

Special Purpose Planning : Hilly Region



Course: Regional Planning and Rural Development (CC-05)

(M.A. Geography, Sem. - 11)

By

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Lecture-1

Concept:

The hills pose problems which are peculiar and distinct from the problems of the plain areas. The hill ecosystem has become fragile. Increasing pressure of population has caused stresses and strains in many ways and things are reaching a stage where serious measures are called for. The terrain besides cultural and socio- economic diversities call for formulation of altogether different methodology of planning. The formulation of region specific development strategies for different hill areas of the country require a detailed information about the social, economic, political and cultural features, resource endowment (both human and physical), development potential and their particular problems as a basic pre-condition.

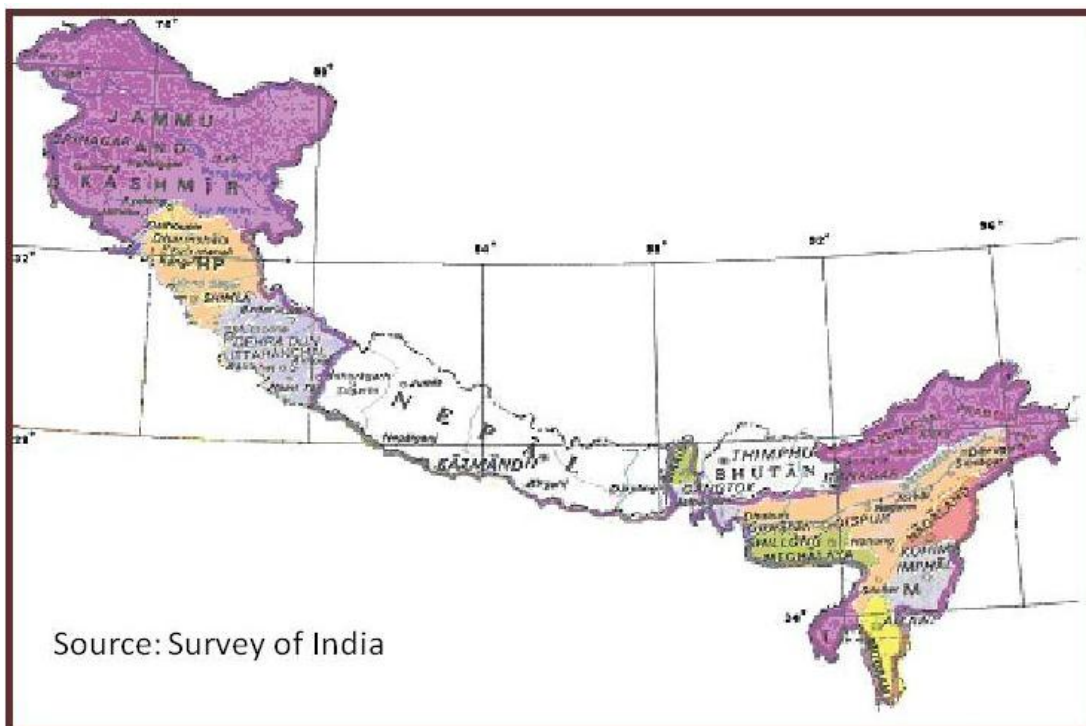
The guiding principles of hill area development programme are based on the promotion of basic life support system and judicious utilization of land, water, minerals and biotic resources in a total perspective (considering the interest of hills and plains both). The whole strategy should centre on the active participation of the people in the fulfillment of their basic needs. “Social fencing” implies a voluntary and self-imposed discipline in managing society’s resources at a local level.

Hilly Region:

The hill areas in India constitute roughly 17% of the country’s total land area. These areas broadly fall into two categories,

- *The areas which are co-extensive with the boundaries of the state or union territory , and*
- *Those which form a part of the state.*

The first category includes the state and union territories of the North eastern region, Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. These are termed as “Special Category States” whose outlays are met substantially out of central assistance. For the integrated development of these hill states of the Northern Eastern Region, the Central Govt. has set up the North Eastern Hill Council in 1971 by an act of parliament. The council takes up schemes of common interest to more than one state or union territory and to the region as a whole under its development plan. It has played an important role in the development of inter-regional programmes of power generation, construction of roads, agriculture, animal husbandry, fisheries etc. It also supports research and experimental projects.



Hilly region forming part of larger composite state occurs in Assam, Uttarakhand and West Bengal in the sub- Himalayan

region. These include Karbi Anglong and North Cachher districts of Assam (15,200 sq.km), Darjeeling district of West Bengal (2400sq.km) , and Dehradun, Pauri Garhwal, Tehri Garhwal, Chamoli , Uttarkashi, Almora, Pithoragarh and Nainital districts of Utrakhand (51,100) sq.km. Other important hill areas extend over the Western Ghats incorporating 132 Talukas in the states of Maharashtra, M.P, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Goa and Kerala (1, 34,500sqkm). Here, central assistance is provided for development programmes before the introduction of the concept of sub- plan.

Major Problems:

Deforestation, soil erosion, flood hazard, low productivity, decreasing forest based products, land-water management and increasing poverty.

Programmes during Five Year Plans:

5th Five year plan- Starting of sub-plan concept

6th Five year plan – Ecology and development

7th Five year plan – Eco-restoration ,

- Eco-development, Eco-preservation

8th Five year plan- Modern agriculture

Small & cottage industries

Village industries

Land-water resources

People's participation.

The primary responsibility for the development of these hilly areas is that of the concerned state govts. The need for central

assistance has, however been felt since the 2nd five year plan. The central assistance to the Hill Area Development Programme (HADP) has been further the constituent states giving equal weightage to the area and population systematized since the 5th five year plan. The special central assistance (SCA) is being allocated among of the hilly areas regulated by Gadgil formula.

Gadgil Formula (1969-70): *It allocates 60% weightage to population, 10% to per capita income if lower than the national average, 10% on the basis of ongoing major / medium irrigation projects, 10% on the basis of tax effort of the state and finally 10% for special / urgent problems.*

Modified Gadgil Formula (1980): *It allocates 60% weightage to population, 20% on the basis of per capita income if less than 10 – 20% of the national average, 10% on the basis of tax effort and 10% on the basis of natural calamity or severe problems.*

Planning and Programmes:

The hill area development programmes place adequate emphasis on exploiting the indigenous resources of the hills through specially designed programmes for the dev of horticulture plantations , agriculture, animal husbandry, poultry, bee- keeping, forestry, soil conversation and suitable village industries. The focus is essentially on a package of activities that could be absorbed by the local people. The co-operatives or farmer's societies has been given great importance.

Programmes:

- *To check erosion and raising the productivity and consolidation of landholdings.*
- *Population control measures – family planning programmes*
- *To improve various govt. programmes through monitoring of capital and physical plans*
- *Afforestation through local self – bodies and others*
- *Improving agricultural practices through agro- climatic regions, soil suitability test,*
- *For Jhumias - special programmes have been launched to-prevent jhum cultivation and rehabilitate them in settled agricultural practices. To develop plantation of rubber and coffee and rehabilitate Jhumias in such plantation agriculture has been encouraged.*
- *Animal husbandry/livestock raising has been encouraged in view of stock of animal, availability and pastures and forest. The programmes also include scientific breeding approach, strong protective and curative animal health cover and processing and marketing of the produce.*
- *In forestry programmes, production of forestry such as plantation (coffee, tea, spices etc), agro-forestry and social forestry have been emphasized.*
- *In horticulture programme, development of orchards (apple, grapes and banana) and their marketing have been stressed.*
- *The hill areas may develop industries which require pollution free atmosphere, cold climate based on high skills and high value*

addition- electronics, watch makings, optical glass, furniture, medicines and drugs. Cottage industries like carpet manufacturing and handlooms are also suitable activities.

- *Development of non-conventional sources of energy.*
- *Developing means of transportation and communication*
- *Safe quarrying and mining.*
- *Tourism is one of the most important industries which should be properly developed*
- *An integrated strategy has to be made for the presentation of the valuable flora and fauna through biosphere reserves, national parks and sanctuaries.*
- *The need for increasing public awareness about the environmental issues and to stimulate public participation in the activities for environmental protection have to be emphasized*
- *Eco- preservation should be kept in mind while carrying any activity in hilly areas e.g. a paper project should include the cost of afforestation and its economic viability has to be determined accordingly.*
- *For scientific planning of hilly areas-information about the available resources-soil, water, minerals, vegetation etc- should be achieved through RS and GIS.*
- *Scientific, sustainable and eco-friendly development strategies have to be adopted in the hilly areas to fetch maximum returns and bring forth development of the concerned area.*

Recommendations:

1. ***Developmental Zones:*** *The task force recommends that the balance between the natural resource exploitation*

and conservation should tilt in favour of the latter. Zones must be identified for appropriate activities such as;

- *Zones of snow, alpine, sub-alpine areas and sacred landscapes to be protected to be any cost, for maintaining the flow of vital ecosystem services and for respecting and preserving religio-cultural values,*
- *All natural water zones (glacier, rivers, lakes and spring) must be strictly protected. Activities in any of the zones that in any way, adversely impact should be barred. Areas that harboured natural springs must be converted “spring sanctuaries” and this concept should be incorporated in all planning.*
- *Forest zone should conserve and augmented for environmental services and biodiversity values. Such zone should also be available for sustainable bio and NTFP, including bamboo, prospecting, and for eco- tourism*
- *Zones for fertile river valleys at lower attitudes should be utilized maximizing agricultural production but conversion of agricultural land to other uses in such zones should not be allowed. Areas where shifting or terraced agriculture is practiced should be earmarked for unique crops, organic agriculture, horticulture, agro- forestry, and for introducing better managements practices,*
- *River zones for decentralized electricity production should be earmarked to meet the household and small industrial requirements.*

2. Road, rail and air connectivity: *The task recommends two loop railways lines – one for the western Himalayan region connecting Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand, and the*

other for the north- eastern region. These two loops should be linked to each other through the existing national network of the north and eastern railway. The road network of IHR must link up with the rail network at appropriate places for performing the aforementioned functions. The road network should also be linked up with air services so as to provide opportunities for perishable goods and persons needing emergency health to reach the rest of the country or outside. The task force recommends that every IHR state should have at least one small air- strip for accepting large helicopters and short take-off and landing planes.

Other Recommendations:

- 1. Mountain Perspectives and Sensitisation*
- 2. Education and Skill Development*
- 3. Natural Resource Analysis and Advisory Centre*
- 4. Strategic Environmental Assessment*
- 5. Financial Incentives, Rewards and Relaxations*
- 6. Resource Sharing between IHR States*
- 7. Waterways and Ropeways*
- 8. Waste Management*
- 9. Disaster Preparedness and Mitigation*
- 10. Industries*
- 11. Climate Chang*
- 12. National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem*

India Hill Stations

Map Showing Major Hill Stations

