



Impact made by *trustea* program – M L Dalmia Group

by **Ms. Neeta Tiwari**

Ms. Neeta Tiwari, an agriculturist with rich experience in tea industry mentions at length, about the on-ground impact made by trustea program on the several entities under M L Dalmia Group. One of the early adopters of trustea Code, both the tea companies under the group have been trustea certified since 2014:

1. Dalmia Tea Plantation and Industries Ltd (DTPIL); units located in Terai region of West Bengal

- Merry View Tea Estate
- Teesta view factory
- Toong Tea Factory
- Tejo Tea factory

No. of verified STGs: 542, Verified quantity: ~8 million

2. Bateli Tea company Ltd; Bateli tea Estate at North Bank, Assam

No. of verified STGs: 444, Verified quantity: ~4.3 million

Ms. Neeta, trustea coordinator from MLD group quotes the following interventions made by the trustea program:

“While following the trustea guidelines, we are using only Plant Protection Code (PPC) approved molecules and are maintaining buffer zones, mixing zones and are practicing Integrated Pest Management (IPM). As a result of these practices, we could minimize soil and water pollution remarkably. We have observed and recorded that the volume of our chemical consumption has drastically come down with the introduction of biochemical agents and Indigenous Technical Knowledge (ITK) in the field. We understand that the using hazardous chemicals may adversely affect the health of chemical handlers as well as the end consumers. As per trustea code, application of banned chemicals is one of the ‘zero tolerance’ items. We have applied bio-control agents and ITK towards plant protection that ensures safety of handlers, environment and consumers. We get our teas tested for Maximum Residue Limit (MRL) at regular interval. This of course, has made a positive impact on the environment.”

Neeta adds, “MLD Group is putting sincere efforts to prevent the depletion of water table by adopting suitable measures in the field, factory and households. We are using tensiometers (a measuring instrument) to optimize water usage for irrigation. To check the loss of water in evapotranspiration, we irrigate the plants mostly during night hours. A regular maintenance of irrigation equipment has minimised the water wastage. We got encouraging results by imparting trainings to our workers regarding the efficient use of water and thus minimizing the wastage. Moreover, participation in various awareness programs has developed a sense of responsibility in our workers.”

Neeta further mentions, “We observe that the practices such as maintaining buffer zones near natural water bodies in line with trustea guidelines have prevented the water bodies from chemical contamination. The trained sprayers can easily identify the buffer zone boundaries, as the black and yellow bands are clearly visible even from a distance. Further, regular trainings are imparted to workers towards encouraging them in using toilets which helps in preventing microbiological contamination of natural

Introduction and adoption of trustea program has enabled us to address environmental, social, economic and legal concerns across our supply chain. Taking a holistic approach, we are able to reduce waste and environmental footprints at every step while improving the health and safety of our manpower. trustea code has made us understand that we can conserve resources, optimise processes, increase productivity, along with promoting the organisational value.

water bodies. The impact is clearly visible as we can notice healthy flora and fauna in and around our estates. Also, efficient waste management practices such as using dustbins for segregated wastes, selling hazardous waste to the authorized vendors only (and not burning any wastes) are helping in preventing contamination of water bodies.”

Benefits brought by trustea program to ML Dalmia Group (in Neeta's words):

- ✓ The trustea verification has added value to our product as it ensures product quality and safety for our customers.
- ✓ The demonstrations from trustea program has helped us in establishing sustainable relationships with various tea procurers.
- ✓ Compliance to trustea code enables us to comply with national/ international sustainability standards with a structured approach.