

New plan floated to rejuvenate City of Lakes project

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To expedite its ambitious-but-slow-paced City of Lakes project, Delhi Jal Board (DJB) has approved a standard set of operating procedures (SOPs) for any plan to rejuvenate waterbodies.

Instead of taking up the projects individually, 30-50 waterbodies of similar parameters will be clubbed under a package and projects will be executed after floating bids in parallel, said a DJB official.

A standard 10-step guideline has been formulated, which "is in line with the model established in creating school rooms and mohalla clinics" the official said. "Over 20,000 classrooms and hundreds of mohalla clinics were built after following SOPs. We want to standardise and replicate the same for waterbodies."

The SOPs set priority timelines for garbage removal and desilting of lake beds followed by landscaping of surroundings to create a public space. The board has approved a three-phase development for all waterbodies. Garbage

removal, fencing and excavation of lake bed will be carried out in phase-I, followed by arrangement of water source for rejuvenation from the nearest sewage treatment plant (STP) or through construction of an on-site decentralised STP (DSTP) for treating waste water. Phase-III will involve landscaping of surroundings at each of the 201 sites.

"In all cases where DSTP are required, tenders will be floated on the design-build-operate model with 15-year maintenance and NGT-fixed parameters for pollutants. Each site should have a recharge pit equal to 50% of the STP capacity to increase groundwater recharge," the norms state.

In the first phase of the City of Lakes project, conceived around three years ago, 155 waterbodies were to be revived. While project reports have been prepared by CSIR-NEERI for 71 waterbodies, works orders have been issued in 46 cases. "Work at 50 sites is at different stages like digging lake bed, setting up tanks, and reclamation of land by local SDMs from encroachers," the official said. The work is 70-80% complete in case of eight waterbodies. "The commissioning can be done after introducing gravel in DSTP."

According to DJB, the progress will be faster now. "The target is to finish the first phase in the next two years. We have seen a slow pace in the past three years, with just five-six waterbodies being taken up every year," the official said.

With the broad parameters fixed now, "we will provide land area, status, groundwater levels, quality of water etc and there will be flexibility in terms of choosing any proven technology for water treatment", he added.

THREE-PHASE REVIVAL OF WATERBODIES
SOP for waterbody revival cleared by DJB

STATUS
➤ Under first phase, 155 waterbodies were selected
➤ Detailed project reports prepared by CSIR-NEERI in 71 cases
➤ In case of 46 waterbodies, work order awarded and progressing at various stages

Key points of SOP
All waterbodies to have three phases of development
Phase I Garbage removal, fencing and excavation
Phase II Arranging water source for rejuvenation
1) From nearest STP
2) Constructing a decentralised STP
Phase III Landscaping for creating public space
➤ DJB to handle 200+ bodies, including the ones transferred from irrigation department

STANDARDS
In all cases where DSTP required, tenders will be on design-build-operate model with 15-year maintenance; NGT parameters for pollutants to apply

CLUBBING WATERBODIES
30 to 50 similar waterbodies to be clubbed and work to be carried out at the same time

GROUNDWATER RECHARGE
Each site to have recharge pit equal to 50% of STP capacity

Successful project at Rajokri lake