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सचिव एवं महानिदेशक

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MESSAGE

Sustainable development has a strong linkage between the socio-cultural and principles of ecological economics in natural resource management. Land, water and vegetation are vital ecological components of our socio-economic system and mainstay of Indian agriculture. India has a total geographical area of 329 Mha which is 2.3% of the world's land area. Out of which, about 120 Mha is suffering from various forms of land degradation. Likewise, total water resources of India have been estimated to be 1869 billion cubic meter (4% of global water resources) and presently agriculture consumes about 80% of available water. The growing population and competing demands of water are projected to reduce the share of water diverted to agriculture in future. The challenge, therefore, is to produce more for growing population with limited water availability, shrinking land resources, declining factor productivity and under new threats of climate change affecting water resources availability and their distribution.

In view of the above, there is an urgent need to conserve the ecological balance between land, water and bio-resources and maintain their productivity for sustainable food production. Furthermore, it is also important to ensure that the impact of climate change does not affect the ecological components in the biosphere, whereby, the sustainable development is affected *per se*. Thus, it is important need to develop adaptation and mitigation strategies to counter the challenges of climate change.

It is a pleasure to know that the Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Jammu (SKUAST of Jammu) and Indian Ecological Society (IES) is organising a Conference on "Natural Resource Management: Ecological Perspectives" in Jammu on 18-20 February, 2016. I hope the recommendations of the Seminar will be useful to all the stakeholders environmental arena including farmers, foresters and policy makers alike.

I wish the Seminar a great success.

(S. Ayyappan)

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