
Planning and Management of Water Resources

The Government recognizes that the process of planning and managing water resources requires a comprehensive and integrated analysis of relevant hydrological, topographical, social, political, economic, environmental and institutional factors across all related water-using sectors.

The intricate nature of drainage systems within the country requires that activity for planning and management of the nation's river systems is undertaken within the context of hydrological regions. The principal river systems create natural boundaries for these regions. The hilly areas of the east form another hydrological region.

Henceforth, to address these issues the policy of the Government will be as follows:

- a. The Water Resources Planning Organization (WARPO) will delineate the hydrological regions of the country, based on appropriate natural features, for planning the development of their water resources.
- b. WARPO will prepare, and periodically update, a National Water Management Plan (NWMP) addressing the overall resource management issues in each region and the whole of Bangladesh, and providing directions for the short, intermediate, and long runs. The plan will be executed by different agencies as determined by the Government from time to time.
- c. The NWMP and all other related plans will be prepared in comprehensive and integrated manner, with regard for the interests of all water-related sectors. The planning methodology will ensure co-operation across sectors and people's participation in the process.

Within the macro framework of the NWMP:

- d. Sector agencies of the Government and local bodies will prepare and implement sub-regional and local water-management plans in conformance with the NWMP and approved Government project appraisal guidelines. The Executive Committee of the National Water Resources Council (ECNWRC) will resolve any interagency conflict in this regard.
- e. The Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) will implement all major surface water development projects and other FCDI projects with command area above 1000 hectares. The Local Government will implement FCDI projects having a command area of 1000 hectares or less after identification and appraisal through an interagency Project Appraisal Committee. Any interagency dispute will be resolved by means prescribed by the Government.
- f. The participation of all project affected persons, individually and collectively, will be ensured in the planning, design, implementation, and operation and maintenance (O&M) of publicly funded surface water resources development plans and projects. Local Governments (Parishads) will be the principal agencies for coordinating these efforts. Community level self-help groups (private) and Non-Government Organizations will also be relied on to assist in the participatory process.

The Government will further:

- g. Frame rules, procedures, and guidelines for combining water-use and land-use planning
- h. Frame, and periodically revise, the rules, procedures and guidelines on all aspects of water management
- i. Make social and environmental assessments mandatory in all plan development

Through its responsible agencies, the Government will:

- j. Undertake comprehensive development and management of the main rivers through a system of barrages and other structural and non-structural measures
 - k. Develop water resources of the major rivers for multipurpose use, including irrigation, fisheries, navigation, forestry, and aquatic wildlife
 - l. De-silt watercourses to maintain navigation channels and proper drainage
 - m. Delineate water-stress areas based on land characteristics and water availability from all sources for managing dry season demand
 - n. Take steps to protect the water quality and ensure efficiency of its use
 - o. Develop early warning and flood-proofing systems to manage natural disasters like flood and drought
 - p. Designate flood risk zones and take appropriate measures to provide desired levels of protection for life, property, vital infrastructure, agriculture and wetlands. In this regard the following principles will guide future action:
 - i. Regions of economic importance such as metropolitan areas, sea and air ports, and export processing zones will be fully protected against floods as a matter of first priority. Other critical areas such as district and upazila towns, important commercial centers, and places of historical importance will be gradually provided reasonable degree of protection against flood. In the remaining rural areas, with the exception of those already covered by existing flood control infrastructure, the people will be motivated to develop different flood proofing measures such as raising of platform for homesteads, market places, educational institutions, community centers, etc., and adjusting the cropping pattern to suit the flood regime.
 - ii. In future all national and regional highways, railway tracks, and public buildings and facilities will be constructed above the highest ever-recorded level of flood in the country. This principle will also apply in cases of reconstruction of existing structures of this nature.
 - iii. All plans for roads and railways embankment will adequately provide for unimpeded drainage.
 - q. Undertake survey and investigation of the problem of riverbank erosion and develop and implement master plans for river training and erosion control works for preservation of scarce land and prevention of landlessness and pauperization.
- Plan and implement schemes for reclamation of land from the sea and rivers.