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ISSUES AND AGENDA FOR THE 21ST CENTURY
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NURTURING ARID ZONES FOR PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT: ISSUES AND AGENDA FOR THE 21st CENTURY

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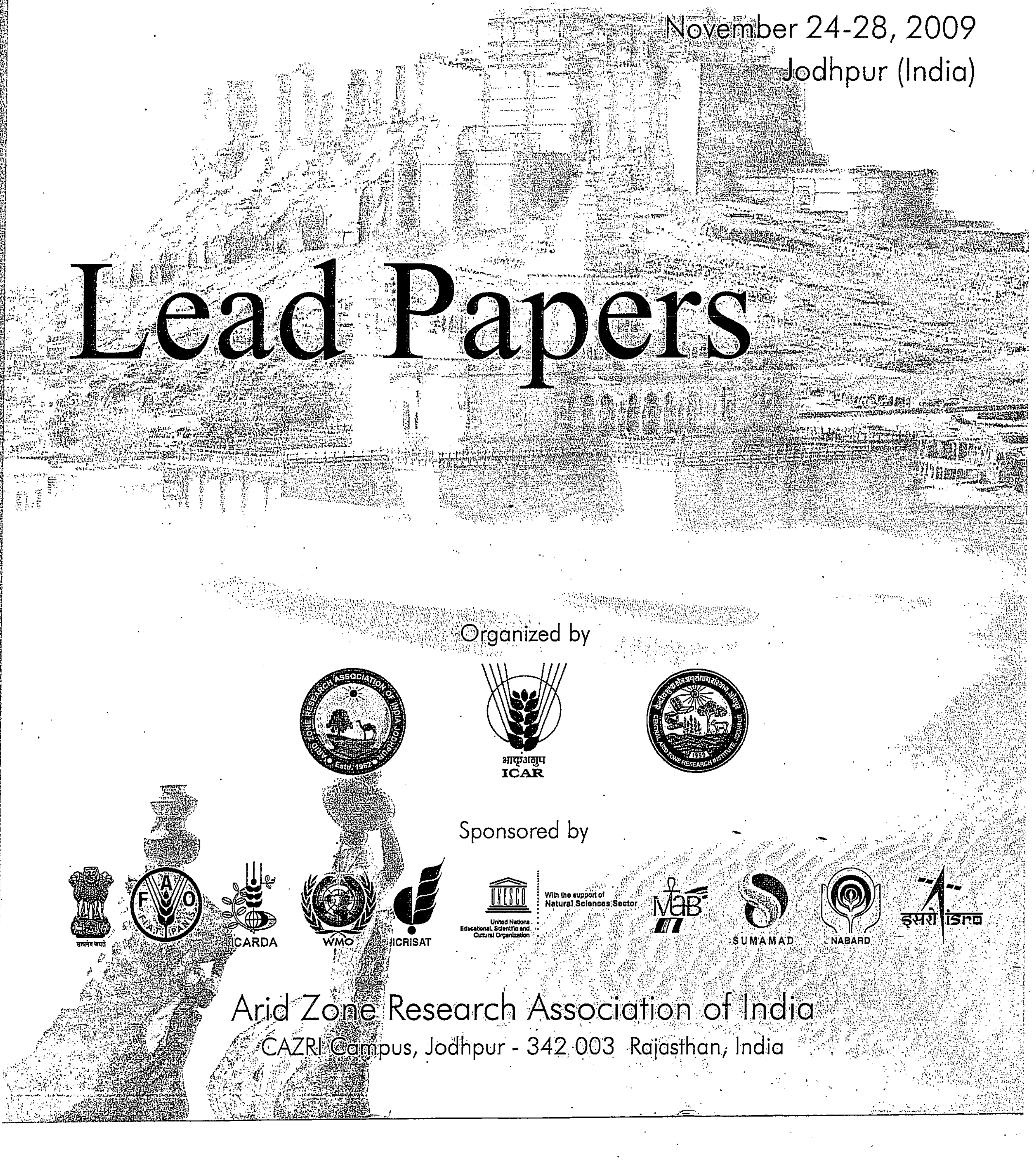

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Sustainable Management of Land and Water for Improving the Livelihoods in the Dry Land Areas

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Two third of agriculture in India is rain-fed and is also the hot spot of poverty as is the case in Asia where large proportion of 852 million poor in the world reside. Rain-fed areas in developing countries and particularly so in India are at cross roads as looming water scarcity for achieving food security and reducing poverty, rain-fed agriculture has come in the central stage. Large potential of rain-fed agriculture is untapped largely due to lack of enabling policy support and investments. In drought-prone rain-fed areas watershed management has shown the potential of doubling the agricultural productivity and increasing the rural family incomes through increased water availability, increased water use efficiency and diversifying the cropping and farming systems resulting in diversified sources of income. Impact of watershed programs can be substantially enhanced by adopting new developed approaches and enabling policies, however, additional investments are must for meeting the millennium development goal. New paradigm based on the learnings over last thirty years for people-centric holistic watershed management involving convergence, collective action, consortium approach, capacity development to address equity, efficiency, environment, and economic concerns is urgently needed. Through new paradigm watershed management can be used as an entry point activity for improving livelihoods of rural poor in rain-fed areas to enable India to achieve inclusive and sustainable development for meeting the MDGs as well as achieving the food, water, and energy security. Concerted efforts by all the stakeholders and actors will make India a global leader in the area of inclusive and sustainable development in drought-prone challenging rain-fed areas to develop a watershed management as business model through public private partnerships harnessing the benefits of value chain and linking farmers to the market.

Green revolution has played a major role in increasing food production in the irrigated area. Worldwide, irrigated agriculture uses 70% of all water withdrawn, applied on about 20% of cropland. And yet, irrigated agriculture contributes only 40% of total food production. It has been an important contributor to the expansion of national and world food supplies since 1960's and is expected to play major role in feeding the growing population. But still, there are about 852 million food insecure people in the world at present. Out of this 815 million people form developing countries, 28 million people from transition countries and 9 million from developed countries (FAO, 2005). However the possibility of future extension of irrigated area seems to be limited since water resources are going to be scarce. Also, in the past few decades, crop productivity growth in irrigated areas has either slowed or stagnated, due to factors such as water scarcity, over exploitation of resources, resulting in land degradation. On other hand a larger proportion of population is involved in rain-fed agriculture than in irrigated agriculture. Nearly 60% people in South Asia, 65% in East Asia, 75% in near East and North Africa, 90% in Latin America and more than 95% of the population in Sub-Saharan Africa, depend on rain-fed agriculture for food sovereignty, employment and cash income, and women account for two-thirds of the economically active population there. Currently, rain-fed systems account for more than 58% of the world food production; in addition, 69% of all the cereal area is rain-fed (Rosegrant *et al.*, 2002a).

In India, dryland agriculture accounts for 60% of total cropped area (142 M ha) and generates nearly half of the total value of agricultural output (GOI, 2006). In these regions, around 300 million people depend for their sustenance on dryland agriculture, of whom 30-40% can be classified as poor (Ryan and Spencer, 2001) Although in the last decades the yields of dryland crops have increased, they are still much lower than the yields of irrigated crops: In 1970 the value produced per hectare in irrigated agriculture was on an average 60% higher than that in dryland agriculture, but by 1994 the difference had gone up to 78% (Fan *et al.*, 2000). Improving dryland crop yields is important, both to maintain food security and to improve the livelihoods of the poor (Ryan and Spencer, 2001). Also, with a depleting resource base and with stagnating productivity in irrigated areas, improving the productivity of dryland agriculture is necessary to maintain food security at the national scale. Results from agricultural experimental stations show that substantial improvements in dryland crop yields are possible (Wani, 2001; Rockstrom and Falkenmark, 2000; Singh *et al.*, 2001). However, to improve yields investments are needed in three fields (Rosegrant *et al.*, 2002a). First, the agricultural production potential of the land needs to be improved. Low and erratic rainfall, poor or steeply sloped soils and a short cropping season make the uncertainty of dryland agriculture in semi-arid regions high. To improve the conditions for agricultural production, investments are needed in soil and water conservation to improve soil fertility, increase soil moisture and allow for supplemental irrigation in critical stages of growth (Keller *et al.*, 2000; Oweis *et al.*, 1999). Second, investments are needed in crop variety improvement to reduce vulnerability to pests and diseases and increase yields through improved production techniques (Ryan and Spencer, 2001). Third, investments in infrastructure are required to reduce the costs of agricultural production and improve the socioeconomic conditions for agricultural production in semi-arid zones (Fan and Hazell, 2001). The semi-arid, resource poor people are more vulnerable, because of increasing population, water stress induced low food production due to climate change (rainfall variability and temperature rise). In India, there is a need to invest more in soil and water conservation, to improve both the conditions for dryland agriculture and provide employment in times of drought.

Management of natural resources in dryland areas is very important not only because livelihoods of millions of rural poor (>500 million) are directly connected to these areas but also due to the fact that these areas will continue to play a crucial role in determining food security for growing population and reducing poverty in the coming decades (Rockström *et al.*, 2007). In the past 40 years, 30% of the overall grain production growth is due to 20-25% expansion of agricultural areas during the period (FAO, 2002; Ramankutty *et al.*, 2002). The remaining yield outputs originated from intensification through yield increases per unit land area. In developing countries rain-fed grain yields are on an average 1.5 t ha^{-1}, compared to 3.1 t ha^{-1} for irrigated yields (Rosegrant *et al.*, 2002a) and increase in production from rain-fed agriculture has mainly originated from land expansion. Agriculture will continue to be the backbone of economies in Africa and South Asia in the foreseeable future. A look into a rain-fed region shows a grim picture of water-scarcity, fragile environments, drought and land degradation due to soil erosion by wind and water, low rainwater use efficiency (35-45%), high population pressure, poverty, low investments in water use efficiency measures, poor infrastructure and inappropriate policies (Wani *et al.*, 2003a, 2009; Rockström *et al.*, 2007).

Millennium Development Goal (MDG) presents a formidable challenge on the other hand, not only targeting to halve the hungry people by 2015, but also to produce more food in the developing world, more water needs to be appropriated for crop and livestock. Assuming a balanced dietary consumption requiring 1,300 m^3 cap^{-1} y^{-1}, an additional 2,200 m^3 y^{-1} is needed to achieve the MDG target on hunger by 2015. To eradicate undernourishment by 2030 corresponds to 4,200 m^3 y^{-1}, reaching 5,200 m^3 y^{-1} by 2050 for additional water for crop and livestock production. Water productivity improvements are essential to reduce pressure on water resources.

If we assume improved water productivity from 1,800 m^3 to 1,200 m^3 per ton of grain produced, the corresponding required water for meeting MDG by 2015 means considerable additional water demand. The estimated additional water requirements, allowing for water productivity improvements, are of the order of 1,850 km^3 y^{-1} in 2015, to about 3,000 km^3 y^{-1} in 2030, and in 2050. This additional requirement presents a great challenge, when we consider the need to allocate water resources for domestic and purposes other than agricultural production (SEI, 2005). It is therefore important, to develop a long-term strategy to cope with the climate change and its adverse effects including higher temperatures, drought and floods. With climate change, the existing water scarcity is likely to be exacerbated and there is an urgent need to manage efficiently the available water resources. The main objective here is to present the current status and production potential of rain-fed agricultural and also suggest measures to minimize the adverse impacts of climate change thru improved land and water management to achieve food security through sustainable increase in agricultural production in dryland areas.

Current Status of Rain-fed Agriculture

An insight into the rain-fed regions shows a grim picture of water-scarcity, fragile environments, drought and land degradation due to soil erosion by wind and water, low rainwater use efficiency (35-45%), high population pressure, poverty, low investments in water use efficiency measures, poor infrastructure and inappropriate policies (Wani *et al.*, 2003a, 2009; Rockström *et al.*, 2007). Drought and land degradation are interlinked in a cause and effect relationship and both in turn are the causes of poverty. This unholy nexus between drought, poverty and land degradation has to be broken if we have to meet the MDG of halving the number of food insecure poor by 2015. Land degradation due to accelerated erosion resulting in the loss of nutrient rich top fertile soil however, occurs nearly everywhere where agriculture is practiced and this can be irreversible. The torrential character of the seasonal rainfall creates high risk for the cultivated lands. In India alone, some 150 million ha are affected by water erosion and 18 m ha by wind erosion. Thus, erosion leaves behind an impoverished soil on one hand, and siltation of reservoirs and tanks on the other. In addition to imbalanced use of nutrients in agriculture, farmers exploit the soil nutrient reserves. For example in the SAT India, a large number of on-farm trials conducted in more than 300 villages demonstrated that the current subsistence agricultural systems have depleted soils not only of the macro-nutrients but also of secondary nutrients such as sulfur and micro-nutrients such as zinc and boron. Widespread deficiencies of micro and secondary nutrients were observed in farmers' fields in various states of the SAT India (Rego *et al.*, 2007; Sahrawat *et al.*, 2007 and Wani *et al.*, 2008a). If these resources are not managed properly the impact of climate change will further deteriorate theses resources and the potential of the environments for agricultural production.

Also the evidence from water balance analyses on farmers' fields around the world shows that only a small fraction (30%) of rainfall, is used as productive green water flow to support plant growth and development (Rockström, 2003). Moreover, evidence from sub-Saharan Africa shows that this range varies from 15-30% of rainfall. This range is even lower on severely degraded land or land where yields are lower than 1 t ha^{-1}. In arid region only 10% of the rainfall is used as productive green water flow with 90% flowing as non-productive evaporation flow. i.e. no or very limited for blue water generation (Oweis and Hachum, 2001). For temperate arid regions, such as West Africa and North Africa (WANA), a larger proportion of rainfall is consumed in the farmers' fields as productive green water flow (45-55%) as a result of higher yield levels (3-4 t ha^{-1}). Still 25-35% of the rainfall flows as a non productive green water with 15-20% generating blue water flow. This indicates a large window of opportunity to improve the low current yields in rain-fed agriculture. Still, what is possible to produce on-farm will not always be produced, especially not by resource-poor, small-scale farmers. This is because of labour shortage, insecure land ownership, capital constraints and limitation in human capacities. All these factors influence how farming is done in terms of timing and effectiveness of farm operations, investments in fertilizers and pesticides, use of improved varieties, water management, etc. So the final produce in the farmers' field is thus strongly affected by social, economic and institutional conditions. Moreover, investments in the rain-fed agriculture pose serious challenges, as the large numbers of households are small, with marginal farmers and poor infrastructure facilities. The knowledge intensive extension effort needed in the rain-fed areas suffers from limited information on the options available, social and economic constraints to adoption, lack of enabling environments and backup services, poor market linkages, weak infrastructure and low means to pay.

Vulnerability to Climate Change Impacts

Climate change is real and its implications are going to be borne by the poorest of the poor. If climatic change is accompanied by an increase in climate variability, many agricultural producers will experience definite hardships and increased risk. The SAT regions, which have economies largely based on weather-sensitive agricultural productions systems, are particularly vulnerable to climate change. This vulnerability has been demonstrated by the devastating effects of recent flooding and the various prolonged droughts during the twentieth century. Thus for many poor countries that are highly vulnerable to effects of climate change, understanding farmers' responses to climatic variation is crucial in designing appropriate coping strategies to climate change. The impact can be reduced through lessening the human impacts on the atmosphere and the climate through emission reductions, and adapting to live with a changing climate before the results of mitigation can begin to appear. The integrated watershed approach could be the option for reducing the future climate change impact by increasing water and nutrient use efficiency and reducing risk through farming system diversification in the rain-fed agriculture. Continued population growth and predicted climate change exert pressure on agricultural output to meet food demand of people. Without considering the potential impact of climate change, the deficit of cereal production is higher in Asia (135Mt), followed by West Asia and North Africa (83Mt), China and Sub-Saharan Africa during 2025 compared with current deficit in Asia and Africa regions if the current 'business as usual', rain-fed resource management and investment policies are maintained (Table 1).

Table 1. Current and predicted cereal production and demand in Asia and Africa

Country/region	Current status (million tons)			Predicted status in 2025 (million tons)[a]		
	Production	Demand[b]	Deficit	Production*	Demand	Deficit
Asia	726	794	68	1093 (30)	1228	135
China	358	375	17	542 (26)	581	39
India	175	171	Surplus 4	257 (31)	275	18
S.E. Asia	106	114	8	170 (47)	176	6
South Asia (Except India)	51	55	4	81 (14)	102	21
Sub-Saharan Africa	69	78	9	137 (88)	172	35
West Asia and North Africa	82	120	38	119 (54)	202	83

Source: (FAO, Rosegrant *et al.*, 2002b).

a Predicted values for the period 2021-2025 according to a 'business as usual' scenario which assumes the continuation of population growth patterns and current trends of and existing plans in water and food policy, resource management and investment, but does not considered the potential impact of climate change.

b The sum of food and feed demand.

* Figures in parenthesis are the predicted percentage of total cereal production in 2025 from rainfed.

In this scenario, policies must be put in place and decisions taken to greatly accelerate the current trends of investment in the rain-fed agriculture sector beyond the 'business as usual' scenario upon which such projection are based. In the Asia region, the predicted population in the medium growth scenario is about 700 million people (about equal to the current population of Europe) in the next 30 years. This will result in a greater demand for food and it is estimated that the food grain requirement by 2020 in the region will be almost 50% more than that of the present (Paroda and Kumar, 2000) (Table 2). On the other hand due to climate change, the food production is going to be reduced in this region considerably in 2020 and around 10-40% reduction at the turn of the century. The additional food will have to be produced from the same or less land resources due to increased competition for land and other resources from non-agricultural sectors. So, the increasing food demand of the population has to be met under the impact of climate change and a greater competition for the natural resources from the non-agricultural sectors.

Table 2. Projected demand for food in South Asia for 2010 and 2020 assuming a 5% GDP growth and constant prices

Items	Production (Mt)	Demand for food (Mt)	
	1999-2000	2010	2020
Rice	85.4	103.6	122.1
Wheat	71.0	85.8	102.8
Coarse grains	29.9	34.9	40.9
Total cereals	184.7	224.3	265.8
Pulses	16.1	21.4	27.8
Food grains	200.8	245.7	293.6
Fruits	41.1	56.3	77.0
Vegetables	84.5	112.7	149.7
Milk	75.3	103.7	142.7
Meat and eggs	3.7	5.4	7.8
Marine products	5.7	8.2	11.8

Source: (Paroda and Kumar, 2000).

Impacts of Climate Change on Rain-fed Agriculture

Any perturbation in agriculture can considerably affect the food systems and thus increase the vulnerability of a large fraction of the resource-poor population. Increase in CO_2 concentration will have beneficial effect on crops especially the legumes (C_3 species) by increasing photosynthesis rate. Increase in temperature in the tropical regions will reduce crop productivity by reducing length of growing season and crop duration (faster crop development, thereby using less natural resources), direct adverse effect on crop growth and yield formation and by increasing water stress in plants as a results of increased water demand. Unless the change in rainfall is substantial, slight increase or decrease in rainfall will have a marginal effect on crop yields. Crop simulation analysis for short duration pigeonpea showed that a temperature increase from 1 to 5°C could reduce the crop yield from 7 to 28.7% at Katumani, Kenya. Despite variable response across seasons to increase in temperature (1-5°C), an average yield reduction of groundnut crop at Chalimbana, Bulawayo will be about 13.2 to 42.3%. Similarly, 10.6 to 56% yield reduction will occur in sorghum variety CSV 15 if the temperature rises from 1 to 5°C at Aurangabad, India. Likewise the pearlmillet (var. ICTP 8203) yield reduction will be 16.2 to 51% at Hisar, India. However, the climate change impacts at current low levels of management of crops would be marginal (Cooper *et al.*, 2009). This means that as we improve the management of crops to achieve higher crop yields to achieve food security the impacts of climate change will become significant.

Due to climate change, the absolute water stress is most notable in the arid and the semi-arid regions with high population densities such as parts of India, China and the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) region. The MENA region is increasingly unable to produce the food required locally due to increasing water stress from a combination of population increase, economic development and climate change, and will have to rely more and more on food imports. So there is a need to identify the potential water productivity method to overcome the impact of climate change and achieve the MDGs as well.

Potential of Rain-fed Agriculture

In tropical regions, particularly in the sub-humid and humid zones, agricultural yields in commercial rain-fed agriculture exceed 5-6 t ha^{-1} (Rockström and Falkenmark, 2000; Wani *et al.*, 2003a, b). However, farmers' crop yields are in the range of 0.5-2 t ha^{-1}, with an average of 1 t ha^{-1} in sub-Saharan Africa, and 1-1.5 t ha^{-1} in the SAT Asia and the Central and West Asia and North Africa (CWANA) regions for rain-fed agriculture (Rockström and Falkenmark, 2000; Wani *et al.*, 2003a, b). Yield gap analyses, undertaken for the Comprehensive Assessment, for major rain-fed crops in semi-arid regions in Asia and Africa, and rain-fed wheat in West Asia and North Africa (WANA), revealed large yield gaps, with farmers' yields being a factor 2-4 lower than achievable yields for major rain-fed crops grown in Asia and Africa (Rockström *et al.*, 2007; Wani *et al.*, 2009; Singh *et al.*, 2009). As shown in Fig. 1, large yield gaps for different rainfed crops exist in Asia and Africa. Evidence from long-term study at the ICRISAT center, Patancheru, India, since 1976, demonstrated that through improved land, water, and nutrient management in rain-fed agriculture, sorghum/pigeonpea intercrop system produced higher mean grain yields (5.1 t ha^{-1} per yr) compared to 1.1 t ha^{-1} per yr under the traditional system where crop is grown on stored soil moisture with the application of 5 t ha^{-1} FYM once in two years. The annual gain in grain yield in the improved system was 82 kg ha^{-1} per year compared to 23 kg ha^{-1} per year in the traditional system (Fig. 2). Unless appropriate adaptation and mitigation measures are taken, it will be difficult to achieve such higher yield to bridge the yield gaps under climate change scenarios.

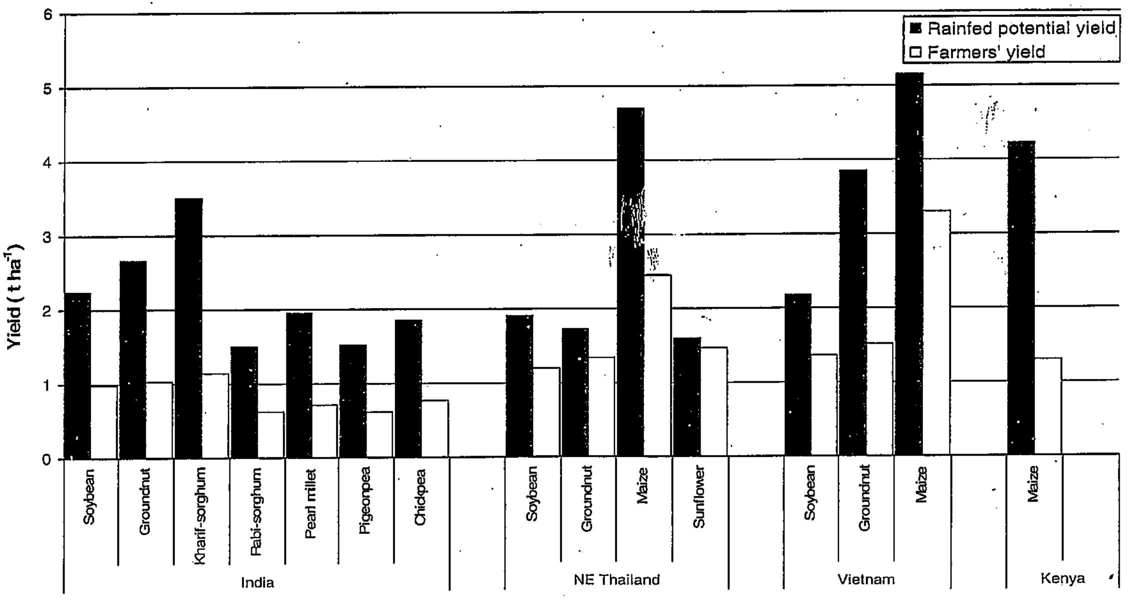

Fig. 1. Yield gap analysis of important rain-fed crops in different countries.

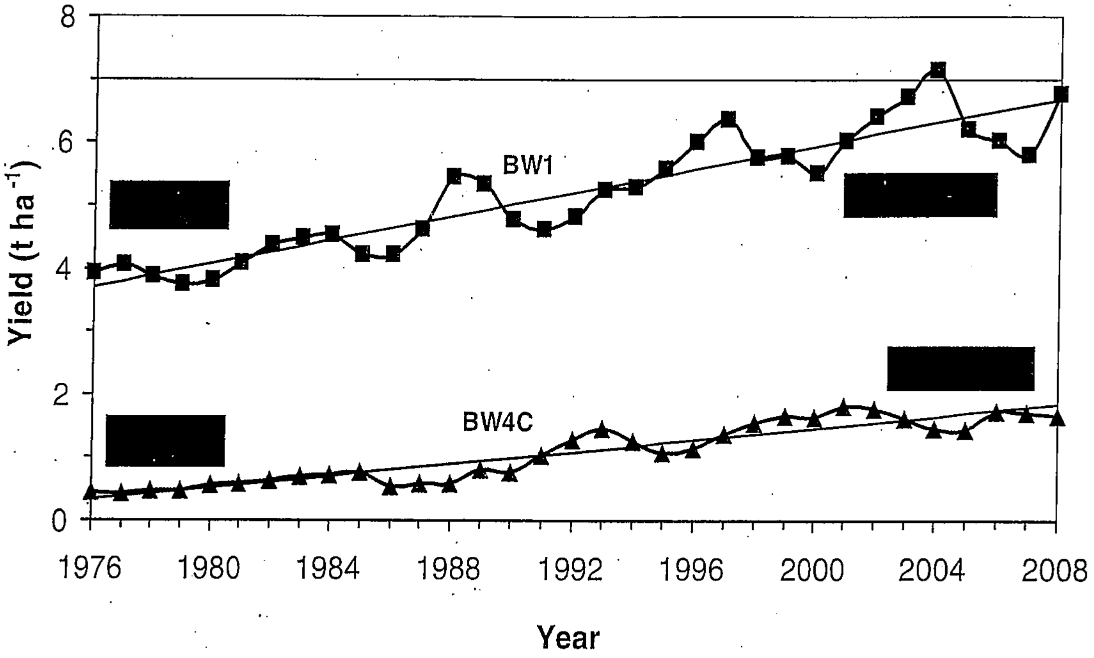

Fig. 2. Three-year moving average of crop yields in improved and traditional management systems during 1976-2006 at ICRISAT, Patancheru, India.

Science-based Approach - IGNRM Approach

Traditionally, crop improvement and NRM were seen as distinct but complementary disciplines. ICRISAT is deliberately blurring these boundaries, to create the new paradigm of Integrated Genetic and Natural Resource Management (IGNRM) (Twomlow *et al.*, 2006). Improved varieties and improved natural resource management are two sides of the same coin. Most farming problems require integrated solutions, with genetic, management-related, and socio-economic components. In essence, plant breeders and NRM scientists must integrate their work with that of private and public sector change agents, to develop flexible cropping systems that can respond to rapid changes in market opportunities and climatic conditions. The systems approach looks at various components of the rural economy - traditional food grains, new potential cash crops, livestock and fodder production, as well as socio-economic factors such as alternative sources of employment and income. Appropriate management of natural resources is the key to good agriculture. This is true everywhere - and particularly in the SAT, where over-exploitation of fragile or inherently vulnerable Agroecosystems is leading to land degradation, productivity decline, and increasing hunger and poverty. Modern crop varieties offer high yields - but the larger share of this potential yield can only be realized with good crop management (Fig. 3) (Wani *et al.*, 2009).

Improved Water Management

Water scarcity is a relative concept and there are various indicators and thresholds of water scarcity. Although the global amount of renewable fresh water has not changed, the amount available per person is much lower than what it was in 1950, due to population growth and increasing demands on available resources. Water is not equally distributed throughout the world and impacts of climate change will vary among regions. The increasing water scarcity resulting from population growth, rising incomes, and climate change, limits the amount of water available for food production and threatens food security in many countries. As the world's population grows and incomes rise, farmers will – if they use today's methods – need a great deal more water to fee the population: another 1600 km^3 yr^{-1} just to achieve the UN of halving hunger by 2015 (SEI, 2005), and another 4500 km^3 yr^{-1} with current water productivity levels in agriculture to feed the world in 2050 (Falkenmark *et al.*, 2009; Rockström *et al.*, 2009) This is more than twice the current consumptive water use in irrigation, which already contributes to depleting several large rivers before they reach the ocean. It is becoming increasingly difficult, on social, economic and environmental grounds, to supply more water to farmers.

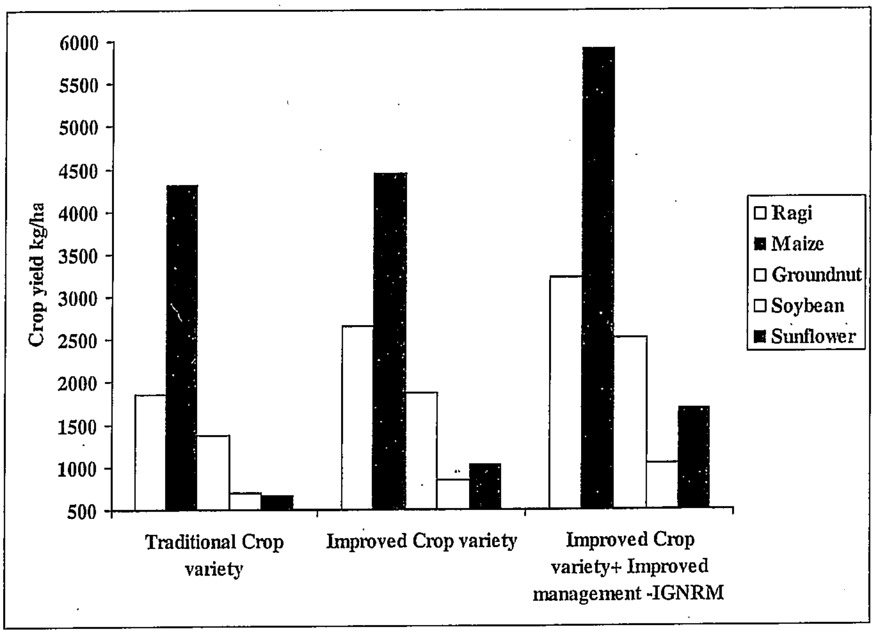

Fig. 3. Contribution of different technology components on crop yield, as observed in on-farm trials in Sujala watershed area of Karnataka.

Frequent scarcity of water is well illustrated by the studies by ICRISAT in India over a 25-year period. In Aurepalle and Dokur in Andhra Pradesh, our studies reveal the acute effects of persistent drought and increasing water scarcity on livelihood strategies. Almost all dug wells in both villages have dried up and village irrigation tanks (previously filled through run off) have not filled over a decade. Farmers are now forced to leave much of their land fallow and the percentage income derived from agricultural related activities has declined dramatically from 88 to 47% in Aurepalle and from 94 to 35% in Dokur. However, farm families have successfully adapted and diversified their livelihood strategies through increased off-farm activity, professional occupations and seasonal job migration. Indeed, in real terms, they have higher incomes today as a result. In other words the communities in these two villages have had high adaptive capacity.

However, whereas these households have adapted to the changes triggered by recurrent drought through diversification onto off-farm activities, this may not be a feasible alternative for many smallholder farmers in the isolated and less-favored areas of rain-fed system in Africa and Asia. There is a great need to develop options and innovations that enhance the resilience of the agricultural production system and reduce the vulnerability to such shocks. ICRISAT's experience on the watershed management in India is one such example. The combined effects of enhanced crop tolerance to drought, integrated management of land and water resources and improved water productivity has reduced the vulnerability to climate shocks and also improved productivity. This is illustrated in Kothapally village, where watershed management has contributed to improving the resilience of agricultural incomes despite the high incidence of drought. While drought induced shocks reduced the average share of agricultural income (as % of the total household income) in nearby non-project village from 44 to 12%, this share remained unchanged at about 36% in the adjoining watershed project village of Kothapally (Shiferaw *et al.*, 2006).

Journey for Watershed Management in India

In the beginning, watershed development in rain-fed areas had become synonymous to soil and water conservation by putting up field bunds and structures to harvest runoff (Wani *et al.*, 2002a). In these activities techno-centric and target oriented approaches were followed by involving one or two departments of the Government without much coordination among each other. It was a top-down approach with hardly any involvement of the stakeholders in planning, implementation, and maintenance (Fig. 4). Since 1990's, there has been a paradigm shift in the thinking of policy makers based on the learning from the earlier programmes. Detailed evaluation of on-farm watershed programmes implemented in the country, ICRISAT team observed that once the project team withdrew from the villages, the farmers reverted back to their earlier practices and very few components of the improved soil, water and nutrient management options were adopted and continued. Although, economic benefits of the improved technologies were observed in the on-farm studies, the adoption rates were low. Individual component technologies such as summer ploughing, improved crop varieties and intercropping however were continued by the farmers. However, soil and water conservation technologies were not much favored (Wani *et al.*, 2002b).

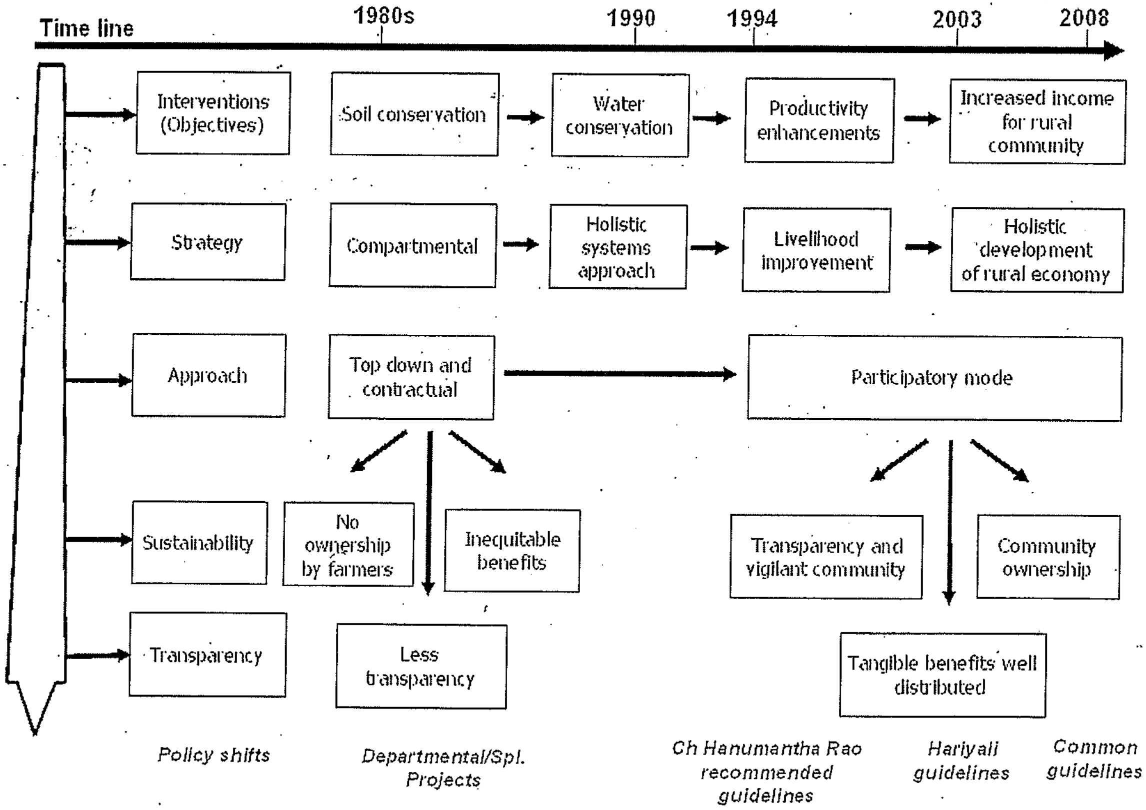

Fig. 4. Journey of watershed approach in India.

Meta-analysis of 636 watershed case studies from different agro-eco regions in India revealed that watershed programmes benefited farmers through enhanced irrigated areas by 51.5%, increased cropping intensity by 35%, reducing soil loss to 1.1 t ha^{-1} and runoff by 45%, and improved groundwater availability. Economically the watershed programmes were beneficial and viable with a benefit - cost ratio of 1:2. and the internal rate of return of 27.0% (Joshi *et al.*, 2008). However, about 65% of the case studies showed below average performance (Fig. 5). Better performances of watersheds were realized in the rainfall regime of 700-1000 mm. There is a need to develop technologies to the area falling in the rainfall regime of <700 mm and >1000 mm.

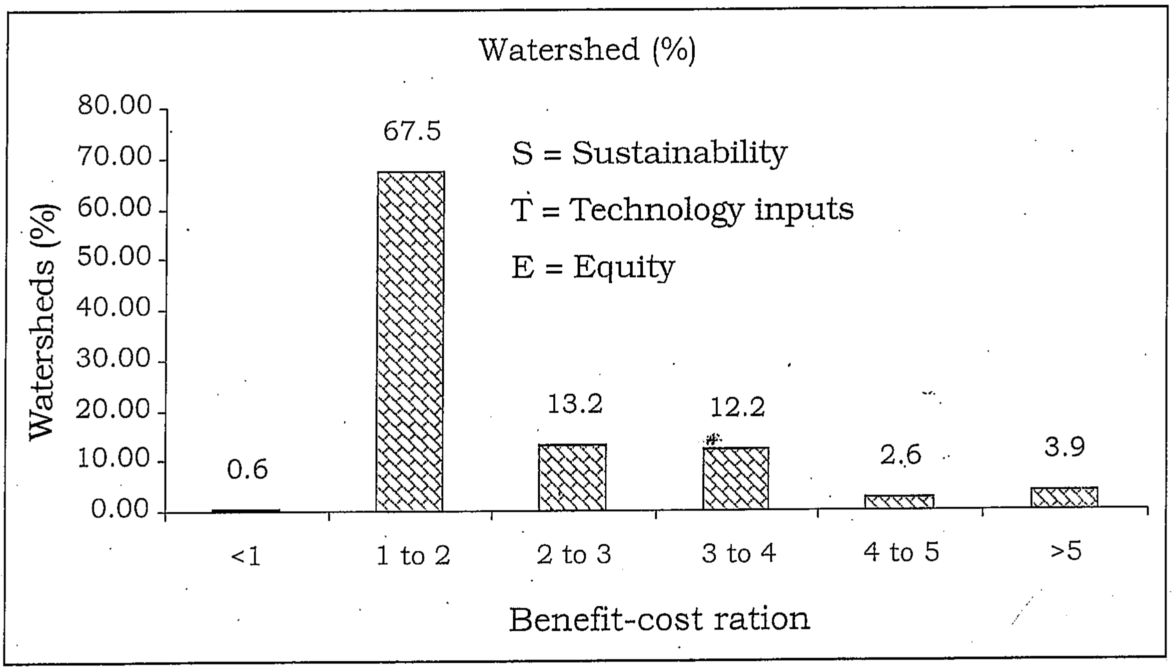

Fig. 5. STEPS to achieve impact.

Integrated Watershed Management to Enhance Productivity and Resilience

Watersheds are not only hydrological units but provide life support to rural people by making people and animals an integral part of watersheds. Activities of people/animals affect the productive status of watersheds and *vice versa*. Currently there is a vicious cycle of 'poverty – poor management of land and crop – poor soils and crop productivity – poverty' is in operation in most of the watersheds. This results in a strong nexus between drought, land degradation and poverty.

Appreciating this fact, the new generations of watershed development programmes are implemented with a larger aim to address issues of food security, equity, poverty, severe land degradation and water scarcity in dry land areas. Hence in the new approach, Watershed, a land unit to manage water resources has been adopted as a planning unit to manage natural resources of the area. Improving livelihoods of local communities is highlighted by realizing the fact that in the absence of them, sustainable NRM would be illusive. Due to these considerations watershed programmes have been looking beyond soil and water conservation into a range of activities from productivity enhancement through interventions in agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry to community organization and gender equity (Wani *et al.*, 2002b, 2003b and 2007a). This holistic approach required optimal contribution from different disciplinary backgrounds creating a demand for multi-stakeholder situation in watershed development programmes.

Table 3. Summary of Benefits from the sample watershed studies

	Particulars[a]	Unit	No. of studies	Mean	Mode	Median	Minimum	Maximum	t-value
Efficiency	B:C ratio	Ratio	311	2.0	1.7	1.7	0.8	7.3	35.09
	IRR	Per cent	162	27.40	25.9	25.0	2.0	102.7	21.75
Equity	Employment	Person days $ha^{-1}yr^{-1}$	99	154.50	286.7	56.5	5.00	900.0	8.13
Sustainability	Increase in irrigated area	Per cent	93	51.5	34.0	32.4	1.23	204	10.94
	Increase in Cropping intensity	Per cent	339	35.5	5.0	21.0	3.0	283.0	14.96
	Runoff reduced	Per cent	83	45.7	43.3	42.5	0.34	96.0	9.36
	Soil loss saved	Tons ha^{-1} $year^{-1}$	72	1.1	0.9	1.0	0.1	2.0	47.21

Based on the learning from the meta-analysis and earlier on-farm watersheds ICRISAT in partnership with national agricultural research systems (NARSs) partners developed and evaluated an innovative farmers participatory integrated watershed consortium model for increasing agricultural productivity and later for improving rural livelihoods (Wani *et al.*, 2003b). The conventional watershed approach is compartmental, structure-driven and lacks the strategy for efficient resource use. Though watershed serves as an entry point, a paradigm shift is needed from these traditional structure-driven watershed programmes to a holistic systems' approach to alleviate poverty through increased agricultural productivity by environment-friendly resource management practices (Wani *et al.*, 2003b, 2008b). Watershed, as an entry point should lead to exploring multiple livelihood interventions/options (Wani *et al.*, 2006, 2007, 2008b) and the new community watershed management model fits into the framework as a tool to assist in the sustainable rural livelihoods (Wani *et al.*, 2008b).

ICRISAT's consortium model for the community watershed management espouses the principles of collective action, convergence, cooperation and capacity building (4Cs) with technical backstopping by a consortium of institutions to address the issues of equity, efficiency, economics and environment (4Es) (Wani *et al.*, 2008c). The new integrated community watershed model provides technological options for management of runoff water harvesting, waterway systems, *in-situ* conservation of rainwater for groundwater recharging and supplemental irrigation, appropriate nutrient and soil management practices, crop production technology and appropriate farming systems with income-generating micro-enterprises for improving livelihoods while protecting the environment (Wani *et al.*, 2002, 2007a, 2007b; Sreedevi *et al.*, 2004). The water only can not improve the productivity of crops in rain-fed areas, with proper soil, nutrient management could improve productivity in these areas.

Soil Health: An Important Driver for Enhancing Water Use Efficiency in Rain-Fed Areas

Soil health is severely affected by land degradation and is in need of urgent attention. ICRISAT's on-farm diagnostic work in different community watersheds in different states of India as well as in China, Vietnam and Thailand showed severe mining of soils for essential plant nutrients. Exhaustive analysis showed that 80-100% farmers' fields are deficient not only in total nitrogen but also micronutrients like zinc, boron and secondary nutrients such as sulphur (Table

4). In addition, soil organic matter an important driving force for supporting biological activity in soil, is low particularly in tropical areas. Management practices that augment soil organic matter and maintain at a threshold level are needed. Farm bunds could be productively used for growing nitrogen-fixing shrubs and trees to generate nitrogen-rich loppings. For example, growing *Gliricidia sepium* at a close spacing of 75 cm on farm bunds could provide 28-30 kg nitrogen per ha in addition to valuable organic matter. Also, large quantities of farm residues and other organic wastes could be converted into valuable source of plant nutrients and organic matter through vermicomposting (Wani *et al.*, 2005).

Table 4. Percentage of farmers' fields deficient in soil nutrients in different states of India[a]

State	No. of farmers' fields	OC (%)	AvP (ppm)	K (ppm)	S (ppm)	B (ppm)	Zn (ppm)
Andhra Pradesh	1927	84	39	12	87	88	81
Karnataka	1260	58	49	18	85	76	72
Madhya Pradesh	73	9	86	1	96	65	93
Rajasthan	179	22	40	9	64	43	24
Gujarat	82	12	60	10	46	100	82
Tamil Nadu	119	57	51	24	71	89	61
Kerala	28	11	21	7	96	100	18
Karnataka* (47 villages)	11609						
Chickballapur	2257	78	37	34	80	80	52
Kolar	2161	81	31	34	85	87	32
Tumkur	2054	75	64	35	92	92	50
Madhgiri	987	81	67	30	93	91	51
Chitradurga	1489	76	54	15	86	64	80
Haveri	1532	55	42	5	85	46	60
Dharwad	1129	31	53	1	79	39	44

a. OC = Organic Carbon; AvP = Available phosphorus.

* Extensive soil sampling undertaken to interpolate analysis at district level using GIS.

Strategic long-term catchment study at the ICRISAT center showed that the legume-based systems particularly with pigeonpea could sequester 330 kg carbon up to 150 cm depth in Vertisols at Patancheru, India under rain-fed conditions (Wani *et al.*, 2003a). Under National Agricultural Technology Project (NATP), ICRISAT, National Bureau of Soil Survey and Land Use Planning (NBSS&LUP), Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture (CRIDA) and Indian Institute of Soil Science (IISS) have identified carbon sequestering systems for Alfisols and Vertisols in India (ICRISAT, 2005). A substantial increase in crop yields was experienced after micronutrient amendments in farmers participatory trials (in more than 300 villages) and a further increase by 70 to 120% when both micronutrients and adequate nitrogen and phosphorus were applied, for a number of rain-fed crops (maize, sorghum, mung bean, pigeonpea, chickpea, castor and groundnut) in farmers' fields. Rainwater productivity (i.e. total amount of grains produced per unit of rainfall) was significantly increased in example above as a result of micronutrient amendment. The rainwater productivity for grain, production has increased by 70-100% for maize, groundnut, mungbean, castor and sorghum by adding boron, zinc and sulphur. In terms of net economic returns, rainwater productivity was substantially higher by 1.50 to 1.75 times. Similarly, rainwater productivity increased significantly when adopting integrated land and water management options as well as use of improved cultivars in semiarid regions of India (Sahrawat *et al.*, 2007; Wani *et al.*, 2003b).

Multiple Benefits and Impacts through Integrated Watershed Management

Through the use of new tools [i.e. remote sensing, geographic information systems (GIS) and simulation modelling] along with an understanding of the entire food production-utilization system (i.e. food quality and market) and genuine involvement of stakeholders, ICRISAT-led watersheds made remarkable impacts on SAT resource-poor farm households.

Reducing rural poverty in the watershed communities is evident from the transformation of their economies. The ICRISAT model ensured improved productivity with the adoption of cost-efficient water harvesting structures (WHS) as an entry point, for improving livelihoods. Crop intensification and diversification with high-value crops is one leading example that allowed households to achieve production of basic staples and surplus for modest incomes. The model has provision for improving the capacity of farm households through training and networking for improving livelihood through enhanced participation especially of the most vulnerable groups like women and the landless.

Building on social capital made a large difference in addressing rural poverty of watershed communities. This is evident in the case of Adarsha Watershed, Kothapally in Andhra Pradesh, India. Today, it is a prosperous village on the path of long-term sustainability and has become a beacon for science-led rural development. In 2001, the average village income from agriculture, livestock and non-farming sources was US$ 945 compared with the neighboring non-watershed village income of US$ 613. The villagers proudly professed: "*We did not face any difficulty for water even during the drought year of 2002. When surrounding villages had no drinking water, our wells had sufficient water.*" To date, the village prides itself with households owning five tractors, seven trucks and 30 auto-rickshaws. People from surrounding villages come to Kothapally for on-farm employment. Similarly, in Tad Fa and Wang Chai watersheds in Thailand, there was a 45% increase in farm income within three years. Farmers earned an average net income of US$ 1195 per cropping season (Wani *et al.*, 2007a).

Crop livestock integration is another facet harnessed for poverty reduction. The Lucheba watershed, Guizhou province of southern China has transformed its economy through modest injection of capital-allied contributions of labor and finance, to create basic infrastructures like access to roads and drinking water supply. With technical support from the consortium, the farming system was intensified from rice and rape seed to tending livestock (pig raising) and growing horticultural crops (fruit trees like *Ziziphus*; vegetables like beans, peas and sweet potato) and groundnuts. In forage production, wild buckwheat was specifically important as an alley crop as it was a good forage grass for pigs. This cropping technology was also effective in controlling erosion and increasing farm income in sloping lands. This holds true in many watersheds of India where the improvement in fodder production has intensified livestock activities like breed improvement (artificial insemination and natural means) and livestock centre/health camp establishment (Wani *et al.*, 2006).

Increasing crop productivity is a common objective in all the watershed programmes; and the enhanced crop productivity is achieved after the implementation of soil and water conservation practices along with appropriate crop and nutrient management. For example, the implementation of improved crop management technology in the benchmark watersheds of Andhra Pradesh increased the maize yield by 2.5 times (Table 5) and sorghum yield by threefold. Overall, in the 65 community watersheds (each measuring approximately 500 ha), implementing best-bet practices resulted in significant yield advantages in sorghum (35-270%), maize (30-174%), pearl millet (72-242%), groundnut (28-179%), sole pigeonpea (97-204%) and intercropped pigeonpea (40-110%) (Table 6). In Thanh Ha watershed of Vietnam, yields of soybean, groundnut and mung bean increased by threefold to fourfold (2.8-3.5 t ha^{-1}) as compared with baseline yields (0.5 to 1.0 t ha^{-1}), reducing the yield gap between potential farmers' yields. A reduction in nitrogen fertilizer (90-120 kg urea per ha) by 38% increased maize yield by 18%. In Tad Fa watershed of northeastern Thailand, maize yield increased by 27-34% with improved crop management (Sreedevi and Wani, 2009).

Table 5. Crop yields in Adarsha watershed Kothapally during 1999-2007

Crop	1998 base-line yield	Yield (kg ha^{-1})									
		1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004 - 2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	Average yields	SE±
Sole maize	1500	3250	3750	3300	3480	3920	3420	3920	3635	3640	283.3
Improved Inter cropped maize	-	2700	2790	2800	3083	3129	2950	3360	3180	3030	263.0
Traditional inter-cropped maize	-	700	1600	1600	1800	1950	2025	2275	2150	1785	115.6
Improved inter-cropped pigeonpea		640	940	800	720	950	680	925	970	860	120.3
Traditional inter-cropped pigeonpea	190	200	180	-	-	-	-	-	-	190	-
Improved Sole Sorghum	-	3050	3170	2600	2425	2290	2325	2250	2085	2530	164.0
Traditional Sole Sorghum	1070	1070	1010	940	910	952	1025	1083	995	1000	120.7
Intercropped Sorghum	-	1770	1940	2200	-	2110	1980	1960	1850	1970	206.0

Table 6. Mean yield and uptake of nutrients by crops grown in APRLP watersheds, Andhra Pradesh, India in 2002

Crop	Stover yield (t ha^{-1})		Grain yield (t ha^{-1})		Total nutrients removed (g ha^{-1})					
					Control			Treated		
	Control	Treated	Control	Treated	S	B	Zn	S	B	Zn
Mung bean	0.73	1.00	0.77	1.11	2325	20	46	4009	30	68
Maize	3.46	4.29	2.73	4.56	4536	16	112	7014	19	192
Groundnut	1.99	2.49	0.70	0.94	4355	40	50	6418	52	81
Pigeonpea	1.31	2.10	0.54	0.87	1619	22	27	2649	36	45
Castor	0.82	1.19	0.59	0.89	2216	18	40	3550	26	62

Improving water availability in the watersheds was attributed to an efficient management of rainwater and *in-situ* conservation, establishment of WHS and improved groundwater levels. In the various watersheds of India like Lalatora (in Madhya Pradesh), treated area registered a groundwater level rise by 7.3 m. At Bundi, Rajasthan, the average rise was 5.7 m and the irrigated area increased from 207 ha to 343 ha. In Kothapally watershed in Andhra Pradesh, the groundwater level rise was 4.2 m in open wells. The various WHS resulted in an additional groundwater recharge per year of approximately 4,28,000 m^3 on an average. With this improvement in groundwater availability, the supply of clean drinking water was guaranteed. In Lucheba watershed in China, a drinking water project, which constitutes a water storage tank and pipelines to farm households, was a joint effort of the community and the watershed project. This solved the drinking water problem for 62 households and more than 300 livestock. Earlier every farmer's household used to spend 2-3 hours per day in fetching drinking water. This was the main motivation behind the excellent farmers' participation in the project. On the other hand, in Thanh Ha watershed in Vietnam, collective pumping out of well water established efficient water distribution system and enabled farmers' group to earn more income by growing watermelon with reduced drudgery as women had to carry water on the head from a long distance (Wani *et al.*, 2006).

Supplemental irrigation one of the climate change adaptation strategy can play a very important role in reducing the risk of crop failures due to and in optimizing the productivity in the SAT. In these regions, there is good potential for delivering excess rainwater to storage structures or groundwater because even under improved systems, there is loss of 12-30% of the rainfall as runoff. Striking results were recorded from supplemental irrigation on crop yields in ICRISAT benchmark watersheds in Madhya Pradesh. On-farm studies made during 2000-03 post rainy seasons, showed that chickpea yield (1.25 t ha^{-1}) increased by 127% over the control yield (0.55 t ha^{-1}); and groundnut pod yield (1.3 t ha^{-1}) increased by 59% over the control yield (0.82 t ha^{-1}) by application of two supplemental irrigations of 40 mm. Similar yield responses in mung bean and chickpea crops were obtained from supplemental irrigation at the ICRISAT center in Patancheru (Pathak *et al.*, 2009).

Sustaining development and protecting the environment are the two-pronged achievements of the watersheds. The effectiveness of improved watershed technologies was evident in reducing runoff volume, peak runoff rate and soil loss and improving groundwater recharge. This is particularly significant in Tad Fa watershed where interventions such as contour cultivation at mid-slopes, vegetative bunds planted with *Vetiver*, fruit trees grown on steep slopes and relay cropping with rice bean reduced seasonal runoff to less than half (194 mm) and soil loss less than 1/7th (4.21 t ha^{-1}) as compared to the conventional system (473 mm runoff and soil loss 31.2 t ha^{-1}). This holds true with peak runoff rate where the reduction is approximately one-third.

Introduction of IPM in cotton and pigeonpea substantially reduced the number of chemical insecticidal sprays in Kothapally, India during the season and thus reduced the pollution of water bodies with harmful chemicals. Introduction of integrated pest management (IPM) and improved cropping systems decreased the use of pesticides worth US$ 44 to 66 per ha (Ranga Rao *et al.*, 2007). Crop rotation using legumes in Wang Chai watershed (Thailand) substantially reduced nitrogen requirement for rain-fed sugarcane. The IPM practices, which brought into use local knowledge using insect traps of molasses, light traps and tobacco waste, led to extensive vegetable production in Xiaoxingcun (China) and Wang Chai (Thailand) watersheds.

Climate Change Adaptation

In climate change adaptation aspects, ICRISAT already has on hand cops that are adapted to heat and high soil temperatures (Cooper *et al.*, 2009). Knowledge and understanding of photoperiod-sensitive flowering, information on genetic variation for transpiration efficiency, short duration varieties that escape terminal drought, and high yielding disease resistant varieties for e.g. in chick pea ICCV96029 (super early 75-80 days), ICCV2 (extra early 85-90 days) and KAK 2 (early 90-95 days). Using early maturing varieties, P fertilizer at planting for late onset of monsoon; high tillering cultivars and optimal root traits for mid-season drought; delay sowing, P fertilizer, water harvesting and run off control for early drought; early maturing traits for terminal drought; heat tolerance traits, crop residue management and large number of seedling per planting hill for increased temperature; better soil nutrient management to promote positive effect of increased CO_2 level are few ICRISAT strategies to over come the climate change as well variability on rain-fed production.

Climate Change Mitigation

Agriculture sector in India contribute 28% of the total green house gas (GHG) emissions (NATCOM, 2004) against the global average from agricultural sector is only 13.5% (IPCC, 2007a). The gross emission of GHG from Indian agriculture is likely to increase significantly in future due to our need to increase food production. There are several potential approaches such as appropriate crop management practices, improved management of livestock diet and increase the soil carbon through carbon sequestration to reduce the GHGs emission from agriculture (Aggarwal, 2008). The improved practices such as crop rotation with legumes, minimum tillage, crop residue addition and better soil and water management could help to more carbon sequestration of soil. The carbon sink capacity of the world's agricultural and degraded soils is 50 to 66% of the historic carbon loss of 42 to 78 gigatons of carbon (Lal, 2004). The rate of soil organic carbon sequestration with adoption of recommended technologies depends on soil texture and structure, rainfall, temperature, farming system, and soil management. Strategies to increase the soil carbon pool include soil restoration and woodland regeneration, no-till farming, cover crops, nutrient management, manuring and sludge application, improved grazing, water conservation and harvesting, efficient irrigation, agroforestry practices, and growing energy crops on spare lands. An increase of 1 ton of soil carbon pool of degraded cropland soils may increase crop yield by 20 to 40 kilograms per hectare (kg ha^{-1}) for wheat, 10 to 20 kg ha^{-1} for maize, and 0.5 to 1 kg ha^{-1} for cowpeas. As well as enhancing food security, carbon sequestration has the potential to offset fossil fuel emissions by 0.4 to 1.2 gigatons of carbon per year, or 5 to 15% of the global fossil-fuel emissions (Lal, 2004). ICRISAT studied carbon sequestration and observed that the inclusion of legumes in cropping system has increased soil N though biologically fix N and also improved the ability of the Vertisol to sequester more carbon from atmosphere. A positive relationship between soil available P and soil organic C suggested that application of P to Vertisol increased carbon sequestration by 7.4 t C ha^{-1} and, in turn, the productivity of the legume-based system, thus ultimately enhanced soil quality. This study gives strong evidence that SAT soils, which has high potential to sequester more carbon through improved soil and water management practices to benefit the agricultural productivity and sustainability (Wani *et al.*, 2003a).

The degraded land which is most prevalent in SAT regions is the potential land for carbon sequestration. Rehabilitation of these lands with *Jatropha* and *Pongamia*, which are drought tolerant crops, can fix the atmospheric carbon extensively. Also the seed oil of *Jatropha* and *Pongamia* can be used as biofuel to substitute the fossil fuel and reduce their carbon emission. By adopting 'bio-fuel-switch for carbon, women SHGs in Powerguda (a remote village of Andhra Pradesh, India) have pioneered the sale of carbon units (147 t CO_2 C) to the World Bank from their 4,500 *Pongamia* trees, seeds of which are collected for producing saplings for distribution/ promotion of biodiesel plantation (D'Silva *et al.*, 2004). Normalized difference vegetation index (NDVI) estimation from the satellite images showed that within four years, vegetation cover could increase by 35% in Kothapally. The IGNRM options in the watersheds reduced loss of NO_3-N in runoff water (8 vs. 14 kg nitrogen per ha). Reduced runoff and erosion reduced risk of downstream flooding and siltation of water bodies that directly improved environmental quality in the watersheds (Pathak *et al.*, 2005; Sahrawat *et al.*, 2005; Wani *et al.*, 2005).

Biodiversity Conservation

Conserving biodiversity in the watersheds was engendered through participatory NRM. The index of surface percentage of crops (ISPC), crop agro-biodiversity factor (CAF) and surface variability of main crops changed as a result of integrated watershed management interventions. Pronounced agro-biodiversity impacts were observed in Kothapally watershed where farmers now grow 22 crops in a season with a remarkable shift in cropping pattern from cotton (200 ha in 1998 to 100 ha in 2002) to a maize/pigeonpea intercrop system (40 ha in 1998 to 180 ha in 2002), thereby changing the CAF from 0.41 in 1998 to 0.73 in 2002. In Thanh Ha, Vietnam the CAF changed from 0.25 in 1998 to 0.6 in 2002 with the introduction of legumes (Wani *et al.*, 2005).

Institution and Enabling Policies

Tangible economic benefits for the farmers through introduction of improved interventions cannot be achieved by working in disciplinary mode that is compartmental. The era of ultra-specialization and compartmental approach has bypassed and scientists need to work in multidisciplinary teams to address the complex issues faced on the farmers' fields. It is known that only application of nitrogen and phosphorus cannot guarantee the crop responses if the soils are deficient in zinc and other micro- or secondary-nutrients. Similarly, improved nutrient management options alone can not give the best results in the absence of suitable pest management options as well as suitable cultivars along with soil and water management interventions and market support.

Adopt integrated water resource management approach in the watersheds by discarding the artificial divide between rain-fed and irrigated agriculture. There is an urgent need to have sustainable water (rain-, ground- and surface-water) use policies to ensure sustainable development (Wani *et al.*, 2008a). As described earlier in the absence of suitable policies and mechanisms for sustainable use of groundwater resources benefits of watershed programs can easily be undone in short period with over exploitation of the augmented water resources. Cultivation of water inefficient crops like rice, sugarcane need to be controlled using groundwater in watersheds through suitable incentive mechanisms for rain-fed irrigated crops and policy to stop cultivation of high water requiring crops. Innovative institutional mechanisms such as Consortium approach for technical backstopping (Wani *et al.*, 2003a), empowerment of community-based organizations (Wani *et al.*, 2003a, 2006), strengthening of area groups as is the case in Sujala Watershed program, strengthening of SHGs in APRLP, women's village organization (VO) in APRLP or Village organization like in Sujala watershed program in Karnataka as PIAs, including Gram Panchayat representatives in Watershed Committee (governing body), concurrent monitoring and evaluation by an independent body as evaluated in Sujala Watershed program, participatory M&E involving community and other stakeholders, transparency at village level, farm-based planning (net planning) (Indo German Program), trained farmers as master trainers are found effective institutional mechanisms. There is an urgent need to identify such effective institutional mechanisms for enhancing the impact and sustainability of watershed programs (Wani *et al.*, 2008b).

Convergence of actors and their actions at watershed level to harness the synergies and to maximize the benefits through efficient and sustainable use of natural resources to benefit small and marginal farmers through increased productivity per unit of resource. We have missed out large benefits of watershed programs due to compartmental approach and there is an urgent need to bring in convergence as the benefits are many folds and its win-win for all the stakeholders including number of line departments involved in improving rural livelihoods (Wani *et al.*, 2008c).

New institutional mechanisms are also needed at district, state, and national level to converge various watershed programs implemented by number of ministries and development agencies to enhance the impact and efficiency by overcoming duplicity and confusion. In 2005, the National Commission on Farmers recommended a holistic integrated watershed management approach, with focus on rainwater harvesting and improving soil health for sustainable development of drought prone rain-fed areas (Government of India, 2005). Recently, Government of India has established National Rain-fed Area Authority for Development of Rain-fed Areas (NRAA) with the mandate to converge various programmes for integrated development of rain-fed agriculture in the country. These are welcome developments, however, it is just a beginning and lot more still need to be done to provide institutional and policy support for development of rain-fed areas. Thus, it has become increasingly clear that water management for rain-fed agriculture requires a landscape perspective, and involves cross-scale interactions from farm household scale to watershed/catchment scale.

Capacity Building

Knowledge management and sharing is an important aspect in management of NRs for sustainable development. Use of new information and communication technologies (ICTs) to cover the last mile to reach the un-reached is must as existing extension mechanisms are not able to meet the ever growing demand as well as to share the new and vast body of knowledge with large number of small and marginal farmers. Innovative methods and new local community members need to be empowered as extension agents by linking them with knowledge resource centers.

Align M&E processes as per the objectives and use quantitative and qualitative indicators judiciously for assessing the effectiveness of the programs as well as for doing the mid-course corrections in the strategy. Select suitable impact assessment methods at different levels and use new science (social as well as biophysical) tools to assess the impact collecting quality data selectively rather than collecting voluminous reports out of the mill approach.

Watersheds to be developed as business model through public private partnership (PPP) using principles of market-led diversification using high-value crops, value chain approach and livelihood approach rather than only soil and water conservation approach. Strengths of rain-fed areas using available water resources efficiently through involvement of private entrepreneurs and value addition can be harnessed by linking small and marginal farmers to markets through PPP business model for watershed management (Wani *et al.*, 2008a).

Conclusions

With its long experience, investments, development of technical human power and access to new technologies such as remote sensing India has a potential to be a global leader in the area of development of rain-fed agriculture through integrated watershed management for sustainable management of land and water management as well as reduce the impact of climate change to improve the livelihood. There is an urgent need to make quick adjustments in our approaches by adopting new paradigm for development of rain-fed areas and necessary investments must be made to ensure inclusive growth and increase the food production and ensuring the rain-fed sustainability. It will be a role model not only for India it self but also for all the developing countries in Asia and Africa. These countries are plagued with the same dilemma of achieving inclusive sustainable growth including small and marginal farmers from rain-fed areas, to achieve food security and overcome the looming water scarcity, increasing temperature, rainfall variability (intensity and pattern) and CO_2 enrichment. The challenge faced in the country can be converted in to an opportunity and harnessed through urgent steps and increased investments in development of rain-fed agriculture.

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