

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:356

ANSWERED ON:24.02.2010

NATIONAL WATER POLICY

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Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Union Government has formulated National Water Policy;
- (b) if so, the salient features thereof;
- (c) the areas of implementation of the above said policy during the last three years;
- (d) whether any obstacles were faced in the implementation of the policy;
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken in this regard; and
- (f) the success achieved by the Government as a result thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI VINCENT H. PALA)

(a) The National Water Policy, 2002 (NWP) has been adopted by the National Water Resources Council in April 2002.

(b) The Salient features of the National Water Policy, 2002 are given in the Annex.

(c) to (f) The National Water Policy states that its success will depend entirely on evolving and maintaining a national consensus and commitment to its underlying principles and objectives. For achieving the desired objectives, the NWP stipulates formulation of States Water Policy backed with an operational action plan in a time bound manner. State Water Policy has been adopted by the States of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and UTs & Daman and Diu and Dadar & Nagar Haveli. Ministry of Water Resources has requested all other States for early formulation and adoption of the State Water Policy in the 13th Meeting of National Water Board held on 18.9.2009

Annexure

(Reference Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. +356 dated 24.2.2010)

SALIENT FEATURES OF THE NATIONAL WATER POLICY, 2002

The salient features of the National Water Policy – 2002 are as under:-

Water is a prime natural resource, a basic human need and a precious national asset. Planning, development and management of water resources need to be governed by national perspectives.

A well developed information system for water related data at national/state level should be established with a net-work of data banks and data bases integrating and strengthening the existing central and state level agencies.

Water resources available to the country should be brought within the category of utilizable resources to the maximum possible extent.

Non-conventional methods for utilization of water such as through inter-basin transfers , artificial recharge of ground water and desalination of brackish or sea water as well as traditional water conservation practices like rainwater harvesting, including roof-top rainwater harvesting , need to be practiced to further increase the utilizable water resources. Promotion of frontier research and development, in a focused manner , for these techniques is necessary.

Water resources development and management will have to be planned for a hydrological unit. Appropriate river basin organisations should be established for the planned development and management of the river basins.

Water should be made available to water short areas by transfer from other areas including ransfer from one river basin to another, after taking into account the requirements of the areas/basins.

Planning of water resources development projects should, as far as possible, be for multi- purpose with an integrated and multi-disciplinary approach having regard to human and ecological aspects including those of disadvantaged sections of the society.

In the allocation of water, first priority should be given for drinking water, followed by irrigation, hydro-power, ecology, agro-industries and non-agricultural industries, navigation and other uses, in that order.

The exploitation of groundwater should be regulated with reference to recharge possibilities and consideration of social equity. The

detrimental environmental consequences of over- exploitation of ground water need to be effectively prevented.

Careful planning is necessary to ensure that construction and rehabilitation activities proceed simultaneously. A skeletal national policy on resettlement & rehabilitation needs to be formulated such that project affected persons share the benefits through proper rehabilitation.

Adequate emphasis needs to be given to the physical and financial sustainability of existing water resources facilities. There is need to ensure that the water charges for various uses should be fixed such as to cover at least the operation and maintenance charges initially and a part of the capital costs subsequently.

Management of the water resources for diverse uses should incorporate a participatory approach by involving users and other stakeholders alongwith various governmental agencies, in an effective and decisive manner.

Private sector participation should be encouraged in planning, development and management of water resources projects for diverse uses, wherever feasible.

Both surface water and ground water should be regularly monitored for quality. Effluents should be treated to acceptable levels and standards before discharging them into natural streams. Minimum flow should be ensured in the perennial streams for maintaining ecology.

Efficiency of utilization should be improved in all the diverse uses of water and conservation consciousness promoted through education, regulation, incentives and disincentives.

There should be a Master Plan for flood control and management for each flood prone basin. In flood control and management, the strategy should be to reduce the intensity of floods.

Land erosion by sea or river should be minimized by suitable cost-effective measures. Indiscriminate occupation of, and economic activity in coastal areas and flood plain zones should be regulated.

Needs of drought-prone areas should be given priority in the planning of project for development of water resources. These areas should be made less vulnerable through various measures.

The water sharing / distribution amongst the states should be guided by a national perspective with due regard to water resources availability and needs within the river basin.

Training and research efforts should be intensified as an integral part of water resources development.