

**Bill No. 144 of 2024**

THE SPECIAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR DEVELOPMENT  
AND CONSERVATION OF WATER BODIES IN THE  
STATE OF MAHARASHTRA BILL, 2024

By

DR. HEMANT VISHNU SAVARA, M.P.

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*to provide special financial assistance to the State Government of  
Maharashtra to develop and conserve the water bodies  
in the State of Maharashtra.*

BE it enacted by Parliament in the Seventy-fifth Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

1. (1) This Act may be called the Special Financial Assistance for Development and Conservation of Water Bodies in the State of Maharashtra Act, 2024.

Short title and  
commencement.

5 (2) It shall come into force on such date as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint.

Definitions.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,—

(a) “aquatic ecosystem” means all organic and inorganic matter and all living organisms living in or located in or on water or the beds or shores of a water body;

(b) “drain” includes gutters, wastewater canals, sewers and all outlets or flow of waste water including overflow of rainwater; 5

(c) “groundwater” means all water under the surface of the ground, whether in solid or liquid form;

(d) “water” means all surface water and ground water, whether solid or liquid form; and 10

(e) “water body” means any body of flowing or standing water, whether natural or artificial and whether the flow or presence of water is continuous, intermittent or occurs only during a flood, including but not limited to a lake, river, creek, stream, tank, well, pond and wetland.

State Governments to inform the Central Government.

3. The State Government of Maharashtra shall provide the Central Government,— 15

(a) the details of existence of water bodies in the State; and

(b) requirement of financial assistance to protect the water bodies in the State.

Power of State Governments to make regulations.

4. The State Government of Maharashtra shall, before informing the Central Government under section 3, make the regulation for the purpose of— 20

(a) designating any area as a water quality control zone for the purpose of protecting water, aquatic eco-system or drinking water source;

(b) governing, regulating or prohibiting any use or activity in a water quality control zone or any part of a zone;

(c) improving the drainage and sewerage system; 25

(d) ensuring clear separation between sewerage/waste water and sources of clean water to avoid contamination; and

(e) ensuring quick absorption or clear flow of rain water for conservation.

State Government of Maharashtra to consider the scientific, intrinsic and other information relating to water bodies.

5. The State Government of Maharashtra shall, before informing the Central Government under section 3, take into consideration the scientific, intrinsic and other information relating to— 30

(a) the physical characteristics of land in the area, including its topography and soil types;

(b) the ability of the soil or water in the area to assimilate nutrients and other pollutants; 35

(c) water bodies or groundwater in the area, including information relating to—

(i) the quality characteristics of the water;

(ii) The susceptibility of the water to contamination or adverse changes in level; and

(iii) the extent to which the water is undisturbed by human activity.

(d) the areas of aquatic ecosystems;

(e) whether the area contains a source or a potential source, of drinking water;

(f) whether the area supports species that are sensitive to alterations in water quality or quantity resulting from human activity;

(g) whether the area provides habitat for endangered species; and

(h) the perception of farmers and native inhabitants of the area regarding quality, quantity and prospects of water in a particular zone including—

(i) the possibilities of flood and/or water logging; and

(ii) any other matter which the Government considers relevant.

**6. The Central Government shall render scientific and technical advice and assistance to the State Government of Maharashtra if so required to achieve the purposes of this Act.**

Central Government to render scientific and technical advice.

**7.(1) The Central Government shall, after due appropriation made by Parliament by law in this behalf, provide financial assistance to the State Government of Maharashtra for protection of water bodies and for promotion of rain harvesting and watershed management programmes.**

Central Government to provide financial assistance to State Government of Maharashtra.

**(2) The funds provided under sub-section (1) shall be utilized for,—**

**(a) expeditious completion of ongoing water bodies projects;**

**(b) construction of big and small ponds for the use of irrigation;**

**(c) digging wells and bore wells as it will be required;**

**(d) meeting costs incurred on implementing the “Water Bodies Development and Conservation Scheme” based on the water resources in the State;**

**(e) renovation of old ponds and water reservoirs in the water affected area; and**

**(f) construction of canals.**

**(3) The Central Government before releasing the money shall ensure that State Government has complied with the provisions of this Act.**

## STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

In our country and Maharashtra State, per capita water availability is decreasing due to ever increasing population. Also, due to rising food demands, rapid industrialization and urbanization the stress on water management is increasing. As an effect water management has emerged as one of grand challenges. The distribution of water resources is uneven over a large part of the State of Maharashtra. A large area is, therefore, water deficit whereas a small part is surplus in water. Large part of the State of Maharashtra has already become water stressed. Maharashtra occupies the Western and Central parts of India and has a long coastline of about 720 km along the Arabian Sea. The average annual rainfall in the State ranges from 400 to 5000 mm. The State witness frequent drought conditions. Almost, 42.5% area of the State is drought prone. Half of the State's population is dependent upon agriculture for their livelihood. So, a large number of proposals relating to water bodies and development of water bodies in the State of Maharashtra is required. Due to lack of water bodies people have to depend on rain despite having the water reservoirs. State have to do the project involve deepening and widening of streams, construction of cement and earthen stop dams, work on nullahs and digging of farm ponds. Due to non-availability of water bodies, the State Government do not have sufficient funds for the development of water bodies projects. The Bill, therefore, to meet the expense of development and conservation of water bodies in the State of Maharashtra.

Hence this Bill.

NEW DELHI;  
*July 22, 2024*

HEMANT VISHNU SAVARA

## FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM

Clause 6 of the Bill provides for rendering of scientific and technical advice and assistance to the State Government of Maharashtra. Clause 7 provides for financial assistance to the State Government of Maharashtra for protection of water bodies etc.

The Bill, therefore, if enacted, will involve expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India. As the sums of moneys which will be given to the State of Maharashtra as special financial assistance by appropriation by law made by Parliament will be known only after the plans to be implemented by the State Government of Maharashtra with the approval of Government of India as identified, it is not possible at present to give the estimates of recurring expenditure, which would be involved out of the Consolidated Fund of India at this stage.

No non-recurring expenditure is likely to be involved.

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*(Dr. Hemant Vishnu Savara, M.P.)*