

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
WATER RESOURCES  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4963

ANSWERED ON:25.04.2013

WASTAGE OF WATER

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

- (a) whether the Government has reviewed the system of management aimed at conservation and checking wastage of a sacred natural resource like water in view of its shortage and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether there is any proposal to address the problem of shortage of drinking water especially in the areas where quality of underground water is not good and where the water table is going down rapidly;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the steps proposed to be taken thereon; and
- (d) the total quantum of water estimated to be wasted every year due to lack of proper management and the steps proposed to be taken by the Union Government thereon?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI HARISH RAWAT)

(a) Yes, Madam. Keeping in view the challenges emerging from increasing demands on water resources in the country due to population growth, urbanization, industrialization etc., Government of India undertook a review of the National Water Policy, 2002. The new National Water Policy, 2012 has made several recommendations for the improved management of water resources in the country. The Salient Features of the National Water Policy, 2012 are Annexed.

(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.

Ministry of Urban Development is supplementing the efforts of State Governments/Urban Local Bodies in providing water supply in Urban areas/Metropolitan cities under the schemes/ programmes such as Jawahar Lal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, North Eastern Region Urban Development Programme, Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources and Urban Infrastructure Development Scheme in Satellite Towns.

In areas where water table is going down in the country, several steps have been taken to encourage artificial recharge, rainwater harvesting and regulation of ground water development to arrest declining ground water levels. For water conservation, rainwater harvesting and artificial recharge to ground water, Government of India has implemented pilot / demonstrative artificial recharge projects during VIII, IX, X and XI plan periods. In addition, technical assistance is provided to the State Governments and other organizations for rainwater harvesting and artificial recharge. In areas where the quality of underground water is not good, remedial measures are concentrated on providing alternative sources of water supply, since in-situ treatment of contaminated aquifers is difficult.

(d) Due to seasonal, geographical and annual variation in availability of water as well as lack of adequate storage, substantial quantity of water, especially during monsoon season, remains unused and flows into sea. As per present assessment, the average annual water availability in the country is 1869 billion cubic meters (BCM). Further, it has been estimated in the year 2009 by Central Water Commission (CWC) that about 450 BCM of surface water and by Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) that about 243 BCM of ground water are being utilized for various purposes. The rest of the water could be considered to be flowing down to sea.

Several measures for increasing the storage capacity are taken up by the State Governments, viz, construction of dams, check dams and farm ponds. Government of India supplements the efforts of the State Governments for increasing storage capacity by rendering technical and financial assistance through programmes like Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme and Repair, Renovation and Restoration of Water Bodies.

(Annexure referred in reply to Unstarred Question No +4963 to be answered on 25.4.2013 in the Lok Sabha regarding Wastage of Water)

#### SALIENT FEATURES OF NATIONAL WATER POLICY (2012)

1. Emphasis on the need for a national water framework law, comprehensive legislation for optimum development of inter-State rivers and river valleys, amendment of Irrigation Acts, Indian Easements Act, 1882, etc.
2. Water, after meeting the pre-emptive needs for safe drinking water and sanitation, achieving food security, supporting poor people dependent on agriculture for their livelihood and high priority allocation for minimum eco-system needs, be treated as economic good so as to promote its conservation and efficient use.
3. Ecological needs of the river should be determined recognizing that river flows are characterized by low or no flows, small floods (freshets), large floods and flow variability and should accommodate development needs. A portion of river flows should be kept aside to meet ecological needs ensuring that the proportional low and high flow releases correspond in time closely to the natural flow regime.
4. Adaptation strategies in view of climate change for designing and management of water resources structures, review of acceptability criteria and increasing water storage have been emphasized.
5. A system to evolve benchmarks for water uses for different purposes, i.e., water footprints, and water auditing be developed to ensure efficient use of water. Project financing has been suggested as a tool to incentivize efficient & economic use of water.
6. Setting up of Water Regulatory Authority has been recommended. Incentivization of recycle and re-use has been recommended.
7. Water Users Associations should be given statutory powers to collect and retain a portion of water charges, manage the volumetric quantum of water allotted to them and maintain the distribution system in their jurisdiction.
8. Removal of large disparity in stipulations for water supply in urban areas and in rural areas has been recommended.
9. Water resources projects and services should be managed with community participation. Wherever the State Governments or local governing bodies so decide, the private sector can be encouraged to become a service provider in public private partnership model to meet agreed terms of service delivery, including penalties for failure.
10. Adequate grants to the States to update technology, design practices, planning and management practices, preparation of annual water balances and accounts for the site and basin, preparation of hydrologic balances for water systems, and benchmarking and performance evaluation.