2010 Environment Policy

LAWSIT

LWSIT Environment Policy 2010

Preface

LWSIT, largely working among the rural and urban communities in the eastern states of Assam, West Bengal, Orissa, and also covering the southern states of Tamil Nadu, has focused objective of improving "Quality of Life". This is aimed at ensuring a "Sustainable Development" in a finite environment.

The major sectors of LWSIT involvement include Agriculture, Education, Health, Natural Resources, Drinking Water, Sanitation and Disaster Management; needless to emphasise that, each of these sectors have to be integrated with Environment Policy of LWSIT. The major objectives of all these sectoral programmes are to offer Sustainable livelihood.

The Government of India announced a new 'National Environment Policy' in 2006, which emphasises on Conservation of Critical Environmental Resources and Intra-governmental Equity to ensure Livelihood Security for the poor; it also calls for Enhancement of resources for Environmental Conservation and Efficiency in Resource use.

The Civil Society Sector comprising organisations like LWSIT is committed to promote the objectives of the National Environment Policy. The current focal areas of LWSIT can be linked with "Conservation" and "Livelihood Security" in a seamless manner.

Introduction

> "We fundamentally depend on natural systems and resources for our existence and development. Our efforts to defeat poverty and pursue sustainable development will be in vain if environmental degradation and natural resource depletion continue unabated."
> - UN Secretary-General. In 'Larger Freedom', March 2005.

LWSIT is committed to promote environmentally sustainable development. The integration of environment[1] in each area of LWSIT community development programming will further improve effectiveness and focus on strategic approach in combating poverty and achieving the overarching objectives of sustainable development.

The environmental problems[2] associated with deforestation, intensive cultivation of marginal lands, soil erosion, land degradation and biodiversity loss are hindering the socio – economic development of rural areas affecting the poor and marginal farmers particularly. Intensification of the process of industrialization and urbanization without adequate development of the urban infrastructure has posed serious problem of air and water pollution, solid and toxic wastes, unhygienic living conditions and serious health environment. Again the urban poor are the worst affected. These environmental problems are likely to accentuate further mainly because of rapidly growing population, global competition and increased economic development. Therefore, renewed efforts must be made in rural and urban communities to address the socio-economic needs of these groups which in turn will yield environmental benefits.

Poverty reduction and development, and the protection of the environment are mutually dependent. The integrity and diversity of nature and the rational, sustainable use of natural resources are the foundations for human existence, social development and economic activities, not only today but also for future generations. The overall goal of reducing poverty can only be achieved if economic activities and social and institutional development respect and serve to protect the integrity and diversity of nature and ensure that uses of natural resources are equitable and ecologically sustainable.

Despite efforts to reverse environmental change and degradation, growing environmental threats and the increased incidence of natural and man-made disasters hit the poor hardest. Unless increased emphasis is placed on integrating the principles of environmentally

[1] The "Environment" comprises all entities, natural or manmade, external to oneself, and their interrelationships, which provide value, now or perhaps in the future, to humankind.
[2] Environmental concerns relate to their degradation through actions of humans.

sustainable development in projects and activities, their effectiveness will not improve over a medium to long term. The environment policy of LWSIT has been motivated by these considerations and is intended to mainstream environmental concerns in all development programming and operations. It implies that actions supported and carried out by LWSIT in different parts of India minimize damage to the environment and / or result in positive environmental benefits. The external environmental factors that may affect and influence the outcome of LWSIT interventions are also rightly addressed.

This environment policy will identify strategic actions and directions which will enhance environmental sustainability and strengthen LWSIT's future intervention strategy. The implementation of policy will be done in a holistic and participatory manner and will be integrated in all developmental stages of LWSIT programming. The success of the environment policy will rely on increased awareness of environmental aspects among all staff members and partner organizations.

Why LWSIT needs the Environment Policy

It has been greatly acknowledged through different community based development programmes that risks to human development is enhanced or the resulting outcomes of interventions are reduced if environmental considerations are not taken into account. The environment is a key component of sustainable development and a critical element of poverty reduction. Environmental sustainability implies living within the ecological capacity of the biosphere ("Caring for the Earth", IUCN/WWF, 1993). It requires the management and protection of ecosystems to maintain both their ecological functions and their diversity of life in both managed and natural systems.

LWSIT needs the environment policy to consolidate their programming, to reduce environmental risks in their programmatic areas both on the project and due to the project, and enhance commitment to environmental sustainability.
Over the years, it has been felt that:

- Integration of environmental concerns is not fulfilled, inspite of widespread awareness that Sustainable Development is one of the overall objectives and that everyone is required to integrate environmental issues in his or her activities.
- The follow up / Monitoring of integration of environmental issues is irregular and sometimes non-existent.
- The quality of the mainstreaming of the environmental issues need to be improved.

LWSIT needs a more strategic approach to mainstream environment as improved understanding of the links between human and environmental vulnerability are at the core of conflict prevention and disaster reduction. The environment policy of LWSIT needs to fill in gaps that still exist, in light of present knowledge and accumulated experience.

LWSIT Environment Policy Goal and Objectives

Policy Goal

To position LWSIT as an organization sensitive to environmental sustainability issues and with the strong commitment to integrate environmental considerations within the organization (internal mainstreaming) and in projects (external mainstreaming) so as to deliver pro-poor environmental outcomes

Recharging mechanism combined with Hand-pump for improved water conservation
LWSIT Environment Policy 2010

Policy Objectives

The LWSIT environment policy will aim at environmental sustainability in order to protect, conserve and manage local ecosystems to maintain both their economically productive and their ecological functions, maintain the diversity of life in both human-managed and natural systems, and protect the environment from pollution to maintain the quality of land, air and water. The policy will strategize LWSIT to prepare actions for environmental change and disasters, to reduce vulnerability, to reduce effects of external factors, and protect and improve the ability of natural systems for self-recovery. LWSIT through its knowledge and experience will actively work towards the protection of the bio-physical and social environment, minimize the environmental impact of LWSIT interventions, and maximize the environmental benefits for a long term. To comply with its environmental mandate and general principles of environmental sustainability, LWSIT will pursue the following three broad objectives:

- To integrate internal mainstreaming of environmental considerations in order to demonstrate LWSIT's commitment towards the importance of environmentally sustainable approaches to development.
- To integrate external mainstreaming of environmental considerations into projects and activities that minimize negative environmental impacts and enhance environmental benefits of various interventions.
- To enhance its role in the larger forum that addresses environmental issues and promote conservation and protection of environment to further the objectives of environmental sustainability

Interrelationships of poverty, environmental degradation, resource consumption, and environment regeneration

There exist strong linkages between poverty and the environment. While the poorest segments of the population generate less pollution than do the rest through higher levels of consumption, energy use, and vehicle ownership, the poor too contribute significantly to rural resource

degradation (land, forestry, fisheries) because of their greater use of these resources to meet their need for food, fuel, fodder, and medicines. In addition, the poor bear a disproportionate burden of the costs imposed by environmental degradation, and this contributes to their impoverishment. First, the poor are more vulnerable to the health effects of pollution due to their inadequate nutrition, poor access to health care, and owing to where they live (particularly in urban slums that often have the worst air, water, and solid waste problems). Second, the poor are more immediately affected by degradation of natural resources because of their greater reliance on them to meet basic needs.

The population explosion in India led to quadruple the number of people within finite space and natural resources. Coping up with per capita demand of food, water, shelter, energy, healthcare in a stratified society with huge gap between rich and the poor, becomes a challenge to environmental management. Poverty lead people to heavily fall back up on free natural resources, be it pond water, wood from forests or vegetation and community land for shelter. This invariably leads to environmental pollution and degradation. This is more pronounced when economic opportunities pull the people to urban sector and lack of basic services and opportunities push the poor from the vast rural heritor land.

In addressing these complex relationships, there is a need to better understand and act upon the relationships between disadvantaged groups, particularly women and indigenous peoples, and the environment that support them. Program and project initiatives that make use of these concepts can meet a range of environmental objectives in development. Efforts range from reactive approaches, which correct past environmental damage; through responsive approaches to strengthen human, institutional and technological capacities; and to proactive approaches, which raise and support measures for policy reform.

Environmentally sustainable management is important in the fight against poverty since the rural poor depend to a large extent on natural resources for their livelihoods, are the most vulnerable to the degradation of environment and are the first to suffer the consequences of extreme climate variability and change. A sound ecosystem and natural resources management is vital in the context of promoting a sustainable economic growth, and is closely linked with low-carbon development and also significantly contributes to strengthening capacities to withstand the effects of climate change.

Environmentally sustainable development is based on the fact that different determinants of environment have close linkage with poverty and its dimensions such as one given in the figure. Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs[3].[2] Any activity can be sustainable in the future and can strengthen each dimension of development if environmental factors are integrated.

[3] Brundtland Commission, World Commission on Sustainable Development, 1987.

Box 1: What happens when long term environmental factors does not take into account?

LWSIT supported STEER Rural Programme in Bolangir District -

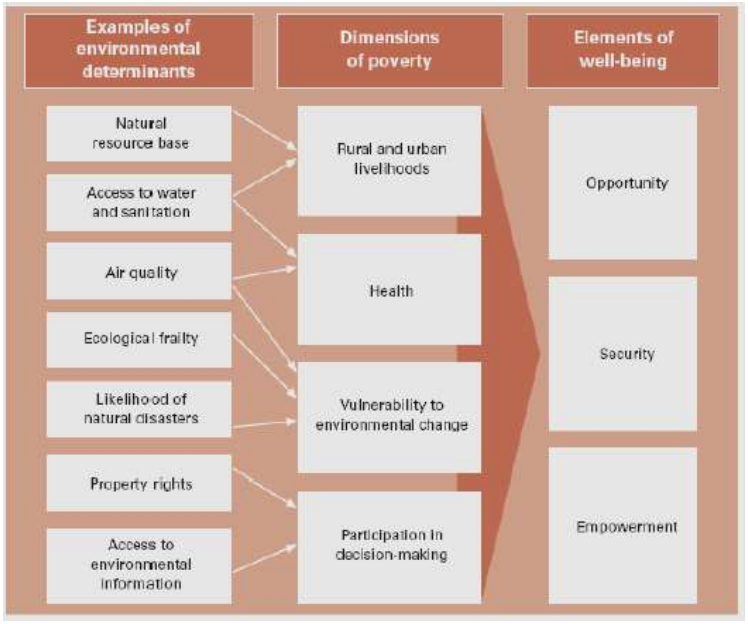
The activity is successful in its objective. SHG members were involved to raise plantation and nurture it over a period of 5 to 6 years on a village common land. This has not only improved local environment in terms of reduced soil erosion and dusty atmosphere but also created community asset.

Recently, SHG decided to cut about 10-15 trees and use wood for the construction of community structure. But in the absence of any integration of environmental sustainability factors, the cutting of trees would nullify all the benefits and even pave way for subsequent cutting.

In order to keep balance and attain long term environmental sustainability, it is essential to place a mechanism among SHGs members that for every tree cut they have to plant at least 5-7 new trees and have to care them.

Although, this is a small linkage but it recognizes the importance of environmental factors in every initiatives and a meaning of environmental sustainability in a simple term.

Environmental Links to dimensions of poverty[4]



Strategic Actions

The environmental mainstreaming is the main strategic action that will be used to implement this environment policy at different levels of LWSIT intervention so as to ensure environmental integration in development programming, projects and activities. The focus in the initial stages of policy implementation will be on promoting education and awareness among the staff and partner organizations and enhancing institutional mechanism to mainstream environmental

[4] From "Making Sustainable Commitments - An Environmental Strategy for the World Bank". World Bank, July 2001

sustainability. Innovative environmental design and activities will be highlighted that inform and complement the strategy actions.

Environmental mainstreaming refers to the integration of environmental considerations into core institutional thinking, policies and decision-making. The environmental mainstreaming approach involves integrating sustainability objectives into poverty reduction practices, capacity development, enhancing environmental sustainability of policies, programmes and operational processes, and improving the quality of environmental programmes in achieving broader socio-economic and human development goals. Mainstreaming the environment thus implies moving beyond environmental impact assessment to a more encompassing and strategic approach to achieving sustainability.

The policy provides guidance to LWSIT to focus primarily on internal organizational factors and on the overall environmental management system and strengthen programming which support environmental sustainability. The policy also ensures mechanism to implement comprehensive and forward looking tools to enhance effectiveness of environmental sustainability in overall programs and projects.

The following strategic actions and their outlines focus the policy objectives and principles of environmental sustainable development.

Internal Mainstreaming

Resource Conservation and Waste Management at Work Place:

LWSIT shall aim to reduce environmental impacts by - conserving energy, water, wood, paper and other resources, particularly those which are scarce or non-renewable by identifying and implementing appropriate conservation and efficiency measures within the offices and considering options for waste management on-site.

Villagers sensitized on the benefits of using CFL Bulbs

LWSIT shall practice environmental concern by setting a good example and at the same time provide on-job learning experience to its staff. Some of the measures could be:

- Reduce the use of high consumption of power bulb.
- Use of CFL bulbs.
- Reduce the use of Air conditioner.
- Cut off the electric/power when not use.

- To introduce solar light, solar cooker.
- Plantation in office premises if possible.
- Use of compost pit (two types) for plastic and non plastic waste materials.
- Use of Organic Waste Convertor to convert biodegradable wastes into compost.

Practice Green Procurement and Establishing Database of Environment Friendly Products:
LWSIT has been using large quantity of building materials, especially during disaster rehabilitation projects. It is, therefore, of utmost importance that a database of green materials, sources of supply, alternatives products etc. shall be maintained and procured. The sustainable use of natural resources and protection of the environment is one of the main guiding principles of environmental sustainability. Green Procurement, also known as "environmentally friendlier", "ecological" or "eco-responsible" procurement, involves making decisions not to purchase goods, supplies and services that are harmful to the environment.
Procurement that incorporates environmental considerations thus has a meaningful role to play in promoting environmental awareness and ecofriendly products during implementation of various project activities and interventions.

By favoring goods and supplies that are environmentally friendly, cost effective, less harmful to human health and ecological systems, and are mainly made from recycled materials (green procurement) will be instrumental in promoting environmentally sustainable development. Green procurement is a method for the systematic integration of environmental considerations in a life cycle perspective. Environmental qualities incorporated in the product and environmental criteria presented to the supplier should therefore be emphasized as having the same level of importance as other criteria such as price, quality etc.

Developing Environmental Guidelines and Resource Sheets:
There is a need to develop and maintain Environmental Guidelines and appropriate guidance notes and tools for the LWSIT staff to assist in implementing the Environment Policy. LWSIT shall provide tools for environmental management (i.e. how to achieve the environmental objectives of LWSIT) and tools for environmental assessment (i.e. when and how to assess environmental aspects during the life cycle of a project). The basic idea is that the guideline should sharpen the awareness of field staff for environmental issues and equip them with tools to take better care of these in their day to day work.

LWSIT shall ensure that staff receives appropriate training on the requirements under, and implementation of the commitments in the objectives of the Environment Policy.

Developing Environmental Information System
It is the responsibility of all staff within the organization to share good case studies, models, lessons learned, and field experience with some centralized system which can further be structured and communicated to all through some means like e-newsletters, seminars etc.

LWSIT will adopt environmental information management systems to allow data on environmental practices and design to be readily accessed and will analyze and disseminate information on environmental issues within and outside the organization.

Share examples of best practices in environment mainstreaming with staff as a basis for developing policy.

Recognizing Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) as a Tool:
Tools like Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) have to be recognized which requires potential environmental impacts to be considered when designing any multi-locational, multi activities, and multi year development programmes.

Strategic environmental assessment (SEA) is the systematic and comprehensive process of evaluating the environmental effects of a policy, plan, or program and its alternatives. The emphasis is on examining environmental effects, but most SEAs may also identify significant economic and social effects.

SEA is an analytical tool to link possible positive or negative environmental issues to higher level decision-making. As an example, some of the specific SEA questions that can be used to integrate environmental aspects are:

- What is the existing situation (in a particular sector or region)?
- What are the goals and objectives of the policy, plan, or program? Do these support relevant LWF policies (particularly those related to the environment and sustainable development)?
- What are the different feasible options for delivering the policy, plan, or program? (For example, options for creating drinking water facilities in an area already stressed with ground water depletion or poor ground water quality)
- What are the most pronounced environmental issues (positive and negative) associated with each of the preferred options?
- How significant are these environmental effects?
- What can be done to avoid or lessen negative effects/issues and to enhance positive ones?
- What is the most feasible policy, plan, or program? (For example, how to deliver a health related programme in urban slums when environmental issues are more pronounced and can nullify the effects)
- How can environmental effects be measured, monitored, and reported?

SEA as a tool can also be used to ensure that the principles of environmentally sustainable development are reflected in all annual action plans, monitoring reports, post evaluation reports, and other documents pertaining to programmes.

External Mainstreaming

Mainstreaming systematically takes into consideration environmental issues as early as possible in the decision-making process where decisions can best benefit from environmental opportunities and avoid negative impacts on the environment. In this way, mainstreaming can help align programmes and operations with the long-term requirements of sustainable development, help modernize development programme content and procedures, and promote a pro-active approach rather than responding to impacts as they unfold.

At the level of projects and activities, the most important tools remain the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Environmental Management Plan (EMP). EIA involves a systematic appraisal of the potential environmental impacts of a proposed project and its alternatives, in order to propose appropriate measures to mitigate negative environmental impacts and optimize positive effects, and assist the decision making process by providing information on the environmental feasibility of the project.

Integrating Environmental Considerations into the Project Cycle:

The major areas of work of LWSIT must be integrated with environmental consideration. Some of these can be elucidated are detailed below:

Aforestation

Natural Resource Management: It is acknowledged in the 'National Strategy and Policy on Environment and Development' (1992) that vast Indian community largely depends on biodiversity and biomass. Conserving Biodiversity and eco-systems therefore becomes a National Agenda item which can only be accomplished with participation of the local community. LWSIT has already been active in conserving and promoting agro-biodiversity on one side and augmenting wild-biodiversity through protection and plantation of indigenous plant species, both in terrestrial (fruit & fodder trees) and coastal eco-system (mangrove). Such a process need to be intensified, well planned and monitored to assess the **impact in the short and long term, both on the livelihood of the local** community and improving the natural environment.

Nursery for indigenous plant

Agriculture: To promote 'Sustainable Agriculture', cost-benefit analysis of using farmer's rice-varieties with no-chemical fertilizer or pesticide can be demonstrated. This process will not only enable farmers to provide clean food but also help the farmer to cope up with uncertain weather condition. Indigenous rice seeds have more genetic potential to cope up with adverse environment in comparison to high yield varieties. This has already been initiated by LWSIT, but need to be expanded in the entire area of rural operation. Similarly, emphasis on additional programmes for revival of traditional control measures against seed as well as crop, introduction of Neem and Neem product, multiplication of *Azolla*, different bio-fertilizer and

bio-pesticides for generating a healthy environment and for conservation of Bio-diversity within the crop field should be given. Likewise, future programme should include sensitizing the farming community about low water requiring crops and ill of over abstraction leading to depletion of ground water resource. Integrated farming practices including use of backyard livestock for betterment of nutrition and economic upliftment of farm – families should be the ultimate objective.

Education: Education, formal or informal, must include Environment Education (EE) to help the community understand the value of natural resources and how to sustainably use the same. Natural goods and services derived by Human Society must be a part of EE curriculum. EE training should be made a focal area both for urban and rural programmes.

Health: Promotion of Indian Traditional Medicine, which has been accepted through scientific testing in preventive and curative treatment in modern medicine, can be well integrated with Healthcare Delivery system. Such a process will encourage conservation of Medicinal plant resources and traditional knowledge.

Water Resource: Rainwater harvesting has already been recognized as an Environmentally Sustainable water use. Promotion of check-dam and gully plugging for soil and water conservation, specially in erosion prone or fast run-off prone areas is to be recommended in rural areas; Adoption of replicable good-practice model of water purification from pond-water to drinking water for community use could provide access to safe drinking water; this has to be done as 'Collective Action' programme of the community by contributing voluntary labour and taking over the management systems.

Pond Excavation for Rainwater harvesting

Solid Waste Management: The Government of India has notified separate rules for Management of Municipal Solid Waste, Bio-medical Waste and Plastic Wastes etc. It is imperative that, unless local community participation through adequate campaign and training is ensured, implementation of the rules will remain far from satisfactory. LWSIT through its intensive connectivity in the area of operation, especially in the urban sector, has already taken up a programme in the right direction. This can be intensified, streamlined and expanded in the entire area of operation, especially in the urban locales.

Waste Water Management: The National Policy of India, 2002, provided the directive guidelines for sustainable use of water resources and also projected the declining availability of this finite resource with increasing population. LWSIT's areas of operation also include identified drought prone areas; in such areas reuse and recycling of waste water may provide additional valuable resource, especially for irrigation and plantation programme. Even in urban areas, such a policy of recycling can be promoted and expected benefits can be demonstrated, wherever possible.

Climate Change & Energy Efficiency: LWSIT can outreach the rural and urban target group by demonstrating use of "Fuel Saving Chullah" and "Solar Cooker" and benefit of energy efficiency through use of energy saving lighting system, now available in the market. At the end, reduction of carbon-emission is to be achieved to combat climate change. India's National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) clearly outlines the objectives of eight missions listed below:

- National Solar Mission,
- National Mission on Enhanced Energy Efficiency,
- National Mission on Sustainable Habitat,
- National Water Mission,
- National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Eco-system,
- National Mission for a Green India,
- National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture and
- National Mission on Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change

In each of which except for the ones on Himalayan Eco-system and Strategic Knowledge, LWSIT programmes can be tuned. The programme of Green India can be supported by promoting extensive plantation, suitable to the particular region and preferably indigenous species, both in the land and in the coastal belt (mangroves in the Sundarbans). This can be at the community level or at the household level, providing direct benefit to the families from the plant products (vegetables and fruits) but at the same time, the greening programme will help to increase carbon sink area and also to promote Conservation of Biodiversity. Use of indigenous seeds will help conserve agro-biodiversity for future generations, which inturn will prove more resilient to the impact of Climate Change.

Sanitation: Promoting sanitation through use of latrine with septic tank can help the community prevent entire diseases through water contamination. Location of such sanitary latrine and advantage of constructing double pit tank with squatting plate could be a focal point for deriving long term benefit. Emphasis on 100% sanitation in a village community should be an agenda, as any residual household can still cause concern and be the source of enteric diseases. Provision for clean water for bathing is essential to provide protection against dermal and other host of diseases; current practice of providing bathing enclosures with groundwater supply is already catering to such need and LWSIT can intensify this programme

along with other related programmes. Such provision will also provide privacy to the women bathers in the rural area.

Disaster Management: The increasing reality of climate change is likely to cause more natural disaster viz., floods, drought, storm surges and cyclones. Such natural disasters can not be prevented but, preparedness to cope up, need appropriate training and infrastructure; early warning system, evacuation route, provision for baby food and dry food, life saving drugs and provision of safe drinking water through pre-planning with construction of hand pumps on high raised platforms, can be of immense help. Similarly, adequate supply of ORS and disinfectants must be ensured to cope up with the condition after a calamity.

Identifying appropriate environmental management tools:

Environment Profile of any project should aim at focusing that, there is no contradiction between suggested pathway and long term environment concern. In case of Agriculture, the focus should on sustainable Agriculture" to ensure soil nutrition on one side and chemical free production on the other by right seed selection, use of mulching technique, use of compost and bio-fertilizer; such a process with indigenous rice varieties will provide additional benefit of better roofing material for rural housing.

Likewise in case of accessing drinking water from ground water aquifer, selection of depth, rate of recharge and design of the hand pump, will provide environmentally acceptable supply system.

Such management tools can also be pre-planned in case of promotion of livelihood by poultry farming through recommending country chicken instead of Red Leghorn or other exotic breeds; such chicken rearing will be easier with household level often available in any village household.

Enhancement

The entire work programme of LWSIT, support the laid down Development Policy of the State viz., Agriculture, Water Resource, Health, Energy, Education, Disaster Management, Sanitation and livelihood improvement. In reality, LWSIT project lend lateral support from Civil Society to achieve welfare oriented projects but with positive participation of the stakeholders. Any conflict between the system of administration and role of CSO's are to be resolved to create an enabling environment. The linkage with Academicia, other CSO's can further broaden the scope to achieve a common goal of improving "Quality of Life" through demonstrative and replicable project model, with obvious participation of the stakeholders. In the entire process of project implementation, a democratic approach of community participation with gender equity is to be ensured for inclusive growth.

Enhanced Role

There are instances when external factors / externalities in the project area tend to affect the benefits of LWSIT programmes to the beneficiary community. It means that LWSIT projects and activities in such cases cannot be implemented in isolation. Besides, there are some issues in LWSIT programme areas which need wider role, coordination and linkage. LWSIT shall work to raise awareness of the need to mainstream environmental sustainability into all development programmes. LWSIT encourages the creation of an enabling environment for environmental protection with a focus on the legal framework, encourages the inclusion of a wide range of actors (government, academics and civil society organisations, in particular women's groups) in policy dialogue, and ensure that a diversity of interests are represented, including those of indigenous people.

Climate Change

The Global Community has been sensitized on the issue of 'Climate Change' since UN Conference on Environment & Development (UNCED) held on Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. Impacts of climate change may include Sea level rise, changes in Rainfall & Temperature, Water resource, Agriculture, Communicable diseases, Infrastructure etc. etc. Considering 25% of people in India live within 50 km of coastline of nine maritime states, the Government of India has announced a National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC). The underlying principle remains 'Adaptation' and 'Mitigation'. LWSIT currently operating in the coastal states is to pay special attention to sensitize the population on the phenomena of Climate Change & Global Warming and India's National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC). Climate Change can be combated through 'Adaptation' and 'Mitigation'.

While 'Adaptation' process is less cost intensive and more of a question of changing practices to cope up with uncertain weather, 'Mitigation' process demand, use of clean technology, LWSIT is to promote 'Sustainable Agriculture' with adaption of indigenous seed to fight against drought and flood, 'Rainwater Harvesting' to provide water security and ensure cheap protein food by native fish culture, use of 'Solar Energy' to cut down carbon emission and promoting renewable energy; similar efforts are to be made to promote 'Energy Efficiency' in the urban sector, which can reduce carbon emission and save subscribers expenses. LWSIT can also play significant role in promoting energy efficiency through campaigning for more energy saving lighting devices. The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) of Ministry of Power, Government of India provides an ideal focal point for linkage along with State level Renewable Energy Development Agency.

Special emphasis for Sustainable Agriculture should be given in Coastal belt advocating salt tolerant indigenous rice varieties. Seed Banks, established by LWSIT at community level, should be enriched with collection of farmer's varieties.

Mangrove plantation and increase of Green area is accepted a goal of LWSIT. Both can help in carbon sequestration and help combat climate change.

Conservation of Biodiversity

Human Society, both in Urban and Rural areas heavily depend on Biological Resources, either as direct product for consumption or value added products. All food, fodder for animals, rural cooking fuel, 70% of modern medicine, natural textile fibers, paper & pulp, leather & hide, spices and natural beverages are derived from wild biodiversity or agro-biodiversity, land based or water based. All stakeholders are to be sensitised about the need to conserve these invaluable resources through a process of documentation; with people's participation. Preparation People's Biodiversity Register (PBR) has become the priority area of activity along with formation of Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC) at the local level. The PBR document will provide the basic informations on the population, socio economic profile, current landuse, water resources, fishery & animal husbandry related resources, agricultural & horticultural crops and also provide data on wild biodiversity, both plants and animals, present in the landscape and waterscape of the concerned area; it will also document the Traditional Knowledge of the village community on the uses of bioresources in the past and in present times. This activity is to be promoted by LWSIT to ensure control over access of Biological Resources and setting up a system of Benefit Sharing as per India's Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and Rules, 2004. The act mandated a three tier structure viz., at the national level in the form of National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) at the state level as State Biodiversity Board (SBB) and at local level in the form of Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC). The Act and the Rules also provided rights to the local community on the issue of Access & Transfer of bioresources for commercial use and suggested a principle of benefit sharing between the providers of bioresource and/or Traditional Knowledge for commercial utilisation. The Act and the Rules also stipulated setting up of National Biodiversity Fund at the apex, State Biodiversity Fund in each states and Local Biodiversity Fund under each BMC. It is to be noted that, BMC members (total 07) are to be nominated by the local community, with at least with 02 women members and 18% members from the Scheduled Cast & Scheduled Tribe community. The resources at the disposal of the biodiversity funds are to be used for augmentation, conservation and promoting sustainable utilisation.

Collective Advocacy

The Indian Constitution provides fundamental rights to Clean Environment and 73rd & 74th Amendment further empowers the system of Local Self Government. The role of civil society in such a scenario calls for more concerted efforts for collective actions cutting across the strata. Collective action may not be through a process of confrontation to establish rights, but may be through arbitration, mediation and conciliation. Obviously right approach to Advocacy demands knowledge of extant policies and laws. India being a welfare state and largest democracy in the World, the policy of advocacy has a legacy. Community therefore can be trained for collective advocacy for clean environment, clean air to breath, clean water to drink and clean habitat to live. But collective advocacy may also necessitate 'collective action' – a

process of volunteerism to share responsibility with the system of governance towards achieving the common goal.

Collective Advocacy will gain strength once the stakeholders have full awareness of their rights and duties. LWSIT therefore needs to sensitize the stakeholder communities through a process of Training and Awareness, on the rights and the duties of citizens with regard to environmental governance. Conservation of Natural Resources – Land and Water, Atmosphere, Biodiversity and Biomass have been marked as priority areas for action under National Strategy along with continuing emphasis on Population Control. Civil Society Organisation like LWSIT is to be committed to follow National Development Policies from Environmental Perspectives.

In summary, LWSIT is to

- Integrate all Development Project with Environmental Concerns.
- Assist community to document local Living Natural Resources – Biological Diversity both in the wild and in settled agricultural landscape, and prepare People's Biodiversity Register (PBR).
- Assist the forest dwelling community to establish rights over land under the 'Forests Right Act,' 2006. The Act has empowered tribals and other traditional forest dwellers that are living in such areas at least for three generations (75 years), to get the land right in the form of land *patta* upto a maximum of 04 ha. It also made provision for compensation to be paid to any individual/family for the relocation and resettlement outside notified protected areas. These rights are heritable but not alienable or transferable. The beneficiaries of the Forests Right Act, are also expected to get the benefits that are normal available to the revenue villages.
- Set up model project in selected areas, which can be replicated elsewhere.
- Promote the concept of 'Reuse, Recycle and Reduce' with regard to Natural Resource.
- Promote Sustainable Agriculture by use of Traditional Varieties without chemical Pesticide or Fertilizer.
- Advocate Energy Efficiency and Use of Solar Power, to support NAPCC.
- Use of bio-gas instead of biomass, fuelwood, kerosene, coal should be promoted as a part of Clean Fuel Campaign for cooking.
- Promote Afforestation of non-mangrove and mangrove areas to assist carbon sequestration, offer better habitat for biodiversity.
- Advocate Rainwater Harvesting and appropriate use of groundwater resource.
- Set up of Seed Bank for ensuring and facilitate exchange of farmer's varieties.
- Prepare easy to follow Disaster Management Plan with early warning, setting up rescue centre, provision of dry food and life saving drugs, baby food, halogen tablets and drinking water.
- Training and Awareness Programme for each of the sector of activity to sensitize and prepare the target community (stakeholder).

- Continue dialogue with the system of governance at Block, Sub-division and District level for facilitating the project work.
- LWSIT shall also link their programmatic results with other village level or district level development plans for better integrating environmental issues and provides opportunity to prioritize environmental issues.

Linkages to Strategy Actions

- The objectives and principles of LWSIT environment policy need to be met through commitment through which it will be fully implemented and institutionalized.
- LWSIT will put mechanism to monitor and review progress in implementing the environment policy and results will be reported in LWSIT's Annual Report.
- Through this policy, LWSIT along with partnered NGOs will be able to bring change in the perception, attitude and mindset of the community on various environment issues related to water, waste management, natural resources management, and watershed management.

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