

**Farmer earns a net income of nearly 5 lakhs from agriculture through implementation of soil and water conservation activities - Revealed at the conference organized by FFCSWR during March, 2013**

Mr. Sreeramachandra Bhat from Kunjar watershed project under NHWDP explained that he is getting a net income of Rs. 474000/- per annum from his 2.35 ha land by adopting integrated watershed management practices, at the conference “Farmers First for Conserving Soil and Water Resources in Southern Region (FFCSWR-2013)”, held at Karnataka Veterinary Council (KVC), Hebbal Campus, Bangalore during 14-16 March 2013. His name was nominated for the conference by Centre for Research and Development (CRD), Nileshwaram, the PFA of Kunjar Watershed project and the screening committee selected him for an oral and poster presentation. The conference was organized jointly by Indian Association of Soil and Water Conservationist, Dehradun, Central Soil and Water Conservation Research and Training Institute, Regional Centre’s Bellary and Udagamandalam and University of Agricultural Sciences, GKVK, Bengaluru.

**Sreeramachandra Bhat making presentation in the seminar**



Mr. Bhat hailing from Bela Village of NABARD sponsored Kunjar watershed project is a progressive farmer cultivating various agricultural crops (Arecanut in 0.64 Ha, Coconut in 0.24 Ha, Cashew in 0.52 Ha and Plantain in 0.092 Ha). He is practicing agriculture since 1963. He used to attend various training programmes under Kunjar watershed project and served as Secretary to VWC. The knowledge and experience the farmer has acquired through attending various training programmes and the NABARD Watershed Development project activities infused lot of confidence in the watershed management technologies and these technologies for soil and water conservation were effectively implemented by him following “Ridge to Valley” approach. This includes- Construction of ‘SURANGA’ (horizontally dug up tunnel) with a ‘MADAKKA’ (Earthen pond having side walls reinforced with mud- a traditional practice) with a size of 11.5x9x3mtr to collect the discharge water from the SURANGA. The MADAKKA has a capacity to store 310500 litres of water at a time. Apart from this, four other MADAKKAs were also constructed to collect and store rain water. 508 Nos of Water Percolation Pits, 3 Nos of Ground Recharge Systems, 65 Mtrs of Trenches, 31 Mtrs of Stone Pitched Contour bunds and 2 Loose Boulder Check Dams in the stream adjacent to the farm land were constructed. A

roof top rain water harvesting pit with a capacity of 9600 litres at a time to harvest and conserve the rain water from roof is also constructed.

'Pallam' (Natural water storage pond in laterite area at ridge portion) was conserved by desilting and protecting the sides. An area of 26 cents of laterite quarry was developed for agricultural use by soil filling and cultivated plantain ('Kadhali' variety). A Natural eco system (forest) at ridge portion of the land in 0.93 Ha area was developed and conserved by the farmer. Micro irrigation system (Sprinkler) through gravity force using water from the Suranga collected in the Madakka was installed mainly to irrigate Arecanut.

In his presentation at the conference the farmer explained the process of implementation of scientific soil and water conservation measures on his land and the monitory (Net income from cultivation per year is Rs. 474000/-) and other benefits accrued out of it such as reduction in soil erosion, soil health improvement/ improved water absorption and moisture retention capacity of soil. Before the implementation of the technologies 6 to 8 hours irrigation was needed. But now, within 1 and half hours the entire area will be irrigated as moisture retention capacity of soil is increased. Hence the time as well as the quantity of water for irrigation is reduced. Earlier, the bore well was the major source of water for irrigation. Now, as a result of the conservation measures, the water table in all the water bodies has substantially improved and the bore well is literally not used either for irrigation or drinking purpose. Even the pond which collects discharge water from SURANGA is enough for irrigating more than 6 hours at a stretch. Green manure is available from the land in sufficient quantity. This has helped to follow fully organic farming practices to all the crops.

The poster presentation made by the farmer incorporates the relevant photographs of the treatment measures implemented and the details of the cultivation and results generated out of adoption of scientific soil and water conservation measures.

#### **The poster presented by Sreeramachandra Bhat**



The oral and poster presentation made by the farmer in the technical session of the Conference invited attention of many of the Conference participants who are from academic, scientific and other fields.

**Sreeramachandra Bhat receiving Certificate and Memento**

