

CREEA report charts plans to protect crops, livelihoods, food security in Kerala

CREEA is a blueprint for an inclusive, low-carbon farm economy that keeps smallholders at the centre of climate action, says Agriculture Minister P. Prasad

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THE HINDU BUREAU

A Climate-Resilient and Energy-Efficient Agriculture (CREEA) report, a State-wide roadmap shaped by 14 district workshops and consultations with experts from 16 departments (ranging from Agriculture to Power and Disaster Management), was released here on Wednesday.

The exercise, steered jointly by the Department of Agriculture, Energy Management Centre (EMC) under the Power department, and climate-policy organisations Asar Social Impact Advisors and Equinoct, charts how Kerala can protect crops, livelihood, and food security as extreme weather tightens its grip on the ₹56,000-crore farm economy of the State.

The CREEA framework has been prepared against the backdrop of the climate crisis and its impact on the food system in Kerala. Around 94% of Kerala's cropped area has already been categorised as climate-vulnerable, with loss in paddy and banana cultivation rising by 28% since the 2018 floods, according to the State Agriculture Directorate data.

"Further, farm power use has doubled in a decade alone. The report outlines pathways to cut on-farm energy demand by up to 40% through solar pumps, biogas, and precision irrigation. By reducing production cost, improving soil health, and promoting biodiversity, CREEA will fortify rural livelihood against price and climate shocks," says agricultural scientist S. Usha, the lead author of the report.

Agriculture Minister P. Prasad unveiled the report at a farmer-scientist consultation, while Electricity Minister K. Krishnankutty opened a technical dialogue on its recommendations. "CREEA is more than a study; it is a blueprint for an inclusive, low-carbon farm economy that keeps smallholders at the centre of climate action," Mr. Prasad said.

The ideas highlighted in the report include forming K-CRAIL (Kerala Climate-Resilient Agriculture Innovation Labs) at 941 panchayats in phases. The farmer-led "living labs" at panchayat, block, and district levels will trial bio-inputs, micro-irrigation, and resilient cropping systems.

The report also suggested forming farmer seed and bio-resource networks, AI-powered risk-mapping platform, low-carbon mechanisation drive, and supporting small and marginal farmers through targeted subsidies.

An inter-departmental CREEA steering task force will be notified this quarter to finalise a three-year implementation plan. Pilot K-CRAIL labs are slated for launch in Alappuzha, Palakkad, and Wayanad by early 2026. The EMC will draft an investment prospectus to channel public-private finance into low-carbon mechanisation and AI-enabled advisory services.

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