monitoring and evaluation system. During the mid-term review of the NTGCS an officer of the NWDB was involved as part of the mid-term evaluation team.

4. The points suggested by the Standing Committee with regard to ensuring proper utilisation of grant in aid are unexceptionable. The Committee has rightly focused on the need for ensuring that funds given voluntary agencies should be given projects who have a good track record.

5. NWDB is ensuring quality output from voluntary agencies in the following manner:—

(i) On receipt of a project from a voluntary agency, NWDB sends it for pre-appraisal to the DRDA/State Forest Department at the District level. The District Agency scrutinises the proposal of the voluntary agencies on grounds of credibility, competence, capacity of the voluntary agency to take up this work, availability of land and technical feasibility. Based on the recommendations, of the DRDA/State Forest Department, NWDB takes up the project for consideration.

(ii) The availability of voluntary agencies is not evenly spread all over the country. Some States have a large number of voluntary agencies like

Manipur, Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal. However, it has been noticed that within the State itself some districts have a large number of voluntary agencies and some districts have none at all. To limit the operation of the Scheme only to well recognised agencies would mean that either these voluntary agencies would be over-stretched or new voluntary agencies will not be able to join. NWDB is encouraging new voluntary agencies interested in development of wastelands to put up comparatively small projects under the Grant-in-Aid Scheme.

(iii) After the first release, all subsequent grants are released only after a detailed evaluation is done of the work done at site. This evaluation is done through an independent evaluator.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H-11011/5/94-Parl. dated 14.11.1994]

Recommendation Para Nos. 3.21 & 3.22

The Committee recommend that the Government should identify the semi-arid/semi-fertile wastelands and the same be distributed immediately to landless/rural poor (mainly Tribals/SC) in order to earn their livelihood. The Committee further recommend that the wastelands which are reclaimable and can be reclaimed with reasonable efforts and minimum investments, should be reclaimed by the Government and be given to the landless agricultural labourers/workers on priority basis. On the other hand, the wastelands which are badly damaged and where the Government finds itself helpless in the matter of providing adequate funds for development, such lands should be entrusted to cooperatives, NGOs or corporate sector to develop it.

The Committee feels that a massive campaign should be launched for reclamation and greening of the Wastelands. State Governments should be approached for taking suitable measures for encouraging reclamation of wastelands and raising productivity of the land. Identification of badly damaged land, should be done without delay. The Committee suggest that the land should be given on lease, while the ownership should remain intact with the original owner and the investors may be allowed to take the produce. The condition should be that the land, will not be allowed for any other purpose.

Reply of the Government

The State Governments decide on policies regarding distribution of land. The recommendation regarding campaign for greening has been noted for follow up. The Land Reforms Division of the Department of Rural Development has been requested to examine the matter regarding distribution and leasing in consultation with State Governments.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H-11011/5/94-Parl., dated 14.11.1994]

Comments of the Committee

[Please see Paragraph No. 34 of Chapter I of the Report.]

Recommendation Para No. 3.23

The Committee are of the view that the schemes/programmes which have not been taken seriously so far, may be merged with effective schemes in order to make use of scarce resources for better results. The Committee further emphasise that district-wise time bound strategies should be worked out for the development of Wastelands through inter-related developmental activities. Besides, a competitiveness among districts should be inculcated so that all districts may do better work and produce good results in regard to the development of Wastelands through different schemes being implemented by them. Such districts should be provided more funds as a bonus for achieving better results.

Reply of the Government

The suggestion of the Committee has been incorporated in the common guidelines, which are provided for all the area development schemes of the Ministry of Rural Development.

For fostering competitiveness among the districts/NGOs. NWDB has instituted the Rajiv Gandhi Parti-Bhoomi Mitra Award.

The award which will carry a cash amount of Rs. 50,000/- along with a medallion citation will be given to the following eight categories:—

- (i) Government Agencies;
- (ii) Corporate Agencies;
- (iii) Voluntary Agencies;
- (iv) Panchayati Raj Institutions;
- (v) Educational Institutions;
- (vi) Individual farmers;
- (vii) Individuals representing Corporations/NGOs/Government Agencies;
- (viii) Mined area and mined spoils.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H-11011/5/94-Parl., dated 14.11.1994]

CHAPTER III

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

Recommendation Para No. 2.16

The Committee are of the view that so far no clear-cut picture has come out about the extent of non-forest Wastelands in the country. The Department of Wastelands is having only a rough assessment of non-forest Wastelands. The work of identification of Wastelands is said to be going on in phases under the National Wastelands Identification Project through National Remote Sensing Agency but the data generated by it are not in current use as these are partially complete. The Committee do agree with the Ministry that it is also true that in the absence of sufficiently reliable data and detailed information about the non-forest Wastelands, policies cannot be framed for development of Wastelands. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend that there is a need to evolve a reliable methodology for identification and estimation of the Wastelands which could be adopted by all the agencies concerned with the land. On the basis of this methodology the agencies may generate data and could then be collected to arrive at a realistic picture of non-forest Wastelands in the country.

Reply of the Government

The DoWD has been involved in the creation of a reliable database in a systematic manner. In 1986-87, the National Wastelands Identification Programme was initiated by the erstwhile NWDB in collaboration with NRSA. Under this plan 147 districts which had more than 15% of wastelands were taken up for mapping. This mapping has since been completed and copies of this were sent to all the Collectors in these 147 Districts, Divisional Commissioners and concerned State Governments for using it as a database for the preparation of wasteland development plans.

2. The erstwhile NWDB then took a decision to take up mapping of those 91 districts which have more than 5% of wastelands but less than 15% wastelands. This process has since been completed and NRSA is expected to bring out a booklet in this regard.

3. NWDB has now taken a decision that there is no need immediately to take up mapping of those districts which have less than 5% of wastelands. At this stage, the critical need is to consolidate and utilise the data already available.

4. A review of the data already available has shown that maps on 1:50,000 scale produced by NRSA are useful for identification of different categories of wastelands showing the locations and for comparing with supporting data from Survey of India topography sheets. For more details and micro planning exercise as suggested by the Standing Committee, maps of greater magnification are required. NRSA has informed that in 1995, India would be launching a new satellite which would take survey photographs on a scale of 1:10,000. With this scale of mapping, it would be possible to do micro planning on a watershed basis using the information produced from the map.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H-11011/5/94-Parl., dated 14.11.1994]

Recommendation Para No. 3.18

People's participation should be attracted by evolving effective programmes as there is a lot of scope for providing employment to the rural poor which is an integral part of rural development. It will also generate the additional gainful employment for the unemployed and under-employed men and women in the rural areas.

Reply of the Government

The programmes of DoDW are land based. They involve development of wastelands through activities like in situ-soil and moisture conservation, natural regeneration, afforestation, horticulture, agroforestry and other land based activities. Studies made by the Planning Commission and observations of the Department are that at least 70% of the expenditure incurred on the scheme is labour component. It may be mentioned here that labour component would be provided not only in the initial phase of the development of the watershed, but also in subsequent phases on a sustained basis. Once a watershed started developing, its fruits like grasses, twigs, lops and tops, minor forest produce like flowers, raisin seeds will be available which would provide additional labour and economic activity to the people. Similarly, recharging of under-ground water will help in rejuvenating wells. Availability of additional irrigation facilities from these wells would provide additional rural employment.

2. With the introduction of the Common Guidelines evolved by the Ministry of Rural Development, greater participation of people in the wastelands development programme is expected.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H-11011/5/94-Parl., dated 14.11.1994]

CHAPTER IV

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

Recommendation Para No. 3.19

The Ministry has said that Technology Development and extension is the part of IWDP Scheme. The Committee recommend that the focus may be on research and extension, especially to develop low cost technologies. Available and proven technologies should be transferred on a large scale. The Agricultural Universities and other Institutes through which the projects are under execution may be asked to suggest suitable remedies for the treatment of problem lands and keep in view the local needs and resources available. The effects of technologies transferred under the lab to land programmes may be evaluated on regular intervals, continuous identification of technological, social, financial and natural constraints of technology transfer processes may be made through survey and research.

Reply of the Government

The suggestions made by the Committee regarding Technology Extension form part of the Technology Extension Scheme. The broad area that can be taken up under the Scheme are:

(a) testing of various agro—forestry models in different agro climatic zones of the country;

(b) testing cost effective technologies for increasing productivity of saline/alkaline soils through vegetative methods;

(c) bridging the technological gaps in the reclamation of wastelands belonging to the Government, Community and private lands. These projects are generally implemented by ICAR, Research Centres, State Agricultural Universities and Educational Institutions.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H—11011/5/94-Parl. dated 14.11.1994.]

Comments of the Committee

[Please see Paragraph No. 31 of Chapter I of the Report.]

CHAPTER V

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

Recommendation Para No. 1.13

The Committee find that the Ministry of Rural Development under whose charge the Department of Wastelands Development has been placed has the overall responsibility for the development of non-forest wastelands. It is also responsible for laying down broad policy formulations in this regard. Though, the Ministry have stated that they have various schemes and some schemes are under implementation also but the Committee have found that ground realities are totally different.

As the Department of Wastelands Development is totally new, the Committee are of the opinion that the strategies evolved for developing more and more wasteland in the country should be quite comprehensive and they should have the clear view of the problem.

Reply of the Government

1. The Department of Wastelands Development was set up under the Ministry of Rural Development *vide* Presidential Notification dated 2nd July, 1992. Subsequently *vide* Cabinet Secretariat Memorandum No. 35/1/4/92—Cab. II dated the 27th August, 1992, the subjects allocated to the Department of Wastelands Development were notified along with Constitution and Role & Functions of the National Wastelands Development Board (NWDB). The Role and Functions assigned to the NWDB are the following:

(a) formulate, in collaboration with the National Land Use and Conservation Board a perspective plan for the management and development of wastelands in the non-forest areas in the country in a sustainable manner;

(b) identify such wastelands, create a reliable database and collaborate with the concerned Central and State Departments/Agencies, Local Bodies, Voluntary Agencies and other Non-Governmental Organisations to mobilise the resources and support required for development of wastelands in non-forest areas;

(c) evolve mechanisms for integrated development of such wastelands through systematic planning and implementation in a

cost effective manner, specially to meet the need of the people in the rural areas in respect of fuelwood and fodder;

(d) raise fuelwood, fodder and timber on non-forest and private wastelands in order to reduce the pressure on the forest areas and to meet the needs of industry and market;

(e) sponsor research and extension of research findings to disseminate new and appropriate technologies for wastelands development;

(f) create general awareness and help foster people's movement for wastelands development in non-forest areas with the assistance of Voluntary Agencies, Non-Government Organisations, Panchayati Raj Institutions and others and promote participatory and sustainable management of community/public lands and other similar degraded common property resources;

(g) coordinate and monitor the Action Plans for activities related to such wastelands in order to upgrade land quality in a systematic and cost effective manner; and

(h) undertake all other measures necessary for promoting wastelands development in non-forest areas in the country.

2. On the 7th September, 1992, the Department of Wastelands Development notified the composition of the NWDB. At the very first meeting of the NWDB held on 13th October, 1992, which, *inter alia*, was attended by the Minister of State of Wastelands Development, the Member of the Planning Commission, In-charge of Rural Development and the Secretaries of the relevant Departments of Government of India concerned with Wastelands Development, the strategy and plan of action for the development of wastelands was approved after due deliberations. The strategy that was adopted envisages the following:

- (i) identify/develop models for various agro—climatic zones involving low external inputs;
- (ii) establish tie-up with financial institutions and industry;
- (iii) develop common land;
- (iv) evolve a network of communication and extension.

3. Simultaneously the Board approved the following action plan to be initiated for achieving the objectives for which it was set up:

- (i) In-depth diagnostic studies on micro-level in representative agro-climatic zones to make comprehensive problem identification for different categories of non-forest wastelands/degraded lands for their sustainable development in terms of productivity and ability to provide livelihood to the rural people who generally depend on such lands;

- (ii) Prepare perspective plans for the identified areas or domains and evolve appropriate packages of technology, institutional base for implementation, and policy support;
- (iii) Build up awareness of an integrated and interdependent land management system to meet various sectoral needs from the upgraded non-forest wastelands;
- (iv) Harness people's initiative at all stages in identifying problems, conceiving projects, implementing them and sharing their benefits with a view to ensuring continuous involvement and participation of local people;
- (v) Evolve/identify models of development which will utilise the inherent capabilities of the land and related resources to regenerate its fertility and productivity with minimum reliance on capital intensive external inputs;
- (vi) Identify Departments and Agencies of State Governments, Non-Governmental Organisations, other institutions, including corporate bodies and individuals for generation of projects for the development of the wastelands and to extend promotional support to them.
- (vii) Organise and sponsor communication and extension activities for dissemination of technology and other related information; and
- (viii) Mobilise technologies and financial assistance from national and international institutions for accelerating the process of developing wastelands.

4. Keeping in view the very large potential for substantial increase in biomass production and employment generation and the imperatives of land and water management for sustainable development through regeneration of wastelands, against the background of the observations and recommendations of the Standing Committee of Parliament, in order to examine the basic issues involved in their long-term national developmental perspective above the limited perceptions of Government Departments and evolve an appropriate strategy and action plan, a high level Committee on Wastelands Development has been constituted on 07.11.94 under the Chairmanship of Shri Mohan Dharia with the following broad terms of reference:

- (i) evolve a comprehensive strategy and action plan for the development of wastelands in non-forest areas with reference to a time frame of 10-15 years;
- (ii) assess the level of financial resources required and suggest the ways and means and sources of raising them;

- (iii) indicate the respective roles of the Central and State Government and their Departments, Panchayati Raj Institutions, Voluntary Agencies, the Corporate Sector and the financial institutions/banks in the development of non-forest wastelands;
- (iv) suggest the specific policy initiatives which the Department of Wastelands Development may take in pursuance of the mandate given to it;
- (v) broadly outline the mechanisms through which the NWDB may seek to implement the strategy and action plan proposed for the development of non-forest wastelands.

5. A copy of the notification giving details of background, composition of the high level committee and terms of reference is at Appendix II.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H-11011/5/94-Parl., dated 14.11.1994]

Comments of the Committee

[Please see Paragraph No. 9 of Chapter I of the Report.]

Recommendation Para No. 2.21

The Committee observed that in the absence of comprehensive and periodic surveys in the country as a whole, quantum of soil erosion is precisely not known. The Committee are of the view that this is one of the major cause of Land degradation. There should be proper management for wind water and flood erosion. The Committee, therefore, recommend that a detailed study in regard to this problem may be done and the objectives should be the appraisal of erosion problem and conservation of land and water resources.

Reply of the Government

The matter has been taken up with the Indian Council of Agricultural Research.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H-11011/5/94-Parl. dated 14.11.1994]

Comments of the Committee

[Please see Paragraph No. 16 of Chapter I of the Report.]

Recommendation Para No. 2.24

The Committee are of the view that there is urgent need to check wind erosion where the land is becoming degraded due to it. Adoption of technologies for sand stabilization, soil and moisture conservation can go a long way in improving soil environment for higher and sustained plant production. Building of shelter-belts in Wastelands during rainy season depending upon the type of the plants to be grown and soil conditions, raising of micro-crop shelter-belts with irrigation facilities wherever available can be very useful in reducing the speed of hot dry winds, evaporative loss from the soil and the crop surfaces and in checking erosion and movement of sand.

Reply of the Government

The Technology Package suggested by the Committee for and stabilisation, soil and moisture conservation and increasing productivity have been conveyed to the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Department of Agriculture and Cooperation and to the Technical Committee formulating the technical manual for the implementation of the guidelines.

[Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment, (Deptt. of Wastelands Development) OM No. H-11011/5/94-Parl. dated 14.11.1994]

Comments of the Committee

[Please see Paragraph No. 25 of Chapter I of the Report.]

NEW DELHI;
7 February, 1996

18 Magha, 1917 (Saka)

PRATAPRAO B. BHOSALE,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on
Urban and Rural Development.

APPENDIX I

MINUTES OF THE 15TH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (1995-96) HELD ON 26TH SEPTEMBER, 1995

The Committee sat from 1100 hrs. to 1250 hrs.

PRESENT

Shri Prataprao B. Bhosale — *Chairman*

MEMBERS

- 2. Shri Vijayaramaraju Satrucharla**
- 3. Shri J. Chokka Rao**
- 4. Mohd. Ali Asraf Fatmi**
- 5. Shri Ram Singh Kashwan**
- 6. Shri Surendra Pal Pathak**
- 7. Shri Devi Bux Singh**
- 8. Shri Sudhir Giri**
- 9. Shri Subrata Mukherjee**
- 10. Shri Gulam Mohammad Khan**
- 11. Shri Maruti Deoram Shelke**
- 12. Shri B.K. Hariprasad**
- 13. Shri Nilotpal Basu**
- 14. Shri Thennala Balakrishna Pillai**
- 15. Shri Shivprasad Chanpuria**
- 16. Ch. Harmohan Singh**
- 17. Shri Debabrata Biswas**
- 18. Shri Jagmohan**
- 19. Dr. B.B. Dutta**

SECRETARIAT

- 1. Shri G.R. Juneja — *Deputy Secretary***
- 2. Smt. Sudesh Luthra — *Assistant Director***

REPRESENTATIVES OF MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS & EMPLOYMENT

- 1. Shri Vinay Shankar — *Secretary***
- 2. Shri Ashok Jaitly — *Additional Secretary***
- 3. Shri Ranjit Issar — *Joint Secretary***

2. The Committee then took oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment in connection with examination of the Action taken Replies of Government on the recommendations contained in the Seventh Report of the Committee on 'National Wastelands Development.'

REPORT OF THE MOHAN DHARIA COMMITTEE

3. When the Committee asked as to the present status of the report of the high level Committee headed by Shri Mohan Dharia, Secretary, Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment stated during the evidence as under:-

"This Committee was originally expected to give its report in six months but the Chairman was hospitalized for a long time and therefore, there had been some delay. The Drafting Sub-Committee has also met twice and now its three of the four chapters are ready. Now, it is expected by the end of October, 1995."

4. When asked further if there was any possibility of getting an interim Report on some important areas of action by the high level Committee, in the event of further delay in submission of the report, the witness stated further as follows:-

"We do not anticipate any delay in submission of the Report. Our Joint Secretary services in that Committee and we do not anticipate any delay."

CONSERVATION OF LAND & WATER RESOURCES

5. When asked as to what studies have been undertaken and the details of the steps taken to address the problem of soil erosion and conservation of land, the Secretary stated during evidence as under:—

"If we start making a survey for each kind of degradation then it will be an enormous exercise requiring very large resources and time. But the Bureau of Soil Survey and Land Use Planning, Nagpur under the Ministry of Agriculture on the basis of pilot projects, has prepared maps of lands which are in different states of degradation. They have given estimates about it. They have also said in which area which kind of degradation of land has taken place. They have categorized and degradation of land in 20 categories of both wind and water from low to high intensity of degradation and these maps are available. When watershed is taken up for improvement then depending upon the nature of degradation the plan for the watershed development is prepared. There are a number of institutes which give training in the field of

watershed management and checking of degradation of land. One is the Soil and Water Conservation Research and Training Institute in Dehradun, another such institute is in Jodhpur. Both these institutes have been carrying out short-term, medium-term and long-term programmes and imparting training to staff. The adequate number of imparting training to staff. The adequate number of trained officers of Department of Agriculture are available in all the States and therefore, the knowledge about how to treat a particular watershed is available with all the States.

We have recently sanctioned two pilot projects also which will be undertaken by the two universities under the ICAR. Our aim is to pool all the different kinds of expertise and see to it that we develop a package of practices which can be standardized and then can be propagated throughout the country."

ACCOUNTABILITY OF DEPARTMENT OF WASTELANDS

6. When asked about the manner in which accountability of the Department of Wastelands Development is being ensured, it being the nodal Ministry for Development of Wastelands, the Secretary stated during evidence as under:—

"We are in close consultation with Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment and Forests to pool the knowledge available in all these departments, to see that our work is being done in coordinated manner."

APPRAISAL OF IRRIGATION PROJECTS

7. When asked if the Ministry is in anyway associated with regard to appraisal of irrigation projects, the Secretary stated during evidence as follows:—

"As you know, the Ministry of Environment is charged with the responsibility of giving environmental clearance, we are not formally associated with the proposals. They consider the issue of giving environmental clearance."

8. The Committee then sought clarification on other related issues on the Action Taken Replies of the Government on National Wastelands Development.

9. A verbatim record of the proceedings of the sitting has been kept separately.

The Committee then adjourned.

**MINUTES OF THE 16TH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON
URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (1995-96) HELD ON 26TH
SEPTEMBER, 1995**

The Committee sat from 1500 hrs. to 1600 hrs.

PRESENT

Shri Prataprao B. Bhosale — *Chairman*

MEMBERS

2. **Shri K.K. Mathew**
3. **Shri Ram Singh Kashwan**
4. **Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava**
5. **Shri Sudhir Giri**
6. **Shri Subrata Mukherjee**
7. **Shri Ram Deo Bhandari**
8. **Shri Nilotpal Basu**
9. **Shri Thennala Balkrishna Pillai**
10. **Shri Debabrata Biswas**
11. **Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra**
12. **Dr. B.B. Dutta**

SECRETARIAT

1. **Shri G.R. Juneja** — *Deputy Secretary*
2. **Smt. Sudesh Luthra** — *Assistant Director*

REPRESENTATIVES OF MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS & EMPLOYMENT

1. **Shri Vinay Shankar** — *Secretary*
2. **Shri Ashok Jaitly** — *Additional Secretary*
3. **Shri Ranjit Issar** — *Joint Secretary*

2. The Committee then continued with the oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment in connection with examination of the Action Taken Replies of Government on the recommendations contained in the Seventh Report of the Committee on 'National Wastelands Development.'

Treatment of Catchment Areas

3. When asked whether 'treatment of catchment area' is included to the cost of irrigation projects as also the steps taken with regard to treatment of catchment areas, the Secretary, Ministry of Rural Areas & Employment stated during evidence as follows:—

"I would like to submit that the Central Water Commission has issued guidelines for treatment of lands likely to be affected due to

construction of river valley projects. The guidelines provide that the cost of treatment in respect of the land affected due to submergence should provide for acquisition and payment of compensation. Then land affected due to soil erosion and the land under direct drain should be charged to the concerned project.

The policy of the Ministry of Water Resources is that they take care of the area which is immediately drained. Efforts are needed to check the problem of the soil that will be brought from all over the catchment area and not just from the area which is directly draining into the system is very valid one. While we agree with you, we will get in touch with the Ministry of Environment and Forests and ask them as to what they have done in this regard. I have some information that they do take care of this aspect of siltation of dams under these projects.

Many times they are insisting on plantation in the catchment to reduce silt loads. As you have pointed out and correctly so we have not represented in any of those Committees. We will ask them whether they can themselves take care of the entire aspect. We would also ask them to associate us or at least ask our comments on such projects."

4. The Committee then sought clarifications on other related issues on the Action Taken Replies of the Government on National Wastelands Development.

5. A verbatim record of the proceedings of the sitting has been kept separately.

The Committee then adjourned.

MINUTES OF THE 22ND SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON
URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (1995-96) HELD ON
4TH JANUARY, 1996

The Committee sat from 1500 hrs. to 1645 hrs.

PRESENT

Shri Prataprao B. Bhosale — *Chairman*

MEMBERS

2. Shri Gangadhara Sanipalli
3. Shri Prabhulal Rawat
4. Shri J. Chokka Rao
5. Shri Vijayaramaraju Satrucharla
6. Shri Prithviraj D. Chavan
7. Shri Maruti Deoram Shelke
8. Shri Surendra Pal Pathak
9. Shri Devi Bux Singh
10. Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava
11. Shri Ram Singh Kashwan
12. Shri Sudhir Giri
13. Mohd. Ali Ashraf Fatmi
14. Shri Sukhdev Paswan
15. Shri Dharmabhiksham
16. Shri N. Murugesan
17. Shri Gulam Mohammad Khan
18. Shri Nilotpal Basu
19. Shri Ram Deo Bhandari
20. Shri Shivprasad Chanpuria
21. Ch. Harmohan Singh
22. Smt. Meera Das
23. Shri Satyanarayana Dronamraju
24. Shri Sangh Priya Gautam
25. Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra
26. Shri Thennala Balakrishna Pillai
27. Shri V. Humanantha Rao

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri G.R. Juneja — *Deputy Secretary*
2. Smt. Sudesh Luthra — *Assistant Director*

Consideration and Adoption of Draft Action Taken Report

2. The Committee considered the Draft Report on Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 7th Report on 'National Wastelands Development' and adopted it with slight modifications as indicated in Annexure.

3. The Committee then authorised the Chairman to finalise the Report on the basis of factual verification by the Ministry concerned and to present the same to Parliament.

The Committee then adjourned.

Page No.	Para No.	Modifications
4	9	<i>Add the following before last sentence of Para 9.</i> “The Committee understand that the Report of the Mohan Dharia Committee has been received by Government in December, 1995. They, therefore, urge that Government should process the recommendations of the Mohan Dharia Committee without further delay and implement the same expeditiously. The Committee may also be informed of the action taken thereon within four weeks of the presentation of this Report.”

APPENDIX II

(ANNEXURE TO RECOMMENDATION PARA 1.13)

No. NWDB:6-17/94—T November 4th 1994.

ORDER

Subject: Constitution of High-level Committee on Wastelands Development

The Department of Wastelands Development was created in July, 1992 with the mandate to take up development of about 95 million hectares of non-forest wastelands in the country. In the first two years of its existence, the Department has achieved a very high percentage of utilisation of plan funds allocated to it. However, it has been felt that there is a need to evolve a strategy and a Plan of Action for the development of vast areas of non-forest wastelands with full appreciation of the magnitude of the problem and the financial resources required to address these problems.

2. In view of the need to have a comprehensive plan for development of wastelands in the country, it has been decided to constitute a "High-level Committee on Wastelands Development" with the following composition and terms of reference:

COMPOSITION

Shri Mohan Dharja
'VANARAI', 2064 Vijaynagar,
Pune — 411030 (Maharashtra)

— Chairman

Shri B.B. Vohra
A-1411, Vasant Kunj,
Pocket — B,
New Delhi — 110057.

— Vice-Chairman

Shri Anna Saheb Hazare,
Sant Yadav Baba Shikshan
Prasarak Mandal,
Ralegaon Shiddi,
Taluk : Parner,
District : Ahmednagar
(Maharashtra)

— Member

- Shri Anil C Shah,** — **Member**
Principal Adviser,
Aga Khan Rural Support Programme,
8, Jupiter Apartment,
Sardar Patel Nagar,
Ahmedabad — 380006. (Gujarat)
- Dr. B.R. Bhumbra,** — **Member**
Vice-Chancellor,
Ch. Charan Singh Agriculture
University, Hissar — 125004.
(Haryana)
- Shri K.L. Chugh,** — **Member**
Chairman,
ITC Bhadrachalam Paperboards Ltd.
Virginia House, 37 Chowranghi Lane,
Calcutta — 700071.
- Shri P. Kotaiah,** — **Member**
Chairman,
NABARD
Sterling Centre,
Dr. Annie Besant Marg,
Worli, Bombay — 400018.
- Dr. R.K. Pachauri,** — **Member**
Director
Tata Energy Research Institute,
Darbari Seth Block,
India Habitat Centre,
Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110 003.
- Shri Subodh Bhargava,** — **Member**
President,
Confederation of Indian Industry,
23-26, Institutional Area,
Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003.
- Mrs. Viji Srinivasan** — **Member**
Managing Director, 'ADITI'
2/30, State Bank Colony-II,
Bailey Road, Patna — 800014.
Bihar.

Shri Ranjit Issar,
Joint Secretary,
Deptt. of Wastelands Dev.,
Ministry of Rural Development,
New Delhi — 110 011.

— Member Secretary

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- (i) evolve a comprehensive strategy and action plan for the development of wastelands in non-forest areas with reference to a time frame of 10-15 years;
 - (ii) assess the level of financial resources required and suggest the ways and means and sources of raising them;
 - (iii) indicate the respective roles of the Central and State Governments and their Departments, Panchayati Raj Institutions, Voluntary Agencies, the Corporate Sector and the financial institutions/banks in the development of non-forest wastelands;
 - (iv) suggest the specific policy initiatives which the Department of Wastelands Development may take in pursuance of the mandate given to it;
 - (v) broadly outline the mechanisms through which the NWDB may seek to implement the strategy and action plan proposed for the development of non-forest wastelands.
3. The Committee will submit its report within 6 months.

SD/-
(RANJIT ISSAR)
JOINT SECRETARY TO THE GOVT. OF INDIA

APPENDIX III

(Vide Para 3 of Introduction)

Analysis of the Action Taken by Government on the Recommendations contained in the Seventh Report of the Standing Committee on Urban and Rural Development (10th Lok Sabha).

I.	Total Number of Recommendations	26
II.	Recommendations that have been accepted by Government	20
	(Para Nos. 1.14 to 1.17, 2.17 to 2.20, 2.22, 2.23, 2.25, 3.13 to 3.17 and 3.20 to 3.23)	
	Percentage to Total	76.92
III.	Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's Replies (Para Nos. 2.16 and 3.18)	2
	Percentage to Total	7.70
IV.	Recommendation in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee (Para No. 3.19)	1
	Percentage to Total	3.85
V.	Recommendation in respect of which final replies of Government are still awaited (Para Nos. 1.13, 2.21 and 2.24)	3
	Percentage to Total	11.53