GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, COOPERATION AND FARMERS WELFARE

**RAJYA SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3055**

TO BE ANSWERED ON 20/03/2020

**SCARCITY OF WATER FOR CULTIVATION OF PADDY AND WHEAT CROPS**

3055. SHRI SANJAY SINGH:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that according to NITI Aayog's Composite Water Management Index of 2019, 74 per cent and 65 per cent of the country's wheat and paddy cultivation areas face serious water scarcity;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the measures Government is planning to tackle the issue of water use as water efficiency across the country continues to be low at 30 to 40 per cent?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

**(SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)**

(a) & (b): NITI Aayog's report titled ‘Composite Water Management Index 2.0’(August 2019) mention that ‘About 74% of area under wheat cultivation and 65% of the area under rice cultivation faces significant levels of water scarcity.’ This is based on WWF 2019 India Report- Hidden Risks and Untapped Opportunities: Water and the Indian Banking Sector (page-21). The link of report is at <http://www.indiaenvironmentportal.org.in/files/file/hidden_risks_and_untapped_opportunities.pdf>.

(c): Various initiatives taken by the Government for increasing water use efficiency in agricultural sector are as under:

* The scheme namely Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) focuses on enhancing water use efficiency at farm level and assists farmers to adopt Micro Irrigation viz. Drip and Sprinkler Irrigation systems with special focus on water guzzling crops like sugarcane, cotton, banana, etc. An area of 43.70 lakh ha has been covered under micro-irrigation through PMKSY-PDMC since 2015-16 till date.

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* Direct Seeded Rice (DSR) and System of Rice Intensification (SRI) for reducing water requirement in rice.
* Crop Diversification Programme in Original Green Revolution States of Punjab, Haryana and Western Uttar Pradesh with objective of changing cropping pattern from water intensive crops to other crops requiring less water.
* Agronomic practices like raised bed sowing, alternate furrow irrigation, mulching, alternate wetting & drying method, laser land leveling, adoption of varieties which require less water etc.
* Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has developed cost effective, location specific technologies viz. rainwater harvesting and recycling, conjunctive use of rain, surface and groundwater resources, smart and precision technologies for irrigation and farming practices, optimum irrigation scheduling, resource conservation technologies and efficient rain water harvesting structures so that the harvested water can be used for supplemental /lifesaving irrigation under water scarce situations.
* National Water Mission (NWM), D/o Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation has been working on one of its goals to increase water use efficiency by 20%. NWM has launched the ‘Sahi-Fasal’ campaign to nudge farmers in the water stressed areas to grow crops which are not water intensive and economically remunerative suited to the agro-climatic zone of the area. Creating awareness among farmers on appropriate crops, micro-irrigation, soil moisture conservation etc.; weaning them away from water intensive crops like paddy and sugarcane to crops like corn and maize, which require less water.

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