

Planning, Development & Management of State's Water Resources

Competing demands on water resources from industrial, domestic, environmental and other sectors essentially warrants an integrated water resources development and management approach. The river basin is taken as a logical hydrological unit of management. To achieve this objective, policy initiatives, administrative initiative and legal provisions have been made at the state and national levels. Some of the initiatives taken in our State include the following ones.

Policy Framework:

State Water Policy: The State formulated its first State Water Policy in 1994 following the principle enunciated in the National Water Policy 1987. In the meantime, a number of developments have taken place; new information and knowledge have been generated and new issues and challenges have emerged in the field of development and management of water resources. The National Water Policy-1987 has been reviewed, updated and the Government of India has adopted a new policy titled National Water Policy -2002. It was therefore felt necessary by the State Government to review the State Water Policy, 1994. After due consideration, the State Government have prepared a new Water Policy called "Orissa State Water Policy-2007" in keeping with the National Water Policy -2002 and this has been approved by the State Water Resources Board after taking the outcome of the meeting with all stakeholders and administrative departments into accounts.

Institutional Framework:

- **State Planning Board:** A key organization of State Government, the Board provides policy direction in formulating plan scenario and both short term and long term development objectives. The Board has a member for Water Resources Development of the State.
- **Water Resources Board:** Government of Orissa constituted the Water Resources Board, the apex body in water sector with Chief Secretary of the State as Chairman. The Water Resources Board has ten departmental Secretaries as members and Engineer-in-Chief as Member- Secretary. The Board is the highest forum to ensure interdepartmental co-ordination and is involved in water planning and development processes such as formulation of State water policy, integrated planning of water resources, allocation of water resources to various water use sectors, prioritization of water resources development, environment management plan, etc.
- **Water Resources Department:** The Department is responsible for planning, developing and managing the State's water resources for irrigation, bulk water supply, flood control and drainage along with implementation of Major, Medium, Minor irrigation projects and their operation and maintenance.

Legal Framework:

- Orissa Irrigation Act and Rule:** The Orissa Irrigation Act came into force in 1959 and the Orissa Irrigation Rules in 1961. The Act covers the legal aspects related to construction and maintenance of irrigation works. It also prescribes the basic water rates to be made applicable to various class of irrigation systems for which water is to be supplied. The Orissa Irrigation Rules were amended in 2002 for revision of basic water rates for various class of irrigation system & as well as for crops other than the basic cereal crops. Rates for water supplied for purposes other than irrigation works were also amended in 1998 to cover the industrial and municipal water supply.
- Orissa Pani Panchayat Act & Rule:** The primary objective of this Act is to ensure optimum utilization of water by farmers for improving agricultural production, to involve farmers' organizations in the management and maintenance of the irrigation system to ensure dependable supply and distribution of water. The Pani Panchayat Rule provides guidelines for formation, membership, duties and responsibilities of Water Users' Associations.

