

Meeting on mapping of coastal water bodies

Date : 16th September 2006
Time : 3:15 pm to 5:35 p.m.
Venue : 313, Collectorate, Nagapattinam

Agneda

1. Planning in detail the study on water bodies in the coastal Nagapattinam
2. Discussion on roles and timeframe for the NGOs involved in the study

The first follow-up meeting to map the water bodies in the coastal areas of Nagapattinam was organised by NCRC. Mr. Chandra Mohan welcomed all and introduced Dr. Shivanappan to the participants. As most of the participants had not attended the previous meeting, Mr. Chandra Mohan gave a briefing on what had been discussed in the previous meeting. The following recaps were told:

- In the first year following the tsunami, different packages were introduced to reclaim farm from salinity. It involves immediate, short term and long term packages and common works like clearance of irrigation/drainage channels and common ponds
- In the following year, farm management incorporating trees and animals in the farm was highlighted
- Now it has come to the frontier that safeguarding farms from salinity caused by either tsunami or flood requires a drainage system in place for the water to drain out
- The heavy rains that poured in the district during October and November last year caused rain water to stay on the fields. Therefore, there is a need for safe disposal of water, harvesting excess water and recharging the ground water. Improve ground water could pay dividends during drought
- Raising fund would not be a problem for the cause as ADB and the World Bank have potentials to extend support
- The last meeting had reached the following consensus: The tail end regulator to

map the water bodies was fixed from 5 to 10 kms from the shore; the study would be done in a span of two months; the main stakeholders involved in the study are NGOs like KUDUMBAM, CEE, CCD and TOFARM, government departments like PWD and Agriculture Engineering, farmers and NCRC.

The road map

Following the briefing, Dr. Shivanappan explained how to go about doing the study on mapping of coastal water bodies in Nagapattinam. Excerpts:

- The tail end regulator has to be fixed for the study
- There is a need to strengthen existing bunds, water bodies and ponds to save water
- Further possibilities of saving rain water has to be studied
- The sub drainages (around 25 big and 65 small) have to be regularised
- Every drainage channel has to be marked. The marking involves history, length, size and what and how changes occurred in the water bodies
- The NGOs would take up the study of water bodies, both existing and non-existing, Taluk/block wise and consolidate report
- The NGOs also would propose renovation methods after studying the water bodies in the district
- Skimming wells have to be made
- Action plan involving different stakeholders has to be prepared
- Mapping of tanks, lakes and drainage/irrigation channels have to be done looking at the possibilities of recharging along with location and estimate for the same
- Length and conditions of the water bodies have to be identified taking in the opinions of the farmers
- Action plan has to be quickly decided as to decide if the study was done Taluk wise or block
- Ground water conditions have to be studied

- Triangulating the acquired information with the available secondary data and sources
- Crop pattern in the cultivating land has to be identified in terms of variety, duration and yield
- A format would be made available for the field visits aided with visits from Dr. Shivanappan
- The proforma concentrates works from the tail end regulators up to shore

Followed by Dr. Shivanappan, a discussion on roles of stakeholders for the study was facilitated by Mr. Chandra Mohan. The following were discussed:

Who does the study?

If the study is carried out at Taluk level, five NGOs would take up a Taluk each. In case of Block level study, seven NGOs would be engaged in each block. KUDUMBAM, CCD, CEE and TOFARM have confirmed the participation; VENTURE and BHARATHI are yet to confirm the same. If many NGOs would be willing to participate, they would be supporting the lead NGO. Two full time staff from NGO with the support of other staff is mandatory for the study.

Focus area

All the five Taluks or 7 blocks affected by tsunami would remain the focus area of the study. Only the area from the tail end regulator from sea shore would be given thrust. After taking a rough survey, it was identified that the coverage area by Taluk was around 150 kms in length and 6 kms in breadth. It gives each NGO about 180 sq. kms of area to be covered in a month. Each NGO has to cover around 7 kms or 700 ha of land everyday.

Time frame

The study has to be completed (field visits) before the onset of the North East monsoon. A proforma would be prepared and would be given to NGOs at least a month ahead of the approach of the monsoon to start data collection.

Irrigation/drainage channels

The conditions of the bunds have to be studied. Encroachment and non-existing channels have to be reported. Diametre, depth, siltation levels, water staying time and volume of tanks, lakes and farm ponds have to be studied.

Small channels

In order to identify categories of channels, NGOs would require consulting the government departments like the PWD and Agriculture Engineering. They would also get to know the measuring device for the same.

Condition of the water bodies

Conditions of the water bodies (good, satisfactory or poor) have to be analysed using indicators. Farmers' opinion was also discussed as a key. However, the proforma would take care of setting indicators to arrive at the conditions of water bodies.

Methodology

- Information for the mapping of water bodies have to be collected from various authentic sources like the PWD, Dept. of Agriculture Engineering, NGOs and VAOs. However, it was also discussed to include Water User Association and Farmer Groups formed by NGOs in the list. It was suggested to get the help of DRO to identify the locations of Water User Associations.
- Even NGOs with less experience may join the field with partial placing of staff along with others
- It was decided to place at least two staff with experience

NGOs were asked to confirm the participation with the names of staff involving the study on or before 18th September to pave way for immediate planning and training.