



Water Management Lessons from Israel

Why in news?

\n\n

The Indo-Israeli partnership is likely to extend to areas like water and agriculture.

\n\n

What are the facts related to water?

\n\n

\n

- India is water stressed. The country's annual **per capita availability of water is less than 1,500 cubic meters (cu.m)** and that scenario is likely to worsen.

\n

- Currently, about 78% of fresh water in India is used for agriculture.

\n

\n\n

\n

- Israel has per capita water availability of less than 200 cu.m.

\n

- It is an extremely water scarce region. Yet, the country exports high-value agri-produce to Europe and many other parts of the world.

\n

- The country is known for innovations in water management - be it drip irrigation, recycling of urban wastewater for use in agriculture or desalinisation of seawater for drinking purposes.

\n

\n\n

How water is governed in Israel?

\n\n

\n

- As per Israel's water law, all water in the country is **common property resource**.
\n
- The government does **accounting for every drop of water**, ensuring good water governance.
\n
- As a result, in 2013, of the total water available in Israel almost 16% came from desalinating seawater and another 22% came from recycling wastewater.
\n
- Almost 62% of the irrigation water used in Israel comes from recycled and brackish water, thus saving potable water for domestic use.
\n

\n\n

Whether the micro-irrigation concepts are new to India?

\n\n

- Micro-irrigation technologies such as **drip irrigation and sprinklers** are not new to India.
\n
- India has about nine million hectares under micro-irrigation.
\n
- It can scale this up several times. But it needs to do so quickly.
\n
- Israel can offer lessons to India in this respect.
\n
- Any scaling up of technologies needs the **right policy environment**.
\n
- Water is not a free good. It **needs to be priced** to reflect its scarcity.
\n
- Such recycling endeavours with proper treatment that make wastewater safe have relevance in India.
\n
- India does have the technology for this purpose.
\n

\n\n

Where else India can cooperate with Israel?

\n\n

- Another area of potential cooperation is **cleaning polluted rivers**.

- \n
- As per government reports, between 2009 and 2015, the number of polluted rivers and river stretches in India has almost doubled.
- \n
- Almost 63% of the total sewage generated in the country is discharged into water bodies without any treatment resulting in acute river pollution.
- \n
- Recently, the Delhi Government has roped in the Israeli firm to clean up an eight km stretch of the Yamuna.
- \n

\n\n

What is the way ahead?

\n\n

- \n
- India needs an **integrated approach** to solving India's emerging water crisis, involving different kind of interactions between Indians and Israeli agencies.
- \n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: The Indian Express

\n



IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering
A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative