CHAPTER-XV

FORESTRY STATISTICS

Reliable forestry statistics are required at the national level by different agencies for planning, policy analysis, and making decisions on forestry investment and development programmes. Statistics are also required to monitor and evaluate the impact of policies and programmes. To make this information available at one place, Directorate of Statistics, Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education, Dehra Dun, has been created under FREEP. The specific task to be carried out by DOS, as listed in Staff Appraisal Report (SAR) document of FREEP are as follows :

- identify and agree with MOEF, the primary and secondary forestry data to be collected;
- liaison with agencies concerned with the collection of primary or secondary data;
- collect, collate and process the agreed data;
- check on data reliability;
- provide required data to MOEF, or other authorised users, in a timely fashion.

It is also mentioned in SAR that DOS would also establish close linkages with other information networks such as NICNET.

FORESTRY STATISTICS INDIA

Directorate of Statistics has been collecting data on forest and pressure on forest from various agencies. For collection of data, two-way approach has been followed. The designed formats were sent to the various States/UT's and/or other agencies. Simultaneously, formats were sent to different Institutes of Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education, working in the various States/UTs. In most of the cases, two sets of formats were received from States/UTs, which were used later for validation of data.

Meanwhile, at the Directorate of Statistics, efforts were made to finalise the computer software in which the data should be stored. DBMS requires, keeping in view the quantum and different types of data we are involved with, a capable programmer who can define database structures for different type of data and then, must be capable of establishing relations among those generated databases. Therefore, it was decided to consider that software in which the available staff can be easily trained in reasonably short time. Most of the staff was conversant with electronic spread sheet and thus, the Microsoft Excel was the suitable choice. Staff was given training in Microsoft Excel by the Officers of the Directorate, on how to key data into it. They were also trained to handle preliminary calculations, manipulations and other required commands which were felt essential in view of the job in hand.

Keeping in view data so gathered, the decision was to be taken up regarding the forms in which these information can be stored for further use of clients and user agencies. These forms were generated so that clients and user agencies could establish linkages with already available data book "India's Forest 1987". Therefore, seventeen chapters were defined which include most of the table formats which were available in India's Forest 1987.

After finalisation of formats for data collection, these were sent to the SFD's and other agencies. Collected data was scrutinised and keyed in. After editing, the book "Forestry Statistics India, 1995", was published in June 1995.

Forestry statistics India, 1988-94

There is a gap in generation of statistical information during the period from 1988 to 1994, viz. the time that lapsed between the publications India's Forest 1987' and Forestry Statistics India, 1995'. To fulfil this gap in information, Directorate of Statistics decided to send out standard formats to States and UT Forest Departments for compilation of Forestry Statistics India, 1988-94. A limited number of formats have, however, been circulated for this purpose. It was felt that information, in areas where continuity was desirable, should only be collected for this period. Information from other Central and State agencies were also collected for this purpose. This task was not the original mandate. The compilation of data for this period was added to the action plan.

After finalisation of additional formats for data collection, these were sent to the SFD's and other agencies. Collected data was scrutinised and errors were rectified in consultation with the State Forest Departments. The book Forestry Statistics India, 1988-94 is being printed now.

Forestry statistics India, 1996

This task was deferred due to activities taken up to compile Forestry Statistics India, 1988-94. Simultaneous collection of data for Forestry Statistics India, 1996 and Forestry Statistics India, 1988-94 could have caused serious confusion.

Formats for data collection have been finalised and sent to the different States, UT's and the Ministries. The date formats are more broad based than the ones used for Forestry Statistics India, 1995. Data received/collected so far, is being posted.

TIMBER / BAMBOO TRADE BULLETIN

On the recommendations of National Commission on Agriculture (NCA), the farm forestry programmes were started in the late 1970s and farmers were encouraged to grow trees on field bunds and in certain compact blocks in their fields. NCA had hoped that farmers would grow trees for meeting their bonafide domestic needs. It was observed that trees were planted more for sale as poles and pulp wood than for use as fuel wood. The extra income from trees was responsible for the notable success of the farm forestry programme. The market orientation of farmers has also been highlighted in the new National Forest Policy of 1988 which states that, the forest based industry should meet its raw material requirements by establishing a direct relationship with individuals who can grow trees on farm lands. The new National Forest Policy, thus, encourages the farmers to grow more trees.

Initial enthusiasm for farm forestry, however, abated after 1986, as tree growing failed to yield financial returns commensurate with expectation of the farmers. The main reason for disappointment with farm forestry programmes in the northern states was, poor economic returns. Marketing of the forest produce grown by the farmers is very vital for the success of farm forestry and private tree planting programmes. Thus, market analysis assumes greater importance when more options are open to the farmer for growing a variety of trees.

The marketing information is helpful to the farmers in assessing the advantage of one crop over the other. It is, therefore, very important to monitor and disseminate market

information for giving impetus to tree planting. Keeping in view this goal, Directorate of Statistics is publishing Quarterly bulletins which deals with prevailing prices of timber and bamboos. Seven timber species, namely Teak, Sal Eucalyptus, Poplars, Casuarina, Chir pine, Deodar and Bamboos are being covered. The information is collected from nineteen markets namely, Nagpur, Jabalpur, Raipur, Madras, Calicut, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Ahmedabad, Delhi, Dehra Dun, Yamuna Nagar, Pathankot, Jammu, Gorakhpur, Guwahati, Calcutta, Ranchi and Siliguri, covering whole of India. So far nine (9) bulletins have been published by this Directorate starting from the first edition of December 94 to the latest for December 96. The data for March 97 bulletin is ready for publication.

BIOMETRICAL ASSISTANCE

Biometrical support has been provided to thirty five (35) research projects of different Institutes of ICFRE. In addition, counselling has been provided to the scientists of ICFRE institutes viz.; Jabalpur, Allahabad, Shimla, Dehradun etc.

NATIONAL FORESTRY DATABASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (NFDBMS)

For award of consultancy regarding development of NFDBMS, three firms were shortlisted. The project was discussed with the representatives of these firms. (At present the process of awarding this consultancy is in the final stages). The development of NFDBMS, includes the following steps :

- Feasibility study,
- Software procurement,
- Training,
- Design of NFDBMS,
- Programing,
- Training on Application Software,
- Data Entry,
- System testing,
- Checking of data entered,
- Data processing,
- Fine-tuning