

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5860

ANSWERED ON:02.05.2013

DECREASE IN RIVER WATER

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Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

- (a) the year-wise million litres per day flow of water of small and big rivers of the country declined during the last three years;
- (b) whether the Government has received the State/UT-wise details of the decline in flow of water of the rivers in each State;
- (c) if so, the total number of rivers of the country in which the water has dried or reached the minimum level and the reasons therefor;
- (d) the number of rivers in which the water level is declining due to pollution along with the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the steps taken by Government to address the problem?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI HARISH RAWAT)

(a) to (d) Some reduction in flow has been observed in downstream of storages on various rivers wherever water is being diverted for drinking and irrigation purposes. However, as per the data analysed by Central Water Commission (CWC), the observed data of average water availability in major rivers before 1985 and after 1985, no trend could be established regarding reduction in average water availability in the river basin.

(e) Conservation of rivers is an ongoing and collective effort of the Central and State Governments. Ministry of Environment & Forests administers a Centrally sponsored scheme of National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) for assisting State Governments for various pollution abatement schemes. NRCP presently covers polluted stretches of 41 rivers in 191 towns spread over 20 States.

The National Water Policy, 2012 recommends that 'Conservation of rivers, river corridors, water bodies and infrastructure should be undertaken in a scientifically planned manner through community participation'. The policy further recommends that 'Ecological needs of the river should be determined, through scientific study, recognizing that the natural river flows are characterized by low or no flows, small floods (freshets), large floods, etc., and should accommodate developmental needs' and that a 'portion of river flows should be kept aside to meet ecological needs ensuring that the low and high flow releases are proportional to the natural flow regime, including base flow contribution in the low flow season through regulated ground water use'.