

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
WATER RESOURCES  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1125  
ANSWERED ON:16.08.2012  
WATER IN THE CONCURRENT LIST  
Agarwal Shri Rajendra

**Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:**

(a) whether a high-powered Committee on the Allocation of Natural Resources has recommended to include the subject of water in the Concurrent List of the Constitution; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the salient features of the recommendations and the follow-up action taken thereon?

**Answer**

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

(a) & (b) Yes, Madam.

The Committee Chaired by Shri Ashok Chawla submitted its report on 31.5.2011. The major recommendations of the Committee relating to water (enclosed in Annexure) were placed before the said Group of Ministers, which, inter alia, recommended acceptance of all recommendations on water.

Government has decided that all the recommendations agreed to by the GoM would be pursued for implementation by individual Ministries in a timely manner.

Annexure

(Annexure referred in reply to Unstarred Question No +1125 to be answered on 16.8.2012 in the Lok Sabha regarding Water in the Concurrent List)

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON ALLOCATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES (CANR) ON WATER

(i) The Committee sees an urgent need to have a comprehensive national legislation on water. This can be either done through bringing water under the Concurrent List and then framing the appropriate legislation; or, by obtaining consensus from a majority of the States that such a "framework law" is necessary and desirable as a Union enactment. The legal options in this regard need to be examined by the Ministry of Water Resources. The national legislation should clarify a common position on a number of issues, e.g., need to consider all water resources as a conjunctive, unified whole; water as a common property resource; principles of allocations and pricing and so on. The framework legislation should recognize that pollution also leads to conjunctive use of water, which makes the resource unusable for other purposes.

(ii) In the meantime, the Committee recommends amending the River Boards' Act, 1956 and include groundwater in its ambit, while assigning the River Boards Act (RBA) a managerial role in management of water resources. The process of seeking political consensus from States for making the Act more effective should be taken up pro-actively by the Union Government Ministry of Water Resources.

(iii) The Committee recommends aquifer level mapping, along with hydro-geological studies, and pilot projects to be initiated in different settings to address the problems of groundwater management urgently. Each of these pilots should cover an area of 5,000 to 10,000 hectares or boundaries of an aquifer, whichever is less. Comprehensive programmes of aquifer management can be built up based on these studies, in respect of these pilots. For better results, these pilots should be designed so that they converge seamlessly into ongoing schemes like the NREGA, IWMP, and ongoing drinking water and sanitation projects. The pilots should take into account community awareness and participation, self-regulation of groundwater enhancement of coverage of water saving methods, including changes in cropping pattern and so on.

(iv) Finally, the Committee suggests that the focus on command area management should be restored and merger of Command Area Development (CAD) programmes with the AIBP schemes can be contemplated in this regard.