



राष्ट्रीय जल विकास अभिकरण
जल शक्ति मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार
(जल संसाधन, नदी विकास और गंगा संरक्षण विभाग)

National Water Development Agency
Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India
(Department of Water Resources, RD and GR)

**Minutes of the
Twelfth Meeting of the Task Force for
Inter-linking of Rivers**

(Held on 16th July, 2020 through Video Conferencing)

Minutes of the 12th Meeting of Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers held on 16th July 2020, through video conferencing from New Delhi.

The Twelfth Meeting of Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers was held on 16th July 2020 at New Delhi through video conferencing under the Chairmanship of Shri Sriram Vedire, Chairman, Task Force & Advisor, Ministry of Jal Shakti. List of the participants is given at **Annex-I**.

In his opening remarks, Chairman, Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers welcomed all the participants including the Additional Secretary, D/o WR, RD & GR, Ministry of Jal Shakti who has assumed the charge recently and participated in the Task Force meeting first time. He gave a brief of the efforts being made by the ministry in the implementation of ILR programme in the country. He indicated that the present Government is very keen to implement the ILR programme in the country. As the ILR programme is being implemented through consensus building amongst party states, he emphasized the need for good suggestions from the experts in the water resources sector for arriving consensus among States for implementation of ILR projects for which DPRs have already been prepared. He cited the example of Ken-Betwa link project, in which most of the clearances from various agencies have been accorded still the project is yet to reach the implementation stage. He also indicated the various efforts made by NWDA/ Ministry of Jal Shakti including the recent meeting of Hon'ble Minister for Jal Shakti held with MoEF&CC in which the relaxation for some of the conditions for Stage-I clearance/In-principle approval for diversion of forest land for KBLP was discussed. He also stated that the Hon'ble Minister for Jal Shakti is trying his best to sort out the pending issues and make the Govts. of UP and MP agree to sign the MoU for implementation of the Ken-Betwa link project. The Chairman then requested Director General, NWDA to take up the Agenda items for discussions.

Item 12.1: Confirmation of the Minutes of 11th meeting of Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers held on 18th October 2019 at New Delhi

Director General, NWDA informed that the minutes of 11th meeting of the Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers (TF-ILR) held on 18.10.2019 at New Delhi were circulated to the members vide letter dated 27.11.2019. Since no comments were received from any of the members, the Minutes of 11th meeting of the Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers may be confirmed as circulated.

Item 12.2: Follow up action on important decisions taken during 11th meeting of Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers

The Director General, NWDA informed that the draft PFR of Integration of PKC link with ERCP has been completed and draft report was circulated to Govts. of MP, Rajasthan and CWC on 29.06.2020.

Regarding initiating dialogue with neighbouring countries of Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh in the ILR projects having international dimension, DG, NWDA mentioned that the Ministry of Jal Shakti will take up the issues with Ministry of External Affairs in this regard. He further informed that MoJS has also been requested by NWDA vide letter dated 14.07.2020 to take up the matter with MEA for nominating a representative as Member of the TFILR.

Shri Chandan Mahanta, Professor, IIT, Guwahati expressed his views on the water resources scenario of North Eastern Region of India. He suggested for a drone survey of the flood affected area and a need for thorough investigations. He suggested linking more rivers in the North Eastern Region to minimize the flood fury of the plains. He also indicated the importance of heavy sediments/desilting mechanism/lean flow augmentation.

Item 12.3: Present Status of Integration of Parbati-Kalisindh-Chambal Link as proposed under Peninsular Component of NPP with proposed Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project

DG, NWDA gave brief background of the preparation of Pre-feasibility report of integration of Parbati-Kalisindh-Chambal link with Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project of Rajasthan. He also informed about the planning, technical and hydrological parameters of the proposal. In the proposal an exchange of 131 MCM of waters has been suggested on substitution basis between Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh States in Kuno and Parbati rivers. This would help in curtailing the length and cost of the ERCP of Rajasthan. He further suggested that NWDA may take up the preparation of the DPR of the PKS link if both the states are agreeable to project concept.

DG, NWDA further informed that the PKS link has been planned based on water availability at 75% dependability. However the Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project was planned based on 50% dependability by M/s. WAPCOS limited. CWC may take call on this aspect whether permit state of Rajasthan to divert water at lower dependability.

Shri A. D. Mohile, Member, TF-ILR requested the CWC to streamline the mechanism in connection with dependability criteria. Also as major portion of water in ERCP is proposed to be utilized for drinking and industrial usage, the reliability of the supply from the project is very important. Shri M. Gopalakrishna also stressed on planning of such project with availability of water reliably. Shri S. K. Halidar, Member (WP&P), CWC informed that Madhya Pradesh has objected for the diversion of water at 50% dependability in some of the rivers in ERCP. He suggested to prepare the DPR of ERCP in close consultation with state of MP. Chairman, TF-ILR asked CWC to look into the views of members while scrutinizing the report. Ms. Vrushali Waghmare, Member, TF-ILR suggested that these aspects need to be settled at PFR stage itself before going to Feasibility Report or DPR.

Item No.12.4 Par-Tapi-Narmada (PTN) link and Damanganga-Pinjal link projects

DG, NWDA gave brief of the present status of these two link projects. The DPRs of both the links have been completed. The Techno Economic Clearance for Damanganga-Pinjal link has been accorded in July 2016. The appraisal of Par-Tapi-Narmada link project is almost completed by CWC except some water sharing issues. The MoU is yet to be signed for implementation of these link projects between States of Maharashtra and Gujarat. The main issue is the suitable mechanism for compensation of about 400 MCM of surplus water being generated in the catchments lying in the state of Maharashtra. Maharashtra is looking for compensation in Tapi basin. The issue has been deliberated at various level in last two years. The issues shall be discussed again in the forthcoming third meeting of the 'Sub-Committee - IV for Consensus building through negotiations and arriving at agreement between concerned States' to be held on 28.07.2020. Chairman, TFILR stated that the SCILR in its 17th meeting held on 26. 02.2020 asked the TFILR to deliberate on the pending issues in the implementation on these two link projects. He also sought the suggestions/ideas of the members/experts for arriving consensus between two states. Shri M. Gopalakrishnan, Member suggested that the possibility of eastward diversion of waters to Godavari/Tapi basins may be explored to utilize the share of Maharashtra. In this regard, Shri S. Masood Husain, former Chairman informed that various alternates have already been studied and it is found that the water of Maharashtra can't be diverted eastward in an economical way. Shri A. D. Mohile, Member stated that these twin links are to be treated together while entering an MOU on the implementation of these links. He also suggested the State wise allocations under Tapi basin need to be reviewed. DG, NWDA suggested that Tapi basin is already overstressed and Tapi water should not be compensated in lieu of share of Maharashtra in PTN catchments It would be better if part of surplus water from Maharashtra in PTN catchments is wheeled to Ukai reservoir through PTN link for utilization by Maharashtra in Tapi basin.

Item No.12.5; Alternative proposal of Diversion of Godavari waters upto Cauvery basin (Phase-I)

DG, NWDA gave a brief background of the proposal and its present status. The comments of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala on the draft DPR have been received and replied by NWDA. The comments of Odisha, Telangana and Puducherry are still awaited. He gave a brief of main comments raised by the States and intimated that a compliance report on the observations of states shall be discussed with states shortly and feasible suggestions/observations shall be considered and incorporated in the final DPR. The key issues are the availability of surplus water in Godavari for diversion and objection of state of Andhra Pradesh for diversion and utilization of Godavari water beyond state of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Shri S. Masood Husain told that as per CWC studies, there is no surplus water in Godavari and presently some surplus is available due to non implementation of planned projects by some of the States. Planning of Godavari-Cauvery link project without Himalayan component will be shaky. Chairman, TFILR asked to rethink on the present norms on water balance and suggest new ways so that the unutilized waters of about 2500 TMC, which is going to sea every year, can be put into beneficial use by diversion to needy areas.

Shri M. Gopalakrishnan, Member suggested that after considering the requirement of existing, ongoing and doable planned projects if there is still some surplus in Godavari basin, the same should be diverted to needy areas. Such planning may not be bound by interstate water sharing agreements in the basin. SCILR which has been vested with authority by Hon'ble Supreme Court, may take call on such revised planning and water balance in Godavari basin or in any other basin.

Shri A. D. Mohile mentioned that the ILR projects may not be abided by the Inter State Agreements and the issues have to be resolved through other means.

Item 12.6: Manas-Sankosh-Teesta-Ganga link project

DG, NWDA gave a brief of the study and its present status. He informed that the draft FR is being circulated to party States. Afterwards, the same will be put up before the TAC of NWDA for approval. Since international issues with Bhutan and Bangladesh are involved, a working group may be formed to devise strategy for initiating dialogue not only

with party states but also with neighboring countries. This MSTG link is very critical for achieving meaning way forward and progress on peninsular links.

Shri M. Gopalakrishnan, Member agreed with the further line of actions suggested for taking the work on MSTG link forward. He also stated that Bangladesh may object on the link but may be offered some compensation in Teesta basin to bring Bangladesh on board.

In this regard, Sh T. S. Mehra, Commissioner(B&B), MoJS intimated that a Working Group is already working on negotiation on Sankosh HEP with Royal Govt. of Bhutan under the Joint Secretary, Ministry of Power with representation from MoJS. There is already a provision for head works below Sankosh dam for utilization of water suitably by India and as such this issue of diversion of water through MSTG link may not be taken up separately. With regard to Bangladesh, there is existing bilateral mechanism like Joint River Commission in which the issue can be discussed with Bangladesh. Some compensation in Teesta to Bangladesh would be helpful in bringing the Bangladesh on board. However, the issue should be taken up with MEA first through the ministry.

Item 12.7: Recommendations of Legal Group set up by the Task Force in July 2016

DG, NWDA briefed about the constitution of the Legal Group by the Task Force for ILR under the Chairmanship of Shri A. D. Mohile, former Chairman, CWC, in 2016 and the Group has submitted the report to TFILR in March, 2017. The report has been submitted to the Ministry in November, 2018. He gave a brief about the recommendations of the Legal Group. The constitution of River Basin Authority(RBA) for inter-state river basins, National Interlinking of Rivers Authority(NIRA) and dispute resolution mechanism through suitable central law would be helpful in expediting the implementation of ILR programme in the country.

Sh A. D. Mohile questioned the rationale of bringing this agenda to the Task Force again when the report of Legal Group and its recommendations have already approved by Task Force. Now it is upto the ministry to take a call on taking up requisite legal reforms to further the task of implementation of ILR. In this regard, the Chairman, TFILR informed that MoJS has prepared a Cabinet note for amendment of law for suitably addressing the Inter basin water transfer of water. It would be better if requisite legal reforms for the implementation of ILR are re-emphasized by Task Force to further the cause. He also informed that bill for constitution of a single tribunal for adjudicating the water disputes all the river basin is under consideration in the Parliament. Shri M. Gopalakrishnan, Member of TFILR also mentioned about Doabia Committee report recommending establishment of

River Basin Authority for the regulation and development of inter-state rivers and river basins. Shri Prodipto Ghosh, member of TFILR mentioned that there are many tribunals for Inter Basin water disputes and the inter basin water transfer should also be discussed in these tribunals also.

After discussions, it was decided that TF-ILR may suggest the below options to Ministry of Jal Shakti for taking up requisite legal reforms including passing an Act by Parliament for the expeditious implementation of ILR programme in the country.

- 1) Under the mandate of Entry 56 of List I, a new Act can be enacted by Parliament for judicious utilization of interstate river waters through the interlinking of rivers program in the country.
- 2) Suitably amend the existing River Boards Act, 1956, which was never used by the Union Government so far. The said Act can play a role in implementation of inter-linking of rivers programme after requisite amendments.
- 3) Through the Acts mentioned above, set up an executing authority/agency at national level to act as a nodal agency for implementing inter-linking of rivers program in the country.

Meeting ended with the vote of thanks to the chair.

List of Participants of the Twelfth meeting of the Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers held on 16th July, 2020 at 11:00 AM through Video Conferencing.

1	Shri Sriram Vedire Advisor, Ministry of Jal Shakti Chairman, Task Force for ILR	Chairman
2	Smt. Debashree Mukherjee Addl. Secretary, DoWR, RD&GR, Ministry of Jal Shakti.	Member
3	Shri Jagmohan Gupta Joint Secretary & Financial Advisor, DoWR, RD&GR, Ministry of Jal Shakti.	Member
4	Shri Prodipto Ghosh, Former Secretary, MoEF & CC Distinguished Fellow, TERI	Member
5	Shri A.D. Mohile Former Chairman, Central Water Commission.	Member
6	Shri M. Gopalakrishnan Former Secretary General, ICID & Former Member, Central Water Commission	Member
7	Dr. Shobha (Vrushali) Waghmare Social Worker, Working for Sinchan Sahyog, Maharashtra.	Member
8	Shri Chandan Mahanta Head of Department, Civil Engineering, IIT, Guwahati.	Member
9	Shri S.K. Halder Member (WP&P), Central Water Commission	Representing Chairman, CWC
10	Shri Bhopal Singh Director General, NWDA	Member-Secretary
Special Invitees		
11	Shri T. S. Mehra Commissioner (B&B), DoWR, RD&GR, Ministry of Jal Shakti	Special Invitee

12	Shri S. Masood Husain Former Chairman, Central Water Commission	Special Invitee
13	Shri Shambu Azad, Chief Executive Director, WAPCOS Ltd.	Special Invitee
Officers from CWC		
14	Sh A.S. Goel, Chief Engineer(PAO)	
15	Sh Vijay Saran, Chief Engineer(IMO)	
16	Shri P Dorje Gyamba, Director(WP&P Coordination)	
17	Shri Suyash Sinha, Director & I/C, Chief Engineer(Hydrology)	
Officers from NWDA		
18	Shri R.K. Jain Chief Engineer (HQ)	
19	Dr. R. N. Sankhua Chief Engineer (South)	
20	Shri K. P. Gupta Chief Engineer (North)	
21	Shri Muzaffar Ahmad Director (Technical)	
22	Shri Dharmendra Kumar Sharma Superintending Engineer	
23	Shri S. R. Mahor Deputy Director	
24	Shri Anil Kumar Jain Deputy Director	
24	Shri R. Balakrishnan Assistant Director	