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Title : Need to de-link the Pampa- Achankovil-Vaipar Link Project in Kerala from the proposed inter-linking of river schemes.

DR. K.S. MANOJ (ALLEPPEY): The National Water Development Agency (NWDA) proposed the PAVLP for construction of an inter-linking canal system backed up by adequate reservoirs to transfer some of the water towards east to meet the need of drought affected areas. This was based on a wrong assumption and the Government of Kerala have expressed its apprehension and decided to oppose the project.

Pampa and Achankovil rivers are considered as the lifeline of central Travancore and the Vembanad Wetland System including Kuttanad, the rice bowl of Kerala.

The diversions of considerable amount of water from the rivers would ultimately spell the doom of the wet land ecology. The Vembanad Wetland System has been declared as a Ramsar site in view of their rich aquatic ecology. Large scale diversions of water from the upper catchment areas would lead to an ecological and socio-economic disaster in down stream areas especially Kuttanad. Salt water intrusion due to reduced fresh water, flow to the lake will result in increased soil salinity which will ruin the productivity of the Kuttanad paddy fields. The decrease in water flow to the down streams would affect the marine fisheries also. Inter-linking of river would lead to disappearance of mud-bank which is a unique phenomenon in Kerala. So the Pampa-Achankovil-Vaipar link project which would become a ecological disaster would be removed from the inter-linking of river schemes.