



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, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation)



No.: SCILR/1ccch/400/5/2021/ 4283 - 4307

Date: 20.11.21

Sub: Minutes of the Fifteenth (15th) meeting of the "Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers" held on 22.10.2021 at 4:30 P.M., in hybrid mode - reg.

Madam/ Sir,

The fifteenth (15th) meeting of the "Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers" was held on 22.10.2021 at 4:30P.M., in the Committee Room, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Shram Shakti Bhawan, New Delhi, under the Chairmanship of Shri Sriram Vedire, Advisor, DoWR, RD & GR, Ministry of Jal Shakti and Chairman of the Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers. The meeting was held in Hybrid mode (physical as well as virtual mode).

A copy of the Minutes of the meeting duly approved by the Chairman, Task Force, is enclosed for kind information.

Yours faithfully,

Encl : As above

(D.K.Sharma)

Director (Tech.)

dirtech-nwda@nic.in

To

1. **Shri Sriram Vedire**, Advisor, Ministry of Jal Shakti, DoWR, RD & GR and Chairman, Task Force for ILR, Room No. 428 B, Shram Shakti Bhawan, New Delhi, E mail: advtomin-mowr@gov.in, Phone 011-23708418, 09441002730 (M).
2. **Chairman CWC**, Sewa Bhawan, R.K. Puram, New Delhi -110066. Email: chairman-cwc@nic.in, Phone : 011-26195415.

Contd./-

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4. **Shri Prodipto Ghosh**, Former Secretary, MoE&F & Distinguished Fellow TERI, Darbari Seth Block, IHC Complex, Lodhi Road , New Delhi-110003. E-mail: prodipto@teri.res.in, prodipto5@gmail.com Phone: 0 11 -24682100, 9810490639 (M).
5. **JS & FA**, Ministry of Jal Shakti, DoWR, RD & GR, Shram Shakti Bhawan, Rafi Marg, New Delhi. E mail: fawr-mowr@nic.in, Phone 011- 23710297.
6. **Shri A.D. Mohile**, Ex. Chairman, CWC, New Delhi. E-mail: anildmohile@gmail.com, Phone: 0124-4055262, 9891154061(M).
7. **Shri M. Gopalakrishnan**, Former Secretary General, ICID, D-1/12, Janakpuri, New Delhi, Email: mgopalakrishnan@hotmail.com, mgopalakrishnan.in@yahoo.com, mgopalakrishnan_in@yahoo.com. Phone: 09538923627 (Bangalore), 011- 28524495 (R), 09811301279 (Delhi).
8. **Dr. Shobha (Vrushali) Waghmare**, 204, Rukmini Heights (Tulsi Developers), Sharda Nagar, Nanded – 431602. E-mail: drvrushaliwaghmare618@gmail.com, Phone: 09823208618 (M).
9. **Prof. Chandan Mahanta**, Deptt. of Civil Engineering , Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati - 781014 (Assam) , E-mail: chandan@iitg.ernet.in, Phone: 0361-2582407.
10. **Prof. K. V. Raju**, Theme Leader, Policy and Impact, Regional Program-Asia, ICRISAT, Lakshmi Nilaya, No. 20, 3rd Floor, 17th Cross, 151 Main, 5th Phase, J.P . Nagar, Bangaluru - 560078. Email: kvraju2008@gmail.com, Phone: 98454 15305 (M).
11. The Joint Secretary (North), Ministry of External Affairs, Room no.149-A , South Block, New Delhi - 110011, E-mail: jsnorth@mea.gov.in, usnepal1@mea.gov.in. Phone no.: 011-49016745.
12. **Director General**, NWDA & Member Secretary, TFILR, 18-20, Community Centre, Saket, New Delhi -110017, E mail: dg-nwda@nic.in, Phone: 011-2327582.

Contd./-

Special Invitees:

1. Joint Secretary (RD & PP), Ministry of Jal Shakti, DoWR, RD & GR, Shram Shakti Bhawan, Rafi marg, New Delhi. Email: jsrd-dowr@gov.in, Phone : 011-23725477, 23710619.
2. Shri S. Masood Husain, Former Chairman, CWC, BD/11/D, DDA Flats, Munirka, New Delhi-110067. Email: syedsmsusain@yahoo.co.in. Mob.: 9810255680.
3. Chief Engineer (HQ), NWDA, Saket, New Delhi, Email: cehqnwda@rediffmail.com Phone: 011-26852735, Fax: 011-26960841.
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6. Senior Joint Commissioner (BM), Ministry of Jal Shakti, DoWR, RD & GR, CGO Complex, Lodhi road, New Delhi. Email: sjcbm-mowr@nic.in. Phone no.: 24367109.
7. Sh. M.E.Haque, Former Member, CWC, E-mail : mehaque50@gmail.com, mehaque50@hotmail.com, Mob.: 9868215539.
8. Prof. Vasant Gandhi, IIM, Ahmedabad. E-mail : gandhi@iima.ac.in, gandhi@iimahd.ernet.in. Mob. : 9426415530
9. Dr. Gautam Pingle, Retd. Prof., Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI), Hyderabad. E-mail : gautam.pingle@gmail.com, gautampingle@mcrhrdi.gov.in. Mob.: 9849639689

Copy for kind information to:

1. PS to Hon'ble Union Minister for Jal Shakti, New Delhi. E-mail: psmwr-mowr@nic.in, Phone: 011-23714200, Fax: 011-23710804.
2. SPS to DG, NWDA, Saket, New Delhi, E-mail: dg-nwda@nic.in, Phone: 011-26519164.
3. PS to CE (HQ), NWDA, Saket, New Delhi, E-mail: cehqnwda@rediffmail.com. Phone: 011- 26852735, Fax: 011-26960841.
4. PS to Advisor, Ministry for Jal Shakti, Room No. 428 B, Shram Shakti Bhawan, New Delhi, E-mail: advtomin-mowr@gov.in Phone 011-23708418.

Minutes of the 15th Meeting of Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers held on 22nd October, 2021, at MoJS, New Delhi.

The fifteenth meeting of Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers was held on 22nd October, 2021 in Conference Hall, DoWR, RD & GR, Ministry of Jal Shakti, New Delhi as well as through video conferencing under the Chairmanship of Shri Sriram Vedire, Chairman, Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers & Advisor, Ministry of Jal Shakti. List of the participants is given at **Annexure-I**.

In his opening remarks, Chairman of the Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers welcomed all the participants and informed that as discussed in the 14th meeting of TFILR, the present meeting has sole agenda of deliberating the constitution of National Interlinking of Rivers Authority (NIRA) and apprised all the members that we are at a very crucial phase for Interlinking of Rivers project as one link viz; Ken -Betwa Link project is ready for implementation soon so Government of India is proposing the constitution of NIRA for smooth implementation of this link and other links and it has been proposed to subsume NWDA into NIRA. He, thereafter, requested DG, NWDA to present the agenda and requested all members to give their views thereafter.

Item 15.1: Confirmation of the Minutes of 14th meeting of Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers held on 25th February, 2021 in hybrid mode.

Director General, NWDA informed that the minutes of 14th meeting of the Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers (TF-ILR) held on 29.9.2021 were circulated to the members vide letter dated 11.10.2021. Since no comments were received from any of the members, the minutes of 14th meeting of the Task Force for Interlinking of Rivers may be confirmed as circulated.

The members of the Task Force confirmed the minutes.

Item no. 15.2 and 15.3: Constitution of NIRA

DG, NWDA gave a brief background of National Perspective Plan (NPP), Formulation of NWDA and its mandates and explained the need for a separate empowered Authority for implementation of ILR Link projects. He referred to the decisions of Task Force on ILR (2002-2004) and explained the two – tier organizational structure proposed by IIM, Ahmedabad in 2007 for the same. He informed the members about direction of Hon'ble Supreme Court of 2012 that a appropriate body should be created to plan, construct and implement the ILR Program for the benefit of the Nation as a whole. Accordingly, the Special Committee for ILR was constituted and this Committee in its first meeting constituted a Sub –Committee on restructuring of NWDA and constitution of NIRA, under the chairmanship of Sh. M. Gopalakrishnan and this Sub-Committee submitted its final report in September, 2015 recommending the creation of an empowered Authority for implementation of ILR.

He, then apprised the members about step by step progress done regarding NIRA formulation, starting from preparation and circulation of draft Cabinet Note for Centre-State funding pattern for ILR Projects. Since constitution of NIRA formulation as emphasized by the Sub-Committee on restructuring as well as by various quarters including Hon'ble Supreme Court, a suitably empowered autonomous body say NIRA should be created with enhanced mandate for achieving the overall objectives of ILR. The NIRA should preferably be a statutory body in order to discharge its function effectively. However, creating a statutory body through an act of Parliament (under entry 56 of Union list) may be very time consuming looking at the sensitivity of the states with regard to sharing of water and execution of a water resources infrastructure project by a central agency or by an SPV controlled by centre. The opinion of Shri B.V. Niren, Central Government Standing Counsel dealing with ILR matters of NWDA was sought who advised that an empowered body (NIRA) can be constituted deriving its power not mandatorily from an statute or Act, but from the notification by which it is established.

The power to constitute such an entity would be derived from the judgement of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in In Re-Networking of Rivers, (2012) 4 SCC51. Further Ministry of Jal Shakti also sought opinion of Ministry of Law and Justice who vide their note dated 9.8.2021 opined that the decision regarding constitution of NIRA is a policy matter that whether a statutory body is to be created or a body is established through Executive order / Notification. Department of Legal Affairs is of the opinion that there is no bar to establish a body through an Executive order. Therefore, DG, NWDA proposed to constitute NIRA by executive order with approval of Union Cabinet.

Item 15.4 : Mandates and functions of proposed NIRA

DG, NWDA briefed the members about the present mandates of NWDA and enhanced mandate of NIRA and presented a comparison between functions of NWDA and functions proposed for NIRA.

Item 15.5 and 15.6 : Proposed Structure of NIRA

DG, NWDA explained about the three tier proposed structure for NIRA, its organisational set up, duties and functions of its Executive Body and how the present staff of NWDA will be subsumed in NIRA with some additional manpower requirements. Thereafter, he requested all the members for their valuable suggestions for further modifications / fine tuning of the proposal.

Sh. M. Gopalakrishnan congratulated TFILR for the momentum gained in recent years, in the work related to constitution of NIRA as he summarized the efforts that were put in this regard long back and commented that much progress was not seen in last few years on this front and explained that the need of an empowered Authority was recognized by SCILR in its first meeting itself.

He appreciated DG, NWDA for the proposal mentioned in presentation and commented that what SCILR has recommended long back is almost envisaged in the present proposal. He ,then, made few suggestions:

- He referred to the four modes of creation of an Entity and commented that creation of NIRA as a Non- Statutory Body by approval of Cabinet seems to be a pragmatic idea in present scenario. He suggested that this should be considered as an initial step only and later, efforts should be made to make NIRA a Statutory Body of Government of India to become fully empowered to look into implementation of ILR projects.
- He then pointed out the proposal of considering NIRA as an independent and Autonomous Body needs to be revisited as burden of Intra State link projects of various States and other water resources projects of national importance may later on, come on NIRA itself.
- He emphasised that 2nd Arm / Wing in proposed structure of NIRA i.e. Project Coordination Wing should have representation of Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) as this Wing has to face many challenges in terms of involvement of various State Governments / neighbouring countries. He specifically pointed out the proposed function of NIRA related to negotiations with States for arriving at consensus and coordination with neighbouring countries may be quite challenging and may be reworded suitably.
- Regarding Project Formulation Wing for which NWDA is suggested to be subsumed with additional requirement of manpower, he suggested that we should not hesitate in hiring personnel / experts from States as well as Private Sector.
- He suggested that proposal of bringing NWDA for Executive Role is very much agreeable and suitable.
- He also suggested to rework the manpower requirement as mentioned in additional requirement strength of NIRA after subsuming NWDA because the present sanctioned strength of NWDA (493) also has a lot of vacancies so manpower required would be much more than the proposed number of 49.

- He agreed the proposed constitution of Governing Council and suggested to deliberate on this in SCILR meeting.
- He opined that mandate and functions as well as proposed structure of NIRA shall be placed before SCILR for further refinement and suggestions as SCILR has already approved / accepted the formulation of NIRA.
- He opined that Project Implementation Wing and SPVs should be free to have their own structures, financial decisions and managerial mechanisms and overall role of NIRA should be an umbrella like nature to all the wings.

Chairman, Task Force appreciated the elaborative guidance of Sh. M. Gopalakrishnan and proposed to incorporate his views suitably in the proposal viz;

- Inclusion of Ministry of External Affairs in Project Coordination Wing as NIRA would work with MEA for many link projects.
- He requested DG, NWDA to verify if the SCILR has already accepted the proposal of NIRA or it is yet to be approved because if it is already approved, the proposal can be put up only for refinement / modifications to SCILR in forthcoming meeting.

Sh S. K. Haldar, Chairman, CWC agreed with proposal for the constitution of NIRA and emphasized that the proposal should be taken forward for the early constitution of NIRA.

Prof. Vasant Gandhi appreciated the efforts of Chairman, TFILR for bringing an impetus to the constitution of NIRA. He briefed about the efforts of IIM, Ahmedabad for finalizing the proposal of organizational structure of NIRA. He gave following suggestions:

- As it was proposed by IIM, Ahmedabad that NIRA should be created as a Statutory Body, keeping in the view the legal and other issues which may arise due to involvement of different states / countries, so even if it is created as a Non –Statutory Body presently, efforts should continue to change it into a Statutory Body.

- He suggested to rename 'Project Formulation Wing' as 'Project Planning and Formulation Wing'
- He opined that Project Coordination Wing should be a Multi Disciplinary Wing and not only a technical / Engineering Wing as it would have to deal with social, environmental, political and legal issues.
- He suggested that NIRA should not appear as renaming of NWDA but should be presented as creating a new Authority with a broad approach and its Governing Council should be far more diverse and empowered by including representatives from various States, Ministries, Departments and NITI Aayog so as to provide a broader visibility for national level planning. The membership of Governing Council and Governing Body should be very dynamic and powerful so that they can push forward the implementation of link projects.
- He also advised that NIRA should focus mainly on implementation of ILR projects and not on projects under PMKSY etc.

Chairman, TFILR informed him that States' representatives are already included in Governing Body of NWDA, which is headed by Secretary, DoWR, RD & GR and AGM of NWDA also has States' representation and is headed by Hon'ble Union Minister for Jal Shakti.

Sh. M.E.Haque said that he agrees the proposal as presented along with addition of suggestions as given by Sh. M. Gopalakrishnan and Prof. Vasant Gandhi.

Sh. Manoj Sethi, AS & FA, MoJS gave following suggestions:

- Governing Council and Governing Body of NIRA should have large representations from States and various Ministries.
- He proposed that all Members heading four wings of Executive Body should be of Additional Secretary level.
- Under Executive Body of NIRA, Member (Admn. and Finance) are kept as one entity but they should be kept as separate entities viz; Member

(Human Resources or Admn.) and Member (Finance).

- He also proposed that NIRA should be a Statutory Body to be more effective and authoritative.
- Executive Body should have a wider and flexible hiring of personnel including States' and private sector expertise.
- He raised apprehension regarding creation of Special Purpose Vehicles as Autonomous bodies as every SPV will then have to take approval of Cabinet every time.

Chairman, TFILR clarified to him that SCILR and AGM of NWDA, which will become Governing Council for NIRA and Governing Body of NWDA already have States' representations and for recruitment of additional manpower apart from NWDA, experts from various fields may be taken on deputation/ contractual basis/ lateral entries / by Re-employment etc. Further, he explained that a project specific SPV will be vertical of NIRA itself and will be part of approval of Cabinet for the implementation and funding of the project.

Chairman, TFILR informed all the members that Dr. Shobha Waghmare, Member, TFILR has telephonically conveyed her agreement for the proposal of constitution of NIRA and its structure, to him.

He asked DG, NWDA to rework on the viewpoint of making Project Coordination Wing as a Multi Disciplinary Wing and to clarify the issue that, if the SCILR has given approval for constitution of NIRA in its initial meetings or it is yet to be approved.

He thanked all the members for their valuable guidance and said that all the suggestions have been well taken and will be incorporated suitably and also highlighted the fact that KBLPA will be a first experience as a SPV working for implementation of Ken- Betwa link and will help to visualize the functioning of a SPV and incorporate further modifications as per suggestions of members of TFILR.

Chairman, TFILR proposed to present the decisions of present meeting in forthcoming meeting of SCILR. Thereafter, he requested DG, NWDA for concluding

remarks.

DG, NWDA thanked Chairman, TFILR and expressed his deep gratitude to all the members and special invitees for their valuable guidance and deliberations.

Annexure- I**List of Participants of the 15th meeting of the Task Force on Interlinking of Rivers held on 22nd October, 2021 at New Delhi along with Video Conferencing mode**

1.	Shri Sriram Vedire Chairman, Task Force for ILR & Advisor, Ministry of Jal Shakti.	Chairman
2.	Shri S.K. Halder Chairman, Central Water Commission.	Member
3.	Shri Manoj Sethi AS & FA, DoWR, RD & GR, Ministry of Jal Shakti.	Member
4.	Shri M. Gopalakrishnan Former Secretary General, ICID & Former Member, Central Water Commission.	Member
5.	Shri Ashwin Bhaskaran Under Secretary (Nepal), Ministry of External Affairs.	Member
6.	Shri Bhopal Singh Director General, NWDA.	Member-Secretary
7.	Shri Rakesh Kumar SJC (BM), DoWR, RD & GR.	Special Invitee
8.	Shri R.K. Jain Chief Engineer (HQ), NWDA.	Special Invitee
9.	Shri Shiva Prakash Chief Engineer (N), NWDA.	Special Invitee

10.	Dr. R.N.Sankhua Chief Engineer (S), NWDA.	Special Invitee
11.	Sh. M.E.Haque Former Member, CWC.	Special Invitee
12.	Prof. Vasant Gandhi IIM, Ahmedabad.	Special Invitee
	OTHER OFFICERS from NWDA	
13.	Shri D. K. Sharma Director (Technical), NWDA	
14.	Smt. Deepika Sharma DD(H)	
15.	Sh.K.K.Rao Assistant Director	