



## **NREGA's plan for 2011 is based on Gujarat's watershed initiative**

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Small, marginal and those farmers living below poverty line (BPL) in Gujarat may get an opportunity to design solutions for their own plot of land. If everything goes right, Gujarat government, under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), has plans of taking each farmer's land as an individual project and give liberty to choose what they want to with it to earn livelihood under the scheme.

This year's planning for the NREGA has already started, disclosed commissioner and principal secretary of Rural Development Department of government of Gujarat, Rita Teotia. "This year, we plan NREGA mainly on watershed initiative," she said, adding that each farmer's (marginal) land will be taken as individual projects and the farmer concerned will be asked what they need for their land - whether they would want it cleared first, improve the soil moisture level since irrigation may not be available or if they wish to go for horticulture, Teotia said.

Around 1 lakh farmers are expected to be benefited by the scheme and the government hopes to take it to 2 lakh in a year's time.

Speaking about the various innovative tactics used by Gujarat farmers Teotia insisted that its time these innovations of these farmers were brought out of the closet.

Teotia was speaking at the launch of the book *State of the World: Innovations that Nourish the Planet* by US-based Worldwatch Institute, also a partner with the Centre for Environment Education (CEE). The book draws from the world's leading agricultural experts and from the hundreds of innovations that are already working on the ground in sub-Saharan Africa to outline 15 proven, environmentally sustainable prescriptions for alleviating hunger and poverty. The function was attended by Danielle Nierenberg of the Worldwatch and one of the authors of the book, vice chancellor of Gujarat Vidyapith Dr Sudarshan Iyenger, DAICT's Prof BN Hiremath and director of CEE Kartikeya Sarabhai.