

HP to start green accounting from Mandi

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SHIMLA, SEPTEMBER 23 Himachal Pradesh will begin the process of Green Accounting under Inclusive Green Growth Sustainable Development from district Mandi and later cover the entire state.

It has already prepared the blueprint for assessing the real value of its forests. A workshop was held here yesterday for officials from various departments of Forest, Tourism, Environment Science and Technology, Land Records, Health, Economics and Statistics and Irrigation and Public Health so that forest accounting could be done strictly as per the UN mandate of System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA)-2012 which is globally acceptable and recognised.

Sources said it was only once the entire data of forest accounting of Mandi district is collected that it would be replicated in

Experts' viewpoint

- Need to have exact statistics of inclusive green growth which presently are not tabulated and available
- After having proper stats, inclusive green growth can be measured not in terms of revenue only, but environmental concerns that arise out of the larger picture as well
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mental concerns that arise out of the larger picture," said forest officials.

"Forest accounting will also help tabulate the information on economic contribution of forests and impact of non-forestry policies on our resources and services," they said.

The officers said: "So far no such studies and estimates have been undertaken to assess as to what cost we are paying for development whether it is in terms of power projects, cement plants, roads or industry."

"Forest sectors and its contribution is either undervalued or wrongly added to other sectors thereby presenting a very under assessed contribution from our forests," point out forest officials.

It is now that the government will engage in the process of green accounting which will not just give the contribution of forests to the budget, but indirect benefits that accrue in other sectors such as power, tourism or even agriculture.

It is being felt that it is

only by compiling data on green accounting that the dependence of all other departments on forests can be ascertained.

"Whether it is tourism, hydro-power or even agriculture, none of them can sustain without forests, so everyone needs to understand the relevance and importance of forests," they said.

TCA Anant, Secretary and Chief Statistician, Ministry of Account and Project Implementation, Government of India inaugurated the three-day workshop on green accounting organised by the State Forest Department here today.

Tarun Shridhar, Principal Secretary, Forests, Dr Shrikant Baldi, Principal Secretary, Finance, RK Gupta, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and other senior officers of the state government were also present.