

## **Research Agenda for Land Laws in Himachal Pradesh**

1. Determine the actual land use policy inherent in the land laws. Compare this with the National Forest Policy, as applicable to the mountain regions, and the current ecological needs of the region.
2. Determine what type of amendments or modifications are necessary in the land development and anti-erosion laws from the point of view of integrated ecological development.
3. By means of empirical studies, determine the impact of land acquisition laws, especially in relation to 'public purpose' acquisitions such as in hydel and irrigation projects. Find out which 'public' has benefitted and what have been the conditions of the original local inhabitants in terms of their water or land rights, compensation, and rehabilitation. Determine what type of application of the land acquisition laws will be in the best interests of the local ecology and people.
4. Determine the use of land laws by the PWD, Corporations, and municipalities, with reference to road constructions, housing, and mining, and work out alternative legal frameworks which will ensure the enforcement of these laws in ecologically non-destructive ways.
5. Determine the legal regime concerning mining, in terms of the rules under the forest laws and land laws, the administration involved, and centre-State relations, and work out how mining can be approached legally in a holistic way which will take care not only of the ecology of the habitat but also of the problems related to landslides, compensation to the people, and rehabilitation of the people as well as the environment.
6. Study the enforcement of land ceiling laws, with special reference to horticulture. Determine how the ceiling laws can be rationalised to serve the interests of both horticulture and the preservation of natural forests.
7. Work out the appropriate legal model for *patta* allotments to the poor. What will secure their interests as well as the interests of the environment? Determine the basic causes for the failure of the land allotment to the poor schemes and suggest legal remedies.
8. Do an impact analysis of the laws regulating livestock. Work out the best practicable legal strategy for managing grazing on public and private lands. The strategies considered may include deterrence, population control, taxation, rationing, and other alternative methods.