

Research Agenda Concerning Forest Legislations

1. Do an impact analysis of the Indian Forest Act as applicable to H.P., and find out in what ways it violates the following Articles of the Indian Constitution, with reference to the people below

the official poverty line and those wholly dependant upon common resources for their livelihood, Art. 14 (Equality before Law), Art. 19(e) (the Right to Reside), Art. 39 (b) and (c), (the Directive to Use the Resources of the Country for Common Good), Art. 21 (Right to Life, Livelihood), Art. 13 (The invalidity of those laws which violate Fundamental Rights). Suggest the appropriate amendments to the law in the light of the impact analysis for an equitable ecodevelopment.

2. Find out what amendments are required in the various forest laws to make social forestry possible. (Forestry that meets the primary basic needs of the rural people: viz., fuel, fodder, housing, and food needs.)
3. Study empirically the traditional community forest resource management systems in H.P. What legal models do these systems reveal? How can they be adopted for modern afforestation or social forestry programmes?
4. Study the land use patterns under the tenancy, ceiling, acquisition, and preservation laws, especially with reference to the public, government, and common lands. Determine what kind of land vesting, occupancy, or ownership will be the best in the context of the regeneration of the environment in a way that benefits the rural people equitably, for e.g., should the *Shamlats*, *Rakhas*, and *Ghasinis* be vested in the *panchayats* as they are in other States?
5. Study the fiscal laws relating to rural credit in H.P., especially with reference to forest cooperatives and *panchayats*. Determine what amendments are required to these laws, as well as in the National Bank for Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development Act, and other bank loan laws, to make State credit facilities available to the village level organisations.
6. Determine what type of usufruct rights in forests (in the settlement of rights presently being done by the FD) will best enable local people to sustain themselves and the forests .
7. Study the basic needs' requirements of the rural people from the forests, and determine the best legal model for lease, contracts, *pattas*, or tree tenure that the FD should provide for the satisfaction of these needs.