

III

Agricultural Inputs

Water Resource and Irrigation Potential

8.38 Average annual surface water flow available in the country is estimated at around 1869 billion cubic metre (bcm). However, because of the topographical, hydrological and other constraints, only about 690 bcm of the available surface water can be utilised, in addition to the annual replenishable ground water resources of 432 bcm. Thus, the total utilisable water resource in the country is assessed at 1122 bcm. The present utilisation of water for various purposes such as drinking, irrigation, industry and energy, etc. is about 750 bcm. The use of water for irrigation constitutes about 84 per cent of the water used. With the increase in demand of water for other uses, the share of water use for irrigation is likely to go down to about 73 per cent by 2025 AD.

8.39 The Ultimate Irrigation Potential (UIP) has been reassessed at 139.89 million hectare (m.ha). This is based on the re-assessment of the ground water potential raised to 64.05 m.ha from 40 m.ha earlier and re-assessment of potential of surface minor irrigation from 15 m.ha to 17.38 m.ha. Thus,

there has been an increase of 26.39 m.ha in the UIP of the country, which was 113.5 m.ha before re-assessment.

8.40 Creation of irrigation potential and its optimum utilization continues to receive high priority in Government planning. From 22.6 million hectares of irrigation potential in 1950, the country's created irrigation potential is estimated to have gone up to about 94.7 million hectares by 1999-2000 comprising 35.3 million hectares under major and medium projects and 59.4 million hectares under minor irrigation potential. The capacity and utilization of irrigation potential is listed in Table 8.16.

8.41 With a view to ensuring early completion of irrigation projects, the Government of India launched the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP) in 1996-97, under which the Centre provides additional central assistance by way of loans to the States for early completion of selected large irrigation and multi-purpose projects. Rs. 4031.98 crore had been released under AIBP as Central Loan Assistance (CLA) to the States during 1996 to 2000. CLA of Rs.915.71 crore has been released by end of November, 2000. With effect from 1999-2000 CLA under AIBP is also being provided for Minor irrigation projects of North-east region, hill states and drought prone districts of Orissa. The revised funding pattern for general category States is in the ratio of 2:1 (Centre: State) whereas that for the Special Category States of North East Region, hill states of J&K, HP and Sikkim and for selected districts of Orissa is in the ratio of 3:1 (Centre: State). The other steps taken to extend irrigation benefits to more areas include promotion of better water management practices, installation of sprinkler and drip irrigation systems in water scarce and drought-prone areas, conjunctive use of surface and ground water and farmers' participation in irrigation water management. Under-utilisation of irrigation potential particularly under major and medium irrigation projects, continues to persist. To reduce the gap between the irrigation potential created and utilised and, to increase crop productivity under the command areas, Command Area Development Programme (CADP) has been under implementation since 1974-75. During 1999-2000, Rs. 163.3 crore were released to States as Central assistance under the programme.

Irrigation Schemes	At the end of Seventh Plan (1985-90)	At the end of Eighth Plan (1992-97)	Ninth plan Target (1997-2002)	At the end of (1999-2000)*
Major & Medium Irrigation				
Potential	29.9	32.96	9.81	35.35
Utilisation	25.5	28.44	8.71	30.47
Minor Irrigation				
Potential	46.6	56.60	7.24	59.38
Utilisation	43.1	52.32	4.93	54.23
Total				
Potential	76.5	89.56	17.05	94.73
Utilisation	68.6	80.76	13.64	84.70
* : Provisional				

8.42 National water Policy 1987 states that the water rate should be such that user knows the scarcity value of water and is motivated for efficient use of water. It was therefore expected that the water rate charged should cover annual maintenance and operation cost and a part of

the fixed cost. However, the water rates have not been revised by most of the states for the last two or three decades. A few states revised water rates during the period 1981-86 but these new rates were not enforced.