

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6576

ANSWERED ON:05.05.2010

CATEGORISATION OF GROUND WATER BLOCKS

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Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether as per the report of World Bank 60% of all aquifers in India could run dry within a decade if the trend of indiscriminate exploitation of ground water continues;
- (b) if so, the details thereof including the basis for such report;
- (c) whether presently 29% of the ground water blocks in the country are already semi-critical, critical or overexploited;
- (d) if so, the details thereof including the norms adopted for categorisation of blocks;
- (e) whether the central ground water authority has proposed any suggestions for regulations of ground water development;
- (f) if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) the action taken by the Government in this regard and the success achieved as a result thereof?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) The World Bank report titled "Deep Wells and Prudence: Towards Pragmatic Action for Addressing Groundwater Overexploitation in India" (2010), inter-alia, indicates that "if the current trends continue, within 20 years, 60% of all aquifers in India will be in a critical condition". The above said World Bank report of 2010 has quoted the specific information from the earlier World Bank report titled "India's Water Economy - Bracing for a Turbulent Future" published in 2005.

(c) & (d) As per the ground water resource assessment carried out jointly by Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) and State Ground Water Organizations (as on 2004), out of 5723 assessment units (Blocks/ Mandals / Talukas) in the country, 839 (15%) are 'Over-exploited', 226 (4%) are 'Critical' and 550 (10%) are categorised as 'Semi-critical'. 'Over-exploited' units are defined as units where stage of ground water development is more than 100% and significant decline in long term trend of water level has been observed in either pre-monsoon or post-monsoon or both. 'Critical' units are defined as units where stage of ground water development is between 90% and 100% and significant decline is observed in the long term trend of water level in both pre-monsoon and post-monsoon. 'Semi-critical' units are defined as units where stage of ground water development is between 70% and 100% and significant decline in long term water level trend has been recorded in either Pre-monsoon or post-monsoon.

(e) to (g) Various measures taken by Ministry of Water Resources and Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) for regulation and control of ground water development and management include:

- i. Notification of 43 areas in 10 states for regulation of ground water development and management;
- ii. Issuance of directions to Chief Secretaries in 12 States and Administrators in 2 Union Territories having over-exploited blocks to take necessary measures to promote / adopt artificial recharge to ground water / rain water harvesting;
- iii. Issuance of directions to all Residential Group Housing Societies / Institutions / Schools / Hotels / Industrial Establishments falling in the over-exploited and critical areas (except in the water logged areas) in the country to adopt roof top rain water harvesting systems in their premises latest by May 2010;
- iv. Issuance of directions to the Heads of Central Road Research Institute, National Highway Authority of India, Central / State Public Works Departments, Railway Board, Sports Authority, Airports Authority of India, Civil Aviation, Youth Affairs & Sports to implement the scheme of ground water recharge along all national / state highways and other roads, rail tracks and other establishments of railways, all stadiums and airports within 365 days of receipt of its direction issued on 08.10.2009; and
- v. Circulation of Model Bill by the Ministry of Water Resources to the States and Union Territories to enable them to enact suitable legislation for regulation and control of ground water development and management. So far 11 States / UTs viz. Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chandigarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal

have enacted ground water legislation.