

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4006

ANSWERED ON:15.12.2009

DEPLETING GROUND WATER

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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether groundwater reserves in several parts of the country have been reported to be receding at an alarming rate;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and
- (c) the extent to which agriculture productivity is likely to be affected in the country, State-wise and crop-wise?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a) to (c): The Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) in the Ministry of Water Resources carries out surveys, monitoring and exploration activities to delineate potential aquifer zones and to assess their yield characteristics. The CGWB in association with State Ground Water Organizations also carries out periodic assessment of the availability of ground water in the country.

As per the assessment carried out in the year 2004, total annual replenishable ground water resources of the country have been assessed as 433 Billion Cubic Metres (bcm) and the net annual ground water availability is estimated as 399 bcm. Existing gross ground water draft as on March, 2004 for all uses is 231 bcm. The stage of ground water development is 58%. The state-wise availability of ground water resources is given in Annexure I. As per this assessment, out of 5723 assessment units (Blocks/Mandals/Talukas) in the country, 839 units have been categorized as 'Over-exploited', 226 units as 'Critical' and 550 as 'Semi-critical'. The State-wise details of over-exploited and critical Blocks/Talukas/Mandals are given in Annexure II. The data generated through these studies is disseminated to the user agencies in the States.

The results of the studies conducted by the CGWB have revealed that ground water level in various parts of the country is decreasing in various parts of the country due to increasing extraction and less recharge of ground water.

There is no structured study report available to provide information on extent to which agriculture productivity is affected by the receding ground water reservoirs. Government has taken various steps to mitigate the impact of depleting ground water level and also for recharging the ground water. This includes;

Implementation of demonstrative artificial recharge projects by CGWB.

Implementation of scheme for Repair, Renovation and Restoration of water bodies. The objectives of the scheme cover augmentation of ground water recharge.

Implementation of Farmers Participatory Action Research Programme aimed at creating awareness about water conservation practices.

Circulation of 'Model Bill' to enable States/Union Territories to enact suitable legislation for regulation and control of ground water development.

Setting up of Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) for the purpose of regulation of ground water management and development in the country.

Organization of mass awareness programmes on Water Management, Rain Water Harvesting and Artificial Recharge of Ground Water.

States have been advised for making rainwater harvesting mandatory. In pursuance thereof, 18 States and 4 UTs have made rain water harvesting mandatory under building bye-laws.

Circulation of a Master Plan for artificial recharge of ground water to the States/UTs.

Institution of Bhoomijal Samvardhan Puraskars & National Water Award to encourage adoption of innovative practices of ground

water augmentation and artificial recharge through people's participation.