

Agriculture Ministry and NIDM Jointly Organize Workshop on Agricultural Disaster Resilience

Growing Threat of Climate-Induced Hazards to India's Agricultural Sector Discussed

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The National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM), in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare hosted a crucial stakeholder workshop at the Dr. Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi to enhance the nation's agricultural disaster preparedness. The event brought together leading policymakers, scientists, and field experts to address the growing threat of climate-induced hazards to India's agricultural sector. The inaugural session was marked by addresses on the need for proactive, multi-hazard preparedness, with Shri Shiv Narayan Sidh, the workshop coordinator, setting the context for the day's discussions. Shri Arnab Dhaki, Deputy Secretary, Department of Agriculture delivered the welcome address, underscoring the collaborative spirit of the workshop. Shri Madhup Vyas, Executive Director, NIDM, highlighted the urgency of integrating climate risk reduction into agricultural policies. Dr. Pramod Kumar Meherda, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, underscored the economic vulnerability of the agricultural sector, citing that over 68% of India's cropped area is drought-prone, and emphasized the importance of leveraging technology and data to protect farm incomes. Shri Rajendra Singh, Member & Head of the Department, NDMA, stressed the need for a shift from a reactive to a proactive approach, highlighting the gaps in managing emerging hazards like cold waves and hailstorms.

The workshop featured four dedicated technical sessions, chaired by eminent experts, which resulted in significant recommendations. Chaired by Dr. Mrutyunjay Mohapatra, DG, IMD, the first session focused on updating the Drought Manual 2020, with recommendations including incorporating new technologies like remote sensing and AI-based models for more accurate drought monitoring. The session on pest attacks, chaired by Dr. S. Bandyopadhyay, Director, MNCFC, addressed the rising threat of pest outbreaks and recommended establishing a national surveillance and early warning system to provide farmers with real-time advisories. Discussions on cold wave guidelines, chaired by Dr. Mangi Lal Jat, Secretary (DARE) & DG, ICAR, led to recommendations for strengthening state-level action plans and promoting the use of cold-tolerant crop varieties. The session on hailstorm guidelines, chaired by Dr. A K. Nayak, DDG NRM, ICAR, focused on promoting impact-based forecasts and enhancing insurance coverage for farmers in vulnerable regions. The workshop concluded with a commitment to translate the day's discussions into actionable policy.

In his valedictory address, Shri Devesh Chaturvedi, Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, reiterated the Government's commitment to building a resilient agricultural sector and affirmed that the recommendations would be integrated into a new, comprehensive framework. Shri Krishna S. Vatsa, Member, NDMA, highlighted that the true measure of the workshop's success would be in its ability to empower farmers with timely information and resources. He emphasized the importance of fostering a culture of cross-sectoral collaboration to bridge the last-mile gap in preparedness. The workshop successfully laid the foundation for a more integrated and proactive approach to managing agricultural risks, ensuring that India's farming community is better prepared for the challenges of a changing climate.

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