

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI,  
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION  
**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3154**  
ANSWERED ON 16.12.2021  
**ECOLOGICAL FLOW OF RIVERS**

3154. SHRI S. JAGATHRAKSHAKAN

Will the Minister of JAL SHAKTI be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that environmental flow assessment must be done for all river basins in a time bound manner to ensure that rivers have sufficient flow during all seasons of the year to carry out all their ecological functions;
- (b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR JAL SHAKTI

(SHRI BISHWESWAR TUDU)

(a) to (c) Hon'ble National Green Tribunal (NGT) in OA 498 of 2015 has directed all States to maintain a minimum environmental flow of 15-20% of the average lean season flow in their rivers. Government of India vide Notification dated 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2018 has notified minimum environmental flows to be maintained in river Ganga from its origin to Unnao in Uttar Pradesh. The notified environmental flow regime is monitored and supervised by the Central Water Commission (CWC).

Studies, including assessment of environmental flow of rivers Dibang, Teesta, Lohit, Tawang, Kameng, Bichom, Beas (in Himachal Pradesh) and Satluj were carried out from the year 2014 onwards by Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC). Cumulative impact assessment and carrying capacity study of Siang and Subansiri basins were also carried out by CWC during the year 2013-14. These 2 reports of Siang and Subansiri have since been accepted by MoEF&CC. Assessment of environmental flows is an integral part of these studies.

MoEF&CC in the Standards Terms of Reference (ToR) for conducting Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) studies for any proposed River Valley & Hydroelectric Project have mentioned the norms for release of environmental flows, which is 30% in monsoon season, 20% in lean season and 25% in non-monsoon & non-lean season, to be followed corresponding to flow of 90% dependable year. These norms along with the site specific requirements for environmental flow releases as per the studies are then stipulated in the Environment Clearance (EC) letter for compliance.

The Regional Offices of MoEF&CC and the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) along with the State Pollution Control Boards concerned have been mandated for monitoring of all the environmental aspects of the Hydro Power Projects, including maintenance/release of environmental flows.

Also, for rejuvenation of polluted rivers identified by CPCB, action plans have been prepared by a four-member Committee called "River Rejuvenation Committee" of the respective 28 State Governments & 2 Union Territory (UT) Administrations under the overall supervision and coordination of Principal Secretary, Environment of the State Governments/UTs. The action plans covers aspects such as Source control (Municipal sewage management, Industrial pollution control, Waste management), River catchment/Basin Management (Adoption of good irrigation practices, Utilization of treated sewage, Ground water recharge aspects), Flood Plain Zone protection and its management (Setting up of bio-diversity parks, Removal of encroachments, Rain water harvesting, Plantation on both sides of the river), and Watershed management, including Ecological/Environmental Flow (E-Flow) for ensuring uninterrupted flow in the rivers.