PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGIONAL REVIEW MEETING HELD BY COCONUT DEVELOPMENT BOARD IN KOLKATA ON 12.04.2018

As part of drafting the Annual Action Plan of Coconut Development Board (CDB) for the year 2018-19 and also to take note on the status of implementation of the schemes and other activities during 2017-18, a Regional Review Meeting for the States of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Tripura and West Bengal was held under the chairmanship of Shri Saradindu Das, Chief Coconut Development Officer, CDB on 12.04.2018 at ICAR-Agricultural Technology Application Research Institute, Kolkata, West Bengal.

The officers from the State Agriculture/ Horticulture Departments of Governments of above States implementing CDB schemes were also invited for the meeting. However, no representation was there in the meeting from the States of Assam, Bihar and Tripura. The following officers & staff attended the meeting.

A. Coconut Development Board:
   1. Shri Lungan Obed, Director, CDB, Regional Office, Guwahati
   2. Shri Kokhan Debnath, Deputy Director (Dev.), CDB, State Centre, W. Bengal & in charge of CDB, Regional Office, Patna
   3. Smt. Rajat Pal, Deputy Director (Dev.), CDB, State Centre, Odisha
   4. Shri Ved Pal Singh, Asst. Director, CDB, DSP Farm, Kondagaon, Chhattisgarh
   5. Shri Kumaravel S, Development Officer, CDB, HO, Kochi
   6. Shri C. Sasikumar, Technical Officer, CDB, State Centre, West Bengal
   7. Shri Jyoti Shankar Basak, Technical Officer (Cont.), CDB, SC, Kolkata
   8. Shri Arun Bhowmik, Horticulture Assistant (Cont.), CDB, SC, Kolkata

B. Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh:
   1. Shri. MardoNinu, SDAO, Horticulture Dept., Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh

C. Govt. of Chhattisgarh:
   1. Shri V.K. Chaturvedi, Joint Director of Horticulture, Govt. of Chhattisgarh

D. Govt. of Meghalaya:
   1. Ms Nareen Ch Sangma, District Hort. Officer, West Garo Hills, Tura, Govt. of Meghalaya
   2. Shri Martin Shira, District Horticulture Officer, West Garo Hills, Ampati, Govt. of Meghalaya

E. Govt. of Mizoram:
   1. Shri R. Thasiama, Deputy Director of Horticulture, Govt. of Mizoram

F. Govt. of Nagaland:
   1. Dr. Elithang Lotha, Director of Horticulture, Govt. of Nagaland,

G. Govt. of Odisha:
   1. Shri S.K. Chand, Hort. Officer, Directorate of Horticulture, Govt. of Odisha

H. Govt. of West Bengal:
   1. Dr. Partha Pratim Paul, Asst. Director of Hort., Dept. of Food Processing Industries and Horticulture, Govt. of West Bengal
Shri Kokhan Debnath, DD, CDB, Kolkata welcomed the officers attended the meeting. Shri Saradinu Das, CCDO, CDB, Kochi informed that the Board has been allocated with the ever highest target of Rs. 196.00 cr. and could achieve an expenditure of Rs. 190.08 cr. during the year 2017-18 under various schemes of CDB in different States and briefed about the purpose of the meeting. Shri Kumaravel S, Development Officer, CDB made a detailed presentation covering all the schemes implemented by the CDB, status of implementation, utilization of funds released during 2017-18, tentative targets proposed for 2018-19, etc. for the States taken up for discussion. It was observed that the 4 States of Eastern India viz., Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and West Bengal contribute for about 4.64 % of the country’s area with about 3.93 % production. The Northeastern States of Assam, Nagaland and Tripura cover about 1.55 % area with 0.92 % production. The average productivity in the eastern States mentioned above is 11275 nuts per ha, which is better than the productivity of 8821 nuts per ha observed in the three NE States and the national average of 10611 nuts per ha.

It was observed that of the total Rs. 138.00 cr. allocated for regular schemes, 15.71% i.e. Rs. 18.52 cr. was allocated to these north and northeast States. Out of which 32.21 % funds were allocated for the schemes to be implemented through the State Departments and 67.79 % for direct implementation by the Board.

CCDO reviewed the Statewise & schemewise targets and achievements in respect of the above States and requested all the concerned to draft plans as per the needs and vision for betterment of the coconut farmers of the country. The stress may be given for timely and proper utilization of funds, especially earmarked under SCSP and TSP.

Arunachal Pradesh – Implementation through State Govt.

Shri. Mardo Ninu, SDAO, Horticulture Dept., Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh has informed about the implementation status of CDB schemes implemented through State Govt. and mentioned that the UC and progress report would be submitted by May 2018.

The State representative informed that the SLMC meeting would be convened during last week of April 2018 and the schemewise proposals for 2018-19 can be communicated to CDB during May 2018.

It was observed that the official data on area, production and productivity of coconut in Arunachal Pradesh is not available. The State was suggested to have the preliminary rough estimate on the same and plan the schemes for area expansion and productivity improvement, before finalizing the action plan for the year 2018-19.
Meghalaya – Implementation through State Govt.

Ms Nareen Ch Sangma and Shri Martin Shira, DHOs, West Garo Hills, Govt. of Meghalaya informed that the UC and the progress report for the funds of Rs. 27.08 lakh released under the schemes ‘Laying out of Demonstration Plots (LoDP) and ‘Establishment of Regional Coconut Nurseries (RCN) have already been submitted to the Board. The Director, CDB, RO, Guwahati was directed to meet the Director of Horticulture and other senior officers of Govt. of Meghalaya and finalise the action plan proposed for 2018-19.

The State Govt. may plan for large scale area expansion in the feasible areas for the benefit of the farmers of the State.

Nagaland – Implementation through State Govt.

The Director of Horticulture, Govt. of Nagaland, Dr. Elithang Lotha informed that the State has about 470 ha in 6 Districts under coconut, mainly as a homestead crop. During the year 2017-18 an amount of Rs. 51.95 lakh was released to the State Govt. under Integrated farming. The progress report and UC are under compilation which will be submitted to the Board shortly.

The Director of Horticulture informed that the State proposes to cover more area under coconut during 2018-19 and stressed the need for timely planting with assured irrigation for better establishment of the crop. CCDO suggested Assam Tall and WCT as good performing varieties in the northeastern conditions. He further added that the best time for planting would be the end of May in Nagaland conditions and the mortality rate will be less. From November onwards the seedlings are to be provided with shade till premonsoon showers to manage with the dry spell of winter. Drip or pot irrigation should be adopted for proper establishment of the seedlings.

To manage the termite problem which is detrimental in the young coconut seedlings, it was suggested for exposure of soil to the sun coupled with application of either common salt or chlorpyriphos or neem cake.

Dr. Lotha also requested for conducting training programmes to the farmers on scientific coconut cultivation. The CCDO directed the Director, CDB, RO, Guwahati to propose for the same during 2018-19.

Mizoram – Implementation through State Govt.

Shri R. Thasiama, Deputy Director of Horticulture, Govt. of Mizoram informed that the progress report for the funds released during 2017-18 was already submitted to the CDB. He informed that the area estimation is to be undertaken, as the coconut is mainly grown in the districts bordering Assam, Tripura and Bangladesh.

Regarding availability of quality coconut seedlings, the State representative was suggested to lift seedlings from Board’s Demonstration cum Seed Production
Farm in Abhayapuri, Assam. The State may also produce coconut seedlings with financial assistance under Board’s RCN scheme or may suggest the private individuals for taking up coconut nursery under ‘Establishment of Coconut Nurseries’ implemented by the Board.

The DDH was requested to submit the action plan proposal for 2018-19 at the earliest to the Board.

Chhattisgarh – Implementation through State Govt.

Shri V.K. Chaturvedi, Joint Director of Horticulture, Govt. of Chhattisgarh expressed the willingness of the State to implement AEP and LoDP by the State Dept. He proposed to cover about 400 to 500 ha under AEP for coconut in the State and the CDB requested to send a formal proposal so that actions can be initiated to reserve the seedlings available with the Board’s DSP Farm in Kondagaon, Chhattisgarh. The Deputy Director, CDB, Regional Office, Patna was directed to coordinate the activities in discussion with the State Officers and AD, CDB, DSP Farm, Kondagaon. If the State implements the scheme the cost of seedlings would be deducted from the eligible subsidy and the balance subsidy may be routed through the State Dept. for distribution to the eligible beneficiaries.

The JDH requested for imparting training on value addition in coconut to the trainers/officers of the Food Processing Training Centre at Raipur. The CCDO requested the JDH to send suitable proposal for the same so that the training can be conducted either in Board’s Institute of Technology in Kerala or in Chhattisgarh itself after discussions.

Odisha – Implementation through State Govt.

Shri S.K. Chand, Horticulture Officer, Directorate of Horticulture, Govt. of Odisha informed that the State has planned for production of 50,000 coconut seedlings only against the target of 100,000 seedlings during 2017-18 and hence proposed for release of Rs. 8.00 lakh under RCN. Under the Replanting & Rejuvenation, the survey was completed and SLMC approval was obtained and the implementation could be taken up during 2018-19 only. During 2018-19 additional area of 300 ha was proposed under the same.

The State Govt. proposed to take up AEP in about 1000 ha by converging with State run scheme and also willing to implement 100 ha under LoDP by the State Dept. Under CPIS, an allocation of Rs. 2.25 lakh was proposed for the year 2018-19.

On the proposal to allocate some budget for mobilization & extension activities like NHM for FPO formation, the Board suggested to take up extension activities under SCSP/ TSP subplans for the targeted group. The interested States can write to CDB for other training needs related to coconut.
The pending issue of realization of sale proceeds of funds released during 2011-12 under ‘Production of TxD hybrid coconut seedlings’ was discussed and the State representative was requested to expedite actions in the regard or the Board may adjust the same in future releases.

West Bengal – Implementation through State Govt.

Dr. Partha Pratim Paul, Asst. Director of Horticulture, Dept. of Food processing Industries and Horticulture, Govt. of West Bengal represented the State in the meeting. He informed that the State has made a resolution that the SLMC will only approve the schemes after beneficiary list is identified by Panchayat Raj System. As the Board is implementing the CDB schemes directly with the facilitation by the FPOs in coconut sector, it was decided that the issue will be taken up at appropriate levels for further consideration. However, the withdrawal cannot be undertaken immediately as the spillover activities are to be completed.

The ADH was requested to arrange for furnishing UC by the State Dept. in the GFR format for the funds released already and progress report submitted. The State Govt. informed that the State would propose for revalidation of pending spill overs earlier achievements. Regarding implementation of CPIS in the State, the CCDO informed that a meeting is proposed with insurance agencies for making the scheme more farmer friendly. The ADH expressed the unwillingness to implement R&R in the State during 2018-19.

The CCDO requested the State representative to take a perspective view for increasing the production and productivity of coconut in the State which is having a high potential and support of State Government in implementing coconut development schemes in the State for the benefit of the coconut farmers.

On a query raised by the ADH, Govt. of West Bengal, it was informed that the HORTNET can be used for identification/ listing of beneficiaries.

Other issues:

The Deputy Director, CDB, SC, Kolkata suggested for making provision for transport subsidy for seed coconuts to NE States as the seednuts transportation cost from South India to the NE India costs about Rs. 50 per nut. Shri Obed also pointed out about the lesser subsidy under AEP in the States of Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh. The CCDO informed that the issues would be looked into.

The Director, CBD, RO, Guwahati explained about the marketing and value addition activities being taken up by the CDB in NE region. The market data may be shared with the State Governments concerned. The interested States for imparting training to the needy people for value addition may contact the CDB, Regional Office, Guwahati. The States can also dovetail the training activities with the Home Scale preservation of fruits and vegetables scheme.
It was opined that the Director, CDB, RO, Guwahati may visit the concerned officers in the State of Manipur and explore possibilities of implementation of CDB schemes in the State.

The State representatives of Odisha and West Bengal proposed for reorienting the jurisdiction of Board's State Centres West Bengal and Odisha to Board's Regional Office located at Patna instead of Guwahati in light of the logistical convenience to facilitate better liaisoning and access with the regional officers. The CCDO responded that the matter will be examined.

The CCDO requested all the State Representatives and the Director, CDB, RO, Guwahati to conduct the visits of the Joint Inspection Team to implementation sites of CDB schemes, interaction with farmers, assessing adoption and impact of implementation, etc. in a similar fashion to MIDH. This will help refining the schemes, mode of implementation, coining of new farmer oriented schemes, etc. for the betterment of the coconut farmers as well as the coconut industry as a whole.

The Board may facilitate the State Govts. to undertake surveys for estimation of area and production under coconut in the NE States where the data is not available so far.

The Officers of the Board from also made presentations on the activities undertaken during 2017-18 and proposals for 2018-19 under various schemes of the Board which were discussed in detail during the meeting.

All the State representatives as well as the Heads of Unit Offices of the Board were requested to communicate the formal proposal for various schemes of the Board to be undertaken during the year 2018-19, based on the discussions, at the earliest to facilitate early finalization of the Schemewise and Statewise targets. Further, the requirement of seedlings from the DSP Farms of the Board during 2018-19 may also be indicated.

The meeting concluded with the vote of thanks proposed by Shri Lungar Obed, Director, CDB, Regional Office, Guwahati.

Deputy Director