

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4561
ANSWERED ON:03.05.2012
WASTAGE OF WATER
Bajwa Shri Partap Singh

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken cognizance of excessive wastage of water due to poor management of this scarce natural resource;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has any mechanism to help offset the paucity of drinking water, particularly where ground-water is of poor quality;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has any proposal to draft a model law for States on management of water resources based on the success stories of other countries; and
- (e) if so, the response of the State Governments thereto?

Answer

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

(a) The Government is aware of wastage of water and has launched National Water Mission with the objective of conservation of water, minimizing wastage and ensuring its more equitable distribution both across and within States through integrated water resources development and management.

(b) & (c) The Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation administers through the States the centrally sponsored scheme, National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) for providing financial and technical assistance to the States to supplement their efforts to provide drinking water to the rural areas. The State Governments are vested with powers to plan, execute and implement drinking water supply schemes under NRDWP. Rural Water Supply Schemes are approved by the State Level Scheme Sanctioning Committee.

(d) & (e) No, Madam. However, National Water Resources Council has adopted National Water Policy, 2002 laying down policy directives on Water resources planning and management for proper utilisation and distribution of water in the country. The salient features of National Water Policy, 2002 is annexed.

Annexure

(Annexure referred in reply to the Unstarred Question No. 4561 to be answered on 3.5.2012 in the Lok Sabha regarding Wastage of Water.)

Salient Features of National Water Policy - 2002

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 transfer 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 and smoothly. A skeletal national policy on resettlement & rehabilitation needs to be formulated so 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 a 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.

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.