

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF LAND RESOURCES

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 625
TO BE ANSWERED ON 07.02.2025

Approval of new watershed development projects in Himachal Pradesh

625: Dr. Sikander Kumar:

Will the Minister of *Rural Development* be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has given approval to new watershed development projects in Himachal Pradesh;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether Government has taken any initiative to increase farmer's income and improve natural resource management in Himachal Pradesh?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(Dr. CHANDRA SEKHAR PEMMASANI)

(a) & (b) Yes Sir.

Under Watershed Development Component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana 2.0. (WDC-PMKSY 2.0), DoLR has till date sanctioned 26 projects to Himachal Pradesh covering an area of 0.54 lakh ha at a total cost of Rs.151.20 crore (Central share: Rs.136.08 crore). Since inception of the scheme, an amount of Rs.55.77 crore has been released to the State as Central share (as on 31.1.2025). DoLR has decided to sanction additional watershed projects during 2024-25 under WDC-PMKSY 2.0 to the best performing States/UTs, including Himachal Pradesh.

Selection of the States for sanction of additional projects was done based on their performance in implementing the already sanctioned WDC-2.0 projects like percentage of expenditure incurred against total project cost; proportion of expenditure in current Natural Resource Management (NRM) component; percentage of degraded land/wasteland/ rainfed areas; hilly states having potential for springshed activities.

The tentative area allocated for sanction of additional projects to Himachal Pradesh is 14425 hectares. The State has to identify project area corresponding to the allocated area, based on the stipulated criteria and which shall then be appraised and sanctioned by the Department.

(c) The main objective of watershed development is resource conservation, resource generation and resource utilization. WDC-PMKSY, through its interventions, seeks to address the concerns of land degradation, improving productivity. It rejuvenates watershed landscapes, which leads to improvement in physical properties of degraded soils and sustenance of ground water, reduction of surface runoff, reduction in soil erosion and sedimentation of reservoirs. Springs Rejuvenation ensures sustainable development through improved natural resource management and better resilience of farmers to climate change and generates livelihood opportunities for the watershed communities.

The End-line evaluation reports of completed projects reveal that there is significant improvement in availability of surface & ground water, increase in productivity, vegetative cover, enhanced livelihood opportunities and household incomes in project areas.

In Himachal Pradesh, under WDC-PMKSY 2.0, from 2022-23 to 2024-25 (Q-3), 367 Water Harvesting Structures have been created / rejuvenated, 1421 ha have been brought under protective irrigation, 16547 framers benefitted. Additionally, 1710 ha have been covered with soil and moisture conservation activities, 2055 ha of degraded /rainfed area developed and 1.46 lakh mandays/employment days have been generated.
