

INLAND WATER TRANSPORT

IWT Wing is responsible for development, management, implementation of capacity building and institutional strengthening initiatives in the National Waterways (NWs). The Wing is headed by Senior Economic Advisor, who is supported by Director (IWT), two Under Secretaries and IWT Section.

India has an extensive network of inland waterways in the form of rivers, canals, backwaters and creeks. Freight transportation by waterways is highly underutilized in the country as compared to developed countries. India's hinterland connectivity is mainly based on road and rail with domestic waterways—both coastal shipping and inland waterways—playing a limited role. Waterways are found to be cost effective as well as an environmentally friendly means of transporting freight. In India, Inland Water Transport (IWT) has the potential to supplement the over-burdened railways and congested roadways. In addition to cargo movement, IWT sector also provide a convenient function in related activities such as carriage of vehicles {on Roll-on-Roll-off (Ro-Ro) mode of cross ferry} and tourism.

The National Waterways Act, 2016 has declared 111 inland waterways as ‘National Waterways’ (NWs) in the country to promote shipping and navigation on them. The total length of NWs is 20,275 km spread across 24 States in the country.

Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI), is an autonomous organization constituted on 27th October, 1986 under the Inland Waterways Authority of India Act, 1985. IWAI is primarily responsible for development, maintenance and regulation of those waterways which have been declared as NWs under National Waterways Act, 2016. The head office of IWAI is at Noida, UP. The policy guidelines and directions issued by IWT Wing are implemented by IWAI.

List of National Waterways

Key Initiative of National Waterways

Guidelines for Central Sector (CS) Scheme for Inland Water Transport (IWT) Sector for the North Eastern States including Sikkim