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Sub:- Preferential Treatment to NTFP Species in the natural forests – Area allotted to VSS - Certain guidelines - Issued - Regarding.

Ref:- This office ref.no.45008/2003/PMU.I/1, dated 17-11-2003.

Certain guidelines have been issued in the reference cited above to take up preferential treatment to the Seethaphal plants that are available in the VSS area of the forests. The preferential treatment was mainly in the form of soil working / providing semi lunar trench to the plants in order to make more moisture available to the plants as the State is passing through recurrent droughts. It is reported by the field officers that the plants which have been provided with such operations are yielding many fruits of big size.

It is considered necessary that such treatment should be given to other important NTFP species like Usiri, Neredu, Tamarind, Jack fruit etc. The preferential treatment may be one of the following tending operations:-

- (1) Soil working to the plants to a radius of 0.5 Mt to 1 Mt. removing the grass around the plants.
- (2) Soil working and providing a semi lunar trench at least at a distance of 0.5 Mt. at the lower side of the slope. The semi-lunar trench may be of the dimension of 30 cm (width) x 30 cm (depth) x L cm. The semi-lunar trench should form half the circle around the plant.
- (3) In case of Bamboo, decongestion of clump and soil working up to a distance of 0.5 m. from the periphery of the clump may be taken up. A small mound to a height of 25 cmt. may be provided to the clump. A semi-lunar trench on the lower side may be provided and the dug out earth may be used for mound formation to the clump. The dimensions of the trench may be bigger if the clump size is medium to big.

It should be noted that big trees of Usiri, Tamarind, Mango, Neredu, Jack fruit should not be provided with such operations. For the big trees, advice of the Horticulturist may be obtained. These tending operations should be provided only to young seedlings up to the age when they start bearing fruits.

- (4) In many VSS forests, profuse regeneration of phoenix species is found in a patch of 1 to 5 hectares of area. Such areas should be protected against fire by digging a series of staggered trenches all over the area and removing the fire hazards every year before the advent of the fire season. With these efforts the palm tope will become a great asset to the local community within a short time.

Any of these operations will result in preventing the fire to reach the plant even if it occurs accidentally in the area.

These operations should be taken up only after carrying out enumeration of the NTFP plants in the area and getting the estimates sanctioned by the competent authority.

Sd/- **(S.K. DAS)**
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