CHAPTER - IV

HILL AREA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
A MACRO ANALYSIS

The Union Planning Commission recognised the fragility of the eco-systems in Hill Areas and came up with Programmes of special Central Assistance (SCA) for Development of Hill Areas from the Fifty plan period. Two programmes called Hill Area Development Programme (HADP) and Western Ghats Development Programme (WGDP), were launched during the Fifth Plan. Both are in operation since then.

COVERAGE:

The major Hill Areas of the Country can be grouped as follows:

1. Areas which are co-extensive with boundaries of the State or Union Territories, namely Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram.

2. Areas which form part of a State, which are termed as ‘Designated Hill Areas’, namely:
   c. Major part of Darjeeling District of West Bengal.
d. **Nilgiris District of Tamil Nadu:**

e. 163 talukas of Western Ghats area comprising parts of Maharashtra (62 talukas), Karnataka (40 talukas), Tamil Nadu (29 talukas), Kerala (29 talukas) and Goa (3 talukas).

The Hill States mentioned at (1) above are called ‘Special Category States’. The amount required for giving Central Assistance for their development plans is preempted from the divisible pool before making allocations from it to the other States categorized as ‘Non-Special Category States’.

The hill areas covered under the programme of Special Central Assistance (SCA) are the areas identified in 1965 by a committee of the National Development Council (NDC) and those recommended in 1972 by the High Level Committee for Western Ghats. 163 Talukas in the Western Ghats referred to above are covered by the Western Ghats Development Programme. The other ‘Designated Hill Areas’ mentioned above are covered by The Hill Area Development Programme. Nilgiris District of Tamil Nadu is one of the designed Hill Area covered by HADP.

**SCALE AND PATTERN OF FUNDING:**

Special Central Assistance is given by the Planning Commission to State Governments to meet the full expenditure under HADP. The total fund available is first divided\(^1\) between designated districts for HADP and designated taluks for WGDP in the ratio 86.69:13.31. The amount available for the districts is distributed among them with equal weightage to area and population\(^2\). This is the amount allocated under
HADP. The other amount available for 163 taluks is distributed among them with 75 per cent weightage for area and 25 per cent weightage for population. This is the allocation under the Western Ghat Development Programme.

Outlays available for HADP in the Seventh and Eighth Plans are shown in Table 4.1.

**TABLE - 4.1**

**OUTLAY FOR HILL AREAS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Seventh Plan</th>
<th>Eighth Plan</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outlay</td>
<td>Allocation On Yearly Basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Designated Hill Districts Total</td>
<td>753.50</td>
<td>924.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>118.20</td>
<td>114.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>33.75</td>
<td>41.53</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>553.50</td>
<td>679.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>44.55</td>
<td>55.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveys &amp; Studies</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>3.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Designated Talukas of Western Ghats Regions</td>
<td>116.50</td>
<td>143.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total (A)+(B)</strong></td>
<td><strong>870.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>1067.80</strong></td>
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**OBJECTIVES OF HADP:**

The Hill Area Development Programme was initiated in the Fifth Five Year Plan. However, the Plan document for the 5th plan prepared by the Government of India, Planning Commission does not deal with the programme specifically.
The Sixth Plan document has devoted a Chapter to Hill Area Development. Chapter 25 begins with the following:

It is now recognized that the pathways of development adopted in the past have resulted in an uneven distribution of the benefits of economic growth as between geographical areas and also between socio-economic groups. It was in realization of this phenomenon that certain specific target group oriented programmes, such as SFDA and MFAL were initiated during the Fourth and Fifth Five Year Plan periods.

Special Programmes for drought-prone, desert and tribal areas were also initiated. But in spite of these programmes, certain geographical areas present some very special ecological and socio-cultural features, which unless specifically taken into account do not permit the present planning process and the schemes developed within it, to be of major assistance to them. The Hill Areas of the country belong to this category. The Development of the hilly areas in the country, however, cannot be undertaken in isolation from the adjoining plains, with which their economy is closely inter-related. The hilly areas influence to some extent the climate of the plains; they contain the sources, the catchments and the water-sheds of several major river systems which flow to the plains, they abound in forests, plant and mineral wealth as well as hydel energy resources. Our experience of development planning during the last three decades has increasingly underlined the fact that unless adequate programmes are evolved for the conservation and proper utilization of the resources of the hill areas, not only the problems of these areas will continue to remain unsolved, but their economy of the plains may also be adversely affected. Symptomatic of this aspect are the rapid siltation of dams, reservoirs, flooding, changes in agro-climatic conditions.
and pressure on the employment market because of the large scale migration of people particularly men from hill areas. Development of the resources of the hill areas is hence necessary in order to enable the population living in these areas, who are by and large very poor, to have their share of the benefits accruing from modern science and technology. But such development, however, has to proceed in a way that the ecosystem constituting the hills and the plains is not irreversibly damaged, but is preserved in a suitable condition for future generations. There is, therefore, a paramount need for conceiving an integrated strategy for the development of the hill areas based on sound principles of ecology and economics. It was in realization of this need that special hill area development programmes were initiated during the 1st Plan. During the Sixth Plan also, the hill areas of the country will continue to receive special attention on account of their difficult terrain, agro-climatic conditions, historical lag in economic development, their environmental impact on the plains and above all, their great growth potential.

The documents deals with the need for conservation of the environment and stated:

The hill area, particularly, the Himalayan region is rich in genetic material of medicinal and food plants, fruits, including citrus and a wide range of other economic plants, orchids and other flowers. Some rare wild life still occurs in these areas. It would be important to have an integrated strategy for the preservation of the valuable flora and fauna through a chain of biosphere reserves, national parks and gene-sanctuaries.
The Seventh Plan document dealt with Hill Area Development in Chapter 16, as one of the Special Area Development Programmes and commented as follows:

The hill areas of the country, particularly the Himalayan and the Western Ghats regions which constitute about 21 percent of the total area and contain 9 per cent of the total population of the country, support the basic life giving natural resources but have fragile and sensitive eco-systems. The need to conserve natural resources and the environment, particularly to prevent damage to fragile and irreplaceable eco-systems, has been voiced in national policies and programmes for quite some time. The hill area development programme (HADP), in operation since the inception of the Fifth Five Year Plan, has been a major step in this regard. Simultaneously, it has also aimed at the goal of balanced regional development. During the Seventh Plan, the programme is expected to enter a crucial phase, particularly with reference to complementarily of interests of the hill and plains. The programme was titled in favour of beneficiary-oriented schemes during the Fifth Plan period. In the Sixth Plan period, eco-development was emphasized, but the general tenor of the plans did not differ significantly from the normal State Plans. In other words, they have been characterized by the sectoral approach without adequate reference to eco-restoration, eco-preservation and eco-development. In the Seventh Plan, the emphasis will be on evolving plans which harmonise the three parameters, i.e. socio-economic growth, development of infrastructure and promotion of ecology. This implies consideration of ecological aspects at the time of formulation of policies, programmes and schemes.
The Eighth Five Year Plan document deals with HADP in Chapter 17 (Special Area Development Programmes). The document summarises the problems of Hill Areas as follows:

The crucial environmental problems of the hills are deforestation and soil erosion, both leading to the drying up of water sources, flash floods and decline in the yield of food and cash crops, fodder, fuel and other minor forest produce. Poverty in the hills is directly related to shortages of materials for basic subsistence, specially where, under the traditional land and water management systems, the capacity of land to support the population has already been exceeded.

The Eighth Plan deals with the objectives, Approaches and Strategies of HADP in some detail as follows:

The programme has been in operation since the inception of the Fifth Five Year Plan in the Designated Hill Areas. The basic objective of the Hill Areas Development Programme has been socio-economic development of the hills and the people living there in harmony with ecological development. The programmes implemented under the HADP have, therefore, aimed at promoting the basic life support systems with sustainable use of the natural resources of the area covered by the programme.

The approach and the strategy of the HADP has evolved over time. The programmes implemented during the Fifth Plan period were mainly beneficiary oriented. While the emphasis shifted to eco-development in the Sixth Plan, the general tenor of the HADP remained substantially the same as that of the normal State Plan following the same sectoral approach. The Seventh Plan laid particular emphasis on
the development of ecology and environment as summed up in three phrases namely, eco-restoration, eco-preservation and eco-development. It aimed at evolving plans and programmes to take care of socio-economic growth, development of infrastructure and promotion of ecology of the areas covered by the HADP.

During the last three Five Year Plans, substantial effort and resources were channelised for the development of infrastructure. However, the corresponding growth in the productive sectors of most of the hill economies has not kept pace with the extent of efforts and resources channelised. During the Eight Plan, attention will have to be focused on this, especially, in modernizing the agricultural practices and small scale industries at household, cottage and village levels. To achieve this, involvement of the people, would be of paramount importance. Actual basic needs of the people have to be met through improved management of their land and water resources. The following will be the approach and strategy in respect of hill areas development planning.

Intensive efforts would be necessary at the implementation level to halt the process of degradation of the hills and improve productivity of land.

Innovative approaches to family planning and welfare to contain the population growth to sustainable levels have to be adopted. Financial and physical monitoring of the HADP by the State Governments would help improve implementation of various programmes.

Afforestation programme may be popularized through village Panchayat or village authorities, schools and other local organizations, groups and clubs. Private nurseries, especially, of multi-purpose trees which yield benefits like fodder leaves,
edible fruits or leaves or flowers, seeds leaves of commercial value can be encouraged. Application of scientific inputs to agriculture and allied sectors, including identification of crops suitable for the agro-climatic zones, multi-purpose species of trees and bushes to meet requirements of the people from a well-developed small land area are of special importance. This approach is expected to spare considerable areas for permanent greening programmes, like social forestry or horticultural and serve the long-term objectives of enhancing production on sustainable basis. Appropriate technologies to bring about localized self-sufficiency and generate alternative means of livelihood, as opposed to heavy dependence on forests, and. Live-stock rearing, can be encouraged. Use of appropriate technologies to upgrade the traditional productive system like agricultural operations, livestock rearing, arts and crafts, household and cottage industries, etc., and to reduce drudgery of women in fetching water, fuel-wood, fodder and other demanding daily domestic chores needs to be encouraged on priority. The technologies have to be need-based, more productive, efficient, low-cost, and ecologically sustainable Extension services should enlighten and educate people on how to enhance productivity of both cultivated and community land on a sustainable basis in the context of increasing human and livestock pressures. Consolidation of small and scattered land holdings would help in improving water and land management and ultimately, productivity of the limited land assets of the hills.

In many hill areas, land assets are held as common or community property. In such areas, people do not make permanent investments and several other problems also originate from this. To over come these, local communities have to be evolve suitable models of land management that would invite permanent investment and ensure both optimal returns and ecological safety and development. The State
Governments may take a fresh look at their Plan and non-Plan Schemes, forest policies, land tenure systems, land and water use policies and realign them to eradicate practices destructive to ecology and environment.

In order to reduce pressure on land, quality of livestock, including goats, sheep, pigs and poultry birds has to be improved and their numbers reduced. There is an urgent need for relating livestock population to the bearing capacity of available land. Scrub animals could be systematically culled out. The livestock and cattle improvement programmes need to be integrated with fodder and cattle-feed development, stall feeding and scientific grazing. The land and livestock management systems have to improve rapidly. The productivity of pastures and grazing areas needs to be restored and enhanced. The effort should be to meet the requirements of food, fuel wood, timber and fodder through scientific utilization of scarce hill resources on sustainable basis from the least land area. Development of non-conventional energy and use of non-wood based sources of energy could be encouraged. Development of watersheds that can meet water requirement of the people and conserve water and soil resources of the area can be taken up for integrated development. For this, a multi-disciplinary approach is considered most appropriate for creating conditions conducive to development of natural and human resources. Food security has to be ensured on top most priority. Development of horticulture, sericulture and plantation, especially cash crops having low volume, light weight, high value and long shelf-life, could play an important role in generating employment opportunities, higher income and ecologically could development in hilly areas.
Area specific marketing infrastructure, especially for perishable produce and its processing, storage and packaging may be set up where such surpluses are imminent or evident.

At the household level, kitchen gardens can be popularized to supplement and enrich the diet of hill people.

Wherever transport linkages have been established and local cultivation of food grains is not advantageous, strong Public Distribution System could be extended, provided other adequate income generating avenues exist.

To reduce the use of wood for packaging of horticultural produce, suitable non-wood based packaging materials such as plastics could be increasingly used on a viable basis. Incentives that would encourage formation of large viable hill villages might be built into the development effort so that the overhead input costs to reach amenities and services to them, could be reduced. Many hill areas seem to be especially suited to industries that require pollution-free atmosphere, cool climate and precision skills like electronics, watch-making, optical glasses, sericulture, etc. A number of cottage industries like carpet weaving, handlooms, handicrafts and other village and household based small scale industries can be encouraged. Due to higher transportation costs in these areas, industries which reduce weight and volume, but add value and increase shelf-life to the locally and medium industries may not generally be considered suitable except under favourable circumstances. Rubber plantations have provided successful in certain areas. Wherever degraded tree-free land could become available and where rubber plantations could thrive, these could be encouraged. Development of sericulture has good potential in hill areas. A systematic programme
of planting feedstock trees for silkworms on all spare patches of land can be taken up. Development of sericulture can provide employment to educated and skilled workers and generate value adding activities and bring in foreign exchange. However, the programme will call for right quality of grain, prompt payment in cash for the cocoons and primary processing activities at local levels.

Tourism can be organized as an industry, with due care taken to avoid exploitive use of scarce local resources, especially, water and fuel-wood. Location specific suitable code of conduct for tourists may be evolved so as to maintain the surroundings clean and disease free, protect local ecology and respect local traditions, culture and heritage. Special local traditions, culture and heritage, special care needs to be taken to ensure that hill roads are constructed as per the traffic needs, scientific design and specifications suited to hill areas, so that the loose soil is contained, proper drainage system is developed and chances of land slides minimized. In such hill areas where the population density is low and the villages are small and scattered over long distances, porter of pony tracks can be built and properly maintained. Road construction should be completed in all respects without delays. Mining can be carried out but with adequate safeguards in favour of ecology during and after the mining operations. Resources should not be thinly spread on a large number of projects and schemes. The priority for such ongoing and spill over schemes, projects and programmes which do not benefit people in improving their quality of life or are destructive to ecology, can be reduced down or terminated. Some of the voluntary organizations doing commendable work in the hills can be encouraged, especially, those engaged in improving the ecological system besides economic and social conditions of the people. People have to be made aware of the far reaching
implications of environmental degradation and their active participation has to be sought for reconstruction of ecology. Environmental aspects can be suitably woven into the curriculum of primary and school classes. Regeneration and development of the hill environment cannot be achieved without willing and active cooperation of the people. It will be forthcoming, only if, the benefits from improved land, water and forests resources reach directly and equitably to the people themselves. The hill areas prone to intense tectonic and seismic activities, need to be identified; activities like indiscriminate road and building construction and creation of artificial large water bodies, need to be minimized and earthquake-proof designs should be used in construction. Large projects etc., which might endanger the ecological balance and displace large number of people should be very carefully considered before investment decisions are taken. Families whose agricultural land is acquired should be settled with productive assets. In many hill areas, men folk have migrated to towns and plans in search of employment opportunities. In such areas, women are managing land and other economic assets. The approach and policies should keep this in view, especially for lightening their burdens of daily chores like collection of fuel-wood, water, and tending to livestock and other domesticated animals and birds. It will be of much advantage if women extension workers are appointed in such villages.

SUMMARY:

A study of the Five Year Plans indicates that the national objective of the HADP has evolved over the years into one of sustainable development of the Hill Areas. The HADP has aimed to achieve Eco-restoration, eco-protection and eco-
development of Hill Areas in a sustainable manner. The Plans have noted that their objectives require multi-sectoral approach in the HADP. The Plans have set out various types of scheme which can be considered. The list of recommended schemes is long. Considering these permissible schemes, specific programmes have been devised for each hill area, taking note of the local features, problems and requirements. For the Nilgiris district, Five Year and Annual Plans for HADP are drawn up by the State Government of Tamil Nadu. After consideration, modification and approval by the Union Planning Commission, the HADP is implemented by the Government of Tamil Nadu as a Centrally Assisted Scheme.
REFERENCES

