

## 2<sup>nd</sup> National Conclave on Micro Irrigation 2012

12<sup>th</sup> Sept 2012, NASC, Pusa, New Delhi

Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) with the support of Ministry of Agriculture, GoI, National Committee on Plasticulture Applications in Horticulture (NCPAH) and National Horticulture Board (NHB) organized second in series one day national conclave on Micro Irrigation held at NASC Complex, Pusa, Delhi. The event was organized at an apt time when the efforts for XII Plan Period is in process and importance of water savings is understood at large due to effect of climate change coupled with less precipitation during current monsoon in many parts of the country.

Hon'ble Union Agriculture Minister, GoI inaugurated the national conclave in which representatives from Micro Irrigation Industries, State Govt.s, Research Bodies, Farmers, Entrepreneurs, Scheme implementing agencies, Students etc. were present to deliberate on the present status, growth & future prospects of micro irrigation under NMMI.



The Joint Secretary (NHM) and Mission Director (NMMI) welcomed the delegates and briefed about the achievements made in the micro irrigation sector since inception of this centrally sponsored schemes, MoA, GoI and growth of MI industry in the country.

The Hon'ble Union Agriculture Minister said that water is becoming scarce both in terms of its demand & availability. He was happy to note that Indian Chamber of Commerce to take the initiative with the support of NHB, NCPAH and leading Micro Irrigation companies for participating in the conclave to develop a comprehensive road map that can be helpful during XII plan period.



Speaking at the conclave, Hon'ble Union Agriculture Minister said that one cannot hope to increase farm production and productivity, if the challenge to provide adequate and timely water to farmers is not addressed. The Minister told that in his recent tour to the drought affected districts in the states of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Gujarat, Punjab and Haryana, felt the urgency of developing plans and missions for preserving every drop of water available for agriculture.

He said, this year country's agriculture produce exports touched a record level of US 37 billion dollars with a fairly diverse basket of agriculture commodities. However in the process, water tables have touched critical levels, and the ecological sustainability of these production systems is being questioned.

He pointed out that the country has potential to bring 69.5 million hectare under micro-irrigation and still a lot has to be achieved in this direction. He urged the banks to extend loans to farmers for the purchase of micro- irrigation equipment. He further mentioned that it is through micro-irrigation technology, small and marginal farmers can enhance crop yields, improve their incomes and motivate the next generation to continue with farming in a modern way.

The minister assured both the industry & implementing agencies that the micro-irrigation sector will get the top most priority both in terms of policy support and financial outlays" as the government recognizes that water is not only becoming scarce but also highly unpredictable on account of climate change. He was happy to learn about the inclusion for discussion on micro irrigation in command areas in a PPP mode by the Planning Commission, GoI. This is indeed laudable because 'water' will continue to be the most critical input in agriculture.

Speaking on the occasion, Secretary Agriculture and Cooperation said, water is increasingly becoming a scarce commodity and there is a need for adopting water conservation technologies in a more comprehensive fashion. Dwelling on the Micro Irrigation systems, he, urged the industry to cover more area under the micro irrigation programme in the country & with the growth of MI industry it needs to provide MI system at lesser costs for users'.

The minister told that farmers have been more than willing to accept this technology. Micro irrigation started with horticulture and High Value crops but own there is a demand that it should be introduced in other crops as well, and experiments have shown that it does have the ability to raise yields, reduce water and fertilizer and higher farm revenue. This augurs well for the Micro Irrigation industry - but the challenge for the industry is to rise to the occasion by offering better value and improved services for the farmer, besides extending the network to hitherto serviced areas.

The President, Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) reiterated the fact about horizontal spread of improved irrigation infrastructure and higher allocation of govt. investments into the sector. The growth of micro irrigation is still at a nascent stage as the coverage is not significant considering potential of MI in the country. He welcomed recent development by the Planning Commission, Ministry of Water Resources and Ministry of Agriculture to promote micro irrigation in the canal command areas for ensuring food security in a populated country like ours.

The other eminent guests present on the dais were Secretary & DG, ICAR, DDG, Crop Science, ICAR and Director, IARI etc.

The conclave was divided into following technical sessions to understand micro irrigation status in different states, issues concerning industry, research & farmers prospective etc.



## First Session - Process & Implementation of Micro Irrigation

The representatives of State Mission Directors from Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Odisha, Punjab, Haryana & Rajasthan shared the progress, coverage, implementation process, presence of micro irrigation industries, convergence of NMMI with others flagship schemes, case studies, on-line progress & monitoring software's developed by Haryana etc. The experiences of these States about higher utilizing of subsidies, increased demand for micro irrigation system in different agri / horti crops. It is commendable to note that Govt.s in Odisha and Haryana appointed officials at the District level to expedite implementation of NMMI.

MD, Gujarat Green Revolution Company (GGRC) shared about use of GPS system used in the web based monitoring system for processing application of beneficiaries. These device would help third party inspection for releasing subsidies on time.

The special address was given by the Principal Secretary, Agriculture, Govt. of Odisha regarding use of deep borewell for community irrigation, convergence of schemes under both State / Central Govt. programmes and use of gravity based irrigation system for very small and marginal farmers in the areas where sources of power is not guaranteed.

The State departments were appreciative of extension and training programmes conducted by the Precision Farming Development Centers (PFDCs) in popularizing modern irrigation methods and developing package of practices on State focused crops. All of them requested for customized training programmes for capacity development of scheme implementers and end users'.

## Second Session - Role of Govt. Agencies, R&D Institutions and Financial Institutions in Enhancement of Micro Irrigation

There was a presentation by the representative, Planning Commission, Gol about PPP model to link micro irrigation in the canal command areas in the country. PI, PFDC, New Delhi shared his experience on research outcomes, automation, use of renewal energy, role of Quality standards (BIS) and training cum awareness to increase coverage of water efficient technologies in different agro-climatic zones of the country. The importance of water, savings of fertilizers, energy, labour etc. for achieving reduced cost of production with enhanced quality and productivity. The MI system helped garner more income out of every drop of water.

Head Food & Agriculture Dept., BIS, New Delhi, presented about the role of Bureau of Indian Standards Farm Irrigation and Drainage System (FAD - 17) in developing standards on all major components used in micro irrigation system. BIS looks at conversion of system from conventional materials to plastic as well. The role of BIS in ISO also has been prominent so that the demand & experiences of both domestic micro irrigation companies and JVs with MNCs in the areas of Research & Development is taken up to improve the quality standards. He hailed the efforts of NCPAH and PFDCs in making standards needed for irrigation industry in the country.



### Third Session - Crop Relationship and Efficient Use of Micro Irrigation System

Representatives of Irrigation Companies - M/s John Deere, M/s Automat, M/s Harvel Agua India Pvt Ltd, M/s Netafim India shared their experiences of operating under the National Mission on Micro Irrigation. All these companies presented about product improvements, agronomic services, dealers' network, role of State & District Level Committees in funds disbursement, registration of companies in scheme implementing States. The field experiences of drip with micro sprinkler, raingun , automation, use of solar energy, fertigation unit etc. were presented along with benefit-cost analysis of various irrigation technologies wrt to water, fertilizer, power, labour etc.

MD, Calypso Food Pvt. Ltd., shared farmers perspective by presenting a case study on wisdom of famers in taking crop geometry, rotation of crops, use of gravity based irrigation system, inter cropping etc for ensuring higher productivity with quality that is needed in food processing industry. He shared success stories from Karnataka & North East States like Manipur and Meghalaya.

JS,NCPAH highlighted the role of National Committee on Plasticulture Applications in Horticulture (NMMI) under MoA, Gol in promoting micro irrigation since inception, contributing in the researchable areas with the support of PFDCs, promoting MI technologies by participating in different events - regional, national & international & providing training cum awareness to related stakeholders at 22 centres in the country.

#### Valedictory Session

JS, (NHM) and Mission Director (NMMI) urged the micro irrigation industry to be more responsive to farmers and joins hands with the ministry to meet the mandate of NMMI in the country. The experience and success of MI in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Rajasthan while is laudable, it is noteworthy for the innovative efforts shown by States like Odisha, Madhya Pradesh etc. He told that the scale of Govt. subsidies under NMMI has been the highest amongst all new mission programmes implemented by the MoA, Gol.

The seriousness of the fact, depleting available water resources calls for Pvt. Bodies, MI industry, Research Institutes, PFDCs and national agencies like NCPAH to look at operational issues so that beneficiaries get the most under NMMI. The adoption of micro irrigation also needs to be seen in North-east and Himalayan States to achieve food security in the country.

Mission Director (NMMI), MoA, Gol was appreciative of the steps taken by the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) along with related agencies to organize conclave to learn lessons in different States and deliberated to develop a comprehensive road map for horizontal spread of MI technologies during the XII plan period.

The Director General, ICC, gave the vote of thanks to all eminent speakers, delegates and Hon'ble Union Minister, Ministry of Agriculture, Gol for supporting the second edition of National Conclave on micro irrigation to commemorate the Year of Horticulture (Y-o-H).

