

**Government of India
National Advisory Council**

28 July, 2011

1. The Fifteenth meeting of the National Advisory Council was chaired by Smt. Sonia Gandhi on 28th July, 2011 at 2 Motilal Nehru Place, New Delhi.
2. Members who attended the meeting were Prof M. S. Swaminathan, Dr. Narendra Jadhav, Prof. Pramod Tandon, Ms. Aruna Roy, Shri Madhav Gadgil, Shri Naresh C. Saxena, Shri Deep Joshi, Ms. Anu Aga, Ms. Farah Naqvi, Shri Harsh Mander and Ms Mirai Chatterjee.
3. Shri Deep Joshi, Convener presented to the Council the Working Group's recommendations on Natural Resource Management (NRM) in convergence with Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)
4. Some of the key recommendations as presented by the Working Group are as follows:
 - a. Create a Mission Structure for Intensive Support & Facilitation
 - b. Decentralise Planning to Natural Village/Hamlet
 - c. Create Technical Capacity at Various Levels Down to the Village
 - d. Create a Training & Support Mechanism with Earmarked Funds to Train Village Resource Persons & Provide Implementation Support
 - e. Insist on 2/3rd Investment on Natural Resources Management
 - f. Set up Mechanisms for Convergence with Schemes for Utilisation of Productive Assets
5. The fundamental principles recommended by the Working Group are:
 - 5.1 At least two-thirds of all works in financial terms at the Block/Mandal level under MGNREGA shall focus on the development of land and water resources to result in sustainable increase in productivity of such resources and incomes to the poor.
 - 5.2 No other works will be taken up in a Gram Panchayat under MGNREGA until the NRM works proposed by the Gram Panchayat, based on hamlet level plans, are implemented.
 - 5.3 There shall be overriding priority on developing assets of the poor, especially of BPL, SC and ST households and land allotted under Forest Rights Act.

- 5.4 Works shall be taken up on the basis of multi-year plans drawn at the level of a natural village or hamlet through a participative process. The plans shall be based on scientific principles to develop the natural resource base in a village. Such plans shall have built-in provision for convergence of other schemes, such as Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) /Rainfed Areas Development Program (RADP), National Horticulture Mission (NHM), etc. to enhance productivity and incomes.
 - 5.5 Section 1 of Schedule I of the MGNREGA, refers to the permitted works under MGNREGS. Works such as water conservation and water harvesting, drought proofing (including afforestation and tree plantation), renovation of traditional water bodies including desilting of tanks, land development and flood control are confined to Common lands. Whereas item (iv) of the Section 1 of the Schedule refers to works to be taken up on individual lands belonging to the SC/STs or BPL families or IAY beneficiaries or small and marginal farmers. It is recommended that under category of (iv), works such as provision of irrigation facilities including irrigation wells, horticulture, planting of trees, herbs, grasses, land leveling, boulder removal and measures to enhance soil fertility such as tank silt application shall be taken on land belonging to SC, ST, BPL, IAY beneficiaries, small and marginal farmers. Works on lands of small and marginal farmers will be taken up only after saturating lands of SC, ST, BPL farmers and IAY beneficiaries.
 - 5.6 Preference will be given to community wells where irrigation wells are being taken up.
 - 5.7 Mahatma Gandhi NREGA plans shall override all other plans made for watershed development by any other agency, including government departments.
 - 5.8 The systems of implementation shall ensure greater say of key stakeholders, such as the wage seekers in deciding the type of works and the timing for their opening, in conformity with the provisions of the Act.
 - 5.9 Mechanisms for capacity building to plan and implement natural resource development schemes shall be institutionalized with greater participation of civil society organizations working in the field.
6. After deliberations, the NAC agreed with the recommendations which shall be communicated to the Government shortly.
 7. Dr. Narendra Jadhav, Convener presented to the Council the Working Group's findings and proposals on Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes. The proposals will be further deliberated in the Working Group. This is work in

progress.

8. Ms. Mirai Chatterjee Convener of Working Group on Social Security presented the progress on the consultations held so far on the subject. This work is in progress.
9. Ms. Aruna Roy, Convener of Working Group on Accountability & Transparency gave a presentation on Pre-Legislative Process. This work is in progress.
10. A new Working Group on Minority Affairs has been constituted with Shri Harsh Mander as the Convener.
11. The next meeting of the NAC is scheduled to be held on 26 August, 2011.