

## FARMERS PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH PROGRAMME (FPARP)

### Background

The Ministry of Water Resources had constituted an Advisory Council on *Artificial Recharge of Ground Water* under the Chairmanship of Prof. Saifuddin Soz, Hon'ble Minister of Water Resources. The first meeting of the Council was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 2006 at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi and was inaugurated by Dr. Manmohan Singh, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India. In his inaugural address, the Prime Minister mentioned **“We have to minimize our water use – invest in science and technology to ensure that we can grow crops which use less water. In other words, find ways of valuing the crop per drop”**. To implement the suggestions of Prime Minister, the Council in its first meeting constituted a Sub-Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. M.S. Swaminathan to prepare a report on **“More Crop and Income per Drop of Water”**. The Sub-Committee consists of representatives of Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Rural Development, National Fishery Development Board, CGWB, CWC, Confederation of Indian Industry and Agricultural Scientists from IARI, CRIDA, CAZRI, ICRISAT and State/Central Agriculture Universities/Institutes. The Sub-Committee held two meetings on 9<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> Sept., 2006 in a brain-storming mode to analyse the available data and offer concrete recommendations.

The report by the sub-committee was submitted on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2006 to Hon'ble Minister of Water Resources. The Sub Committee had interalia recommended to initiate 5000 Farmers Participatory Action Research Programme (FPARP) through out the country with the help of Agricultural Universities/ ICAR institutes/ Engineering colleges/ WALMIs etc. for demonstrating the technologies available on shelf to the farmers for increasing the productivity and profitability of agriculture through generating synergy among water, crop, agronomic practices, soil nutrients, crop variety and implements etc.

To implement the above recommendation of the Sub Committee, the MoWR set up PAN Govt. of India Project Steering Committee again under the Chairmanship of Dr. Swaminathan with Chief Engineer (IMO) as Member Secretary.

- The Steering Committee in its meeting held in Feb, 2007 devised the proforma to invite proposals from the Institutes for FPARP. It also decided to set up a small group under the banner of *“Project Implementation Team (PIT)”*.
- MoWR constituted PIT on 09.04.07 with Dr. K. Palanisami, Director, CARDS, TNAU as Chairman and Chief Engineer (IMO), as Member Coordinator for evaluation of the proposals received for FPARP and to formulate of guidelines to operationalise the programme.
- MS(PIT) invited proposals from various Institutes (ICAR Research Institutes/ Agricultural Universities/ Engineering Colleges/ WALMIs/ NGOs etc.) on the proforma finalised by the Steering Committee. In response, 85 proposals were received.
- The PIT shortlisted 63 proposals by 60 institutes for conducting 5000 demonstrations and submitted proposals for release of funds in July/ August, 2007 to the Ministry. It included four proposals by International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), Hyderabad to be implemented in four states

of Andhra Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. PIT also evolved guidelines for implementation of programme which were approved by the Ministry in July, 2007.

- MoWR issued sanction order for conducting 2060 demonstrations by 21 Institutes on 10.09.2007 and for 2940 demonstrations by 39 Institutes on 31.12.2007. 21 Institutes were released advance payment of 1<sup>st</sup> Installment (35% of the cost) in November 2007 and the balance 35% in March, 08. Remaining 39 Institutes were released advance payment of 1<sup>st</sup> installment (35% of the cost) in March, 2008. As on 30<sup>th</sup> May, 2008 all the 60 Institutes have been provided with 705 of the cost of their programme.
- Para 8 of the guidelines provides for physical monitoring of the programme by the Regional offices of CWC and CGWB. Necessary instructions to Regional offices in this regard, have since been issued on 28.01.2008. Provision for random checking of implementation of the programme by PIT Members also exists in the guidelines.
- The programme is to be implemented in maximum 2-3 crop seasons after release of 1<sup>st</sup> installment. As per the guidelines, the monitoring reports by the Regional Offices are to be submitted in the month following the end of each crop season and the completion report at the end of the programme. Based on information presented during meeting of PIT held on 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2008, due to mismatch in release of the funds and agriculture season, many institutes could not start the work during Rabi season 2007-08 and will be starting their work from Kharif 2008-09. Therefore major part of the programme would be completed by Rabi season 09. However, a few institutes may be in position to complete their work during Kharif season, 08.
- The MoWR will be organizing "National Ground Water Congress" in September, 2008. It is proposed to have an exclusive session for FPARP wherein each participating institute will make a presentation of 7-10 minute duration on the activities being undertaken by them. Besides, each institute will submit one-two page leaflet with photographs exhibiting various activities of FPARP for distribution during the Congress. To maintain uniformity of information by Institutes a proforma has been devised and sent to all the participating Institutes for submitting the data/information by end of June, 2008. Dr K Palanisami, Chairman of PIT in the Congress, would also make an overall presentation on FPARP.
- As on date, 2001 villages in 366 districts and 25 states are covered under the programme. As per information available, 10,600 farmers are participating in the programme which will increase on the receipt of complete information.
- 17 out of 21 Institutes, to whom funds were released in November, 2007 and March, 2008 have reported that they have completed 1072 demonstrations. Details are available in Institute wise progress report.