Summary

Flood Protection Programme in Himachal Pradesh: A Policy Analysis

The study was based on both primary and secondary data. The objective was to examine the flood protection programme of Himachal Pradesh. This study exhibited that Government of Himachal Pradesh needed to make a paradigm shift from the approach of flood control and protection to that of integrated flood management. The flood protection project formulation process was found to be limited in scope when compared with the aspects and modalities considered significant and recommended by the national guidelines and by the international approach on integrated flood management. The proposals were formulated in a piecemeal manner without due significance being accorded to aspect of public participation. Project implementation was found to be partial when compared against the approved goals and proposals. Study of the target groups’ perception exhibited that the locals felt satisfied with the implementation of these projects on account of socio-economic development and prosperity in the region; but they were aggrieved due to the lack of social equity as regards the distribution of benefits accruing from projects’ implementation. This was attributed to inadequate capacity building and public participation of target group during the entire project cycle. Locals were also aggrieved as the street level bureaucracy had used its discretion to unduly benefit some people over the others.

It was suggested that the principles of integrated perspective, ecological conservation, sustainability, public participation and social equity be adopted to broaden, revamp and modernize the formulation and implementation of flood protection and management programme in the state.