

RIVER CORRIDORS

Relevant for: Geography | Topic: Rivers, changes therein and in Flora & Fauna and the Effects of such changes

Water being a State subject, it is the responsibility of State/UT (Union Territory) Governments for planning, execution and operation & maintenance of water resource projects, including projects on river corridors, which are implemented by State/UT Governments from their own resources and as per their requirement and priority. The Union Government only renders assistance to States/UTs which is technical, advisory, catalytic in nature and through policy intervention.

The Ministry of Jal Shakti has impressed upon State/UT Governments the need for enactment of an appropriate legislation for the purpose and delineation and demarcation of flood plain zones on the notified stretch(es) of river(s) of the States/UTs through the Model Bill on Flood Plain Zoning, 1975 prepared by the Central Water Commission (CWC). States/UTs such as Manipur, Rajasthan, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttarakhand have taken a lead and enacted the legislation.

Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) has been constituted under Section 3 (3) of the "Environment (Protection) Act, 1986" for the purpose of regulation and control of ground water development and management in the Country. CGWA has advised States/UTs to take measures to promote/adopt artificial recharge to ground water / rain water harvesting. CGWA grants No Objection Certificates (NOCs) for ground water abstraction to Industries, Infrastructure units and Mining projects in feasible areas in certain States/UTs where regulation is not being done by the respective State/UTs. The latest guidelines for control and regulation of groundwater extraction with pan-India applicability were notified by the Ministry on 24 September, 2020. In addition, following steps have been taken up:

(ii) CGWB has taken up Aquifer Mapping and Management Programme during XII Plan, under the scheme of Ground Water Management and Regulation.

(iii) Government of India launched Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA) in 2019, a time bound campaign with a mission mode approach intended to improve water availability, including ground water conditions, in the water stressed blocks of 256 districts in India. In addition, 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan – Catch the Rain' campaign has been launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India on 22 March, 2021.

(iv) Government has formulated the National Water Policy (2012), which inter-alia advocates rainwater harvesting and conservation of water in river water bodies and the need for augmenting the availability of water through direct use of rainfall. It also advocates conservation of rivers and water bodies.

(v) In compliance to the decision taken by the Committee of Secretaries, an 'Inter Ministerial Committee' under the chairmanship of Secretary, Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation (DoWR, RD & GR) has been constituted to take forward the subject of 'Push on Water Conservation Related Activities for Optimum Utilization of Monsoon Rainfall'.

(vi) Ministry has circulated a Model Bill to all the States/UTs to enable them to enact suitable ground water legislation for regulation of its development, which also includes provision of rain water harvesting. So far, 19 States/UTs have adopted and implemented the ground water legislation.

(vii) Government has instituted National Water awards to incentivize good practices in water

conservation and ground water recharge.

(viii) Mass awareness programmes (Trainings, Seminars, Workshops, Exhibitions, Trade Fares and Painting Competitions etc.) are conducted from time to time each year under the Information, Education & Communication (IEC) scheme in various parts of the country to promote rain water harvesting and artificial recharge to ground water.

(ix) The Ministry of Rural Development in consultation and agreement with DoWR, RD & GR and the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare has developed an actionable framework for Natural Resources Management (NRM), titled 'Mission Water Conservation' to ensure gainful utilization of funds.

(x) Central Government supports construction of water harvesting and conservation works primarily through Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) and Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana – Watershed Development Component (PMKSY-WDC).

(xi) A joint advisory of Department of Rural Development, DoWR, RD & GR, Department of Land Resources and Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation has been issued on 24.04.2020 to all States/UTs to emphasize efforts in the area of water conservation and water management in the country. The activities include augmentation of existing water sources(s), ground water recharge, rainwater harvesting and grey water management and recharge.

(xii) Model Building Bye Laws (MBBL), 2016 circulated by Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs include provisions for rainwater harvesting and it has been shared with all the States / UTs. So far 32 States / UTs have adopted the provisions of rainwater harvesting of MBBL-2016.

(xiii) Government has taken up Atal Bhujal Yojana (ABHY), a Rs.6000 crore scheme with World Bank funding, for sustainable management of ground water with community participation in identified over-exploited and water stressed areas in the states of Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

This Information was given by the Minister of State for Jal Shakti, Shri Bishweswar Tudu in a written reply in Rajya Sabha today.

BY/AS

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