

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA
REJUVENATION

RAJYA SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO. *8

ANSWERED ON 04.12.2023

MISUSE OF GROUNDWATER

*8 #. SHRI ADITYA PRASAD

Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that groundwater is still being misused today, involving large-scale misuse of freshwater ranging from washing vehicles to irrigating fields;
- (b) if so, the measures taken by Government to prevent it; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT)

(a) to (c) : A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO, IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (c) OF STARRED QUESTION NO. *8 TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.12.2023 IN RAJYA SABHA REGARDING “MISUSE OF GROUNDWATER”

(a) Water being a state subject, the regulation and management of ground water is primarily the responsibility of State governments. However, under this Ministry, the Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) has been constituted under section 3(3) of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 for the purpose of regulation and control of ground water development and management in the country. Abstraction cum use of Groundwater in 19 States/UTs of the country is regulated by CGWA by way of issuing NOCs as per the provisions of its Guidelines dated 24.09.2020 which have pan India applicability. Further, 17 States/UTs have put in place their own regulatory mechanism for regulating ground water abstraction cum usage in their respective jurisdiction. Further, the CGWA Guidelines stipulate that state guidelines/regulatory orders, wherever enacted cannot be inconsistent with or dilute the provisions of the former.

(b) & (c)

1. To optimize the groundwater abstraction, the following salient features are included in the ground water extraction guidelines:

I. All new/existing industries, industries seeking expansion, infrastructure projects and mining projects abstracting ground water, unless specifically exempted under Para 1.0 of the guideline, will be required to seek No Objection Certificate from Central Ground Water Authority or, the concerned State/ UT Ground Water and without a valid NOC, abstraction of ground water shall be considered illegal and such entities shall be liable to pay environmental compensation and there is a penalty clause too for non-compliance with the provisions of the Guidelines.

II. No new major industries shall be granted No Objection Certificate in over-exploited assessment areas except as per the policy guidelines.

III. All industries abstracting ground water in excess of 100 m³/d shall be required to undertake annual water audit to optimize and reduce misuse of water and required to reduce their ground water use by at least 20% over the next three years.

IV. For Infrastructure Projects, Installation of Sewage Treatment Plants (STP) shall be mandatory for new projects, where ground water requirement is more than 20 m³/day. The water from STP shall be utilized for toilet flushing, car washing, gardening etc.

V. Wherever feasible, the requirement of water for greenbelt (horticulture) shall be met from recycled / treated wastewater.

VI. Powers have been delegated to District Magistrate/ District Collector/ Sub Divisional Magistrates of each Revenue District/Sub division as Authorized Officers to act against illegal groundwater withdrawal by way of sealing off illegal wells, disconnecting electricity supply to the energized wells, launching prosecution against offenders etc. including grievance redressal related to ground water in their respective jurisdictions.

VII. The detailed CGWA guidelines is available on the public domain (<https://cgwa.mowr.gov.in/Guidelines/NewGuidelinesNotified250920.pdf#ZOOM=100>)

2. For the agriculture sector, MoJS has advised States/UTs to review their free/subsidized electricity policy to farmers, bring suitable water pricing policy and may work further towards crop rotation/diversification/other initiatives to reduce over-dependence on groundwater.
3. MoJS is promoting conjunctive use of surface water and groundwater and to reduce dependence on groundwater, surface water based Major and Medium irrigation projects have been taken up in the country under PMKSY-AIBP scheme in collaboration with States/UTs.
4. Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare is implementing Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) which is operational since 2015-16 in the Country. The PMKSY-PDMC mainly focuses on water use efficiency at farm level through precision/micro irrigation and further supports micro level water storage or water conservation/management activities.
5. In addition to above, Government of India has also taken up other initiatives for promoting conservation of water and encouraging community participation. Such initiatives include Jal Shakti Abhiyan-Catch the rain campaign, implementing Atal Bhujal Yojana, sharing of best practices on water conservation, institution of National Water Awards to promote water conservation efforts in the country, to support Jal Jeevan Mission by way of devising methodologies for source sustainability, preparation of SoP, conducting Public Interaction Programmes (PIP) and imparting trainings etc.
