

## CORPORATE OFFICE

### Delhi Office

706 Ground Floor Dr. Mukherjee  
Nagar Near Batra Cinema Delhi -  
110009

### Noida Office

Basement C-32 Noida Sector-2  
Uttar Pradesh 201301



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## THE 10TH WORLD WATER FORUM

THIS ARTICLE COVERS 'DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS' AND THE TOPIC DETAILS OF "THE 10TH WORLD WATER FORUM". THIS TOPIC IS RELEVANT IN THE "ENVIRONMENT" SECTION OF THE UPSC CSE EXAM.

### WHY IN THE NEWS?

The World Bank's recently published report, "Water for Shared Prosperity," unveiled during the 10th World Water Forum in Bali, Indonesia, illuminates the critical global water crisis and its impact on human and economic growth worldwide.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REPORT:

- There are considerable disparities in worldwide access to water and sanitation facilities. By 2022, about 2.2 billion individuals will not have access to safe drinking water services, and 3.5 billion will not have access to safe sanitation services. Moreover, 80% of those lacking essential water and sanitation facilities live in rural regions.
- Climate change exacerbates water risks, notably in developing nations, with over 800 million people facing drought and more in flood zones. By 2100, droughts could affect 15% more land globally, nearly 50% with temperature factors. Regions like Central Europe, Asia, the Horn of Africa, and others will face significant impacts, disproportionately affecting the poor and perpetuating poverty cycles.
- The distribution of freshwater resources is highly unequal. For instance, China and India, which comprise 36% of the world's population, only have 11% of the freshwater resources. On the other hand, North America, with just 5% of the global population, has access to 52% of these resources.
- The Democratic Republic of the Congo has over half of Africa's water resources, but regions like the Sahel, Southeastern Africa, and South/Central Asia experience severe water scarcity. Since 2000, clean water access in low-income areas has worsened, impacting 197 million more people.
- In low-income regions, the decline in the availability of clean drinking water has left 197 million people without access since 2000. This issue extends to disadvantaged communities,

where water accessibility disparities further affect marginalised groups, including those distinguished by gender, location, ethnicity, race, and social identity.

- Access to water and sanitation is crucial for improving education and human capital. In low-income economies, a significant portion of jobs (56%) depends on water, making them sensitive to water supply changes. This is especially true in Sub-Saharan Africa, where 62% of jobs are water-reliant, indicating that inadequate rainfall can significantly impact economic growth.
- Efficient and fair management of water resources builds trust and collaboration within communities, while poor management can heighten disputes. Adequate management of water resources aids in establishing peace and social unity, encouraging inclusiveness and diminishing discord.
- Strengthening hydro-climatic resilience for impoverished populations, improving water resources management, and ensuring equitable water service delivery are key to reducing poverty and enhancing shared prosperity.

#### **ABOUT 10TH WORLD WATER FORUM:**

- The 10th World Water Forum, an important global event dedicated to addressing water-related issues, is scheduled from May 18 to May 24, 2024, in Bali, Indonesia. Organised collaboratively by the World Water Council and the Indonesian government, the event is themed “Water for Shared Prosperity” and aims to tackle the world’s pressing water challenges.
- This theme focuses on the importance of healthy ecosystems for water security, addressing water quality improvement, conservation and restoration of freshwater ecosystems, and better access to safe drinking water and sanitation.
- With an anticipated attendance of roughly 30,000 individuals from 172 countries, the forum will bring together a diverse group of participants, including policymakers, specialists, and various sector stakeholders, according to the UNEP (UN Environment Programme) and The United Nations in Indonesia.
- The World Water Council, established in 1996 and located in Marseille, is an international organisation with 260 member organisations from 52 countries, including India. Its core objective is to unite the global community in elevating water to a top political agenda, aiming for a sustainably and equitably developed world.
- Since 1997, The Forum has established itself as the largest global event, hosted triennially by various countries. It is a premier platform for collaboration among the water community and key policymakers. It aims to make substantial long-term commitments to addressing worldwide water issues and ensuring equitable and clean water access for everyone.

#### **WAY FORWARD:**

**Improving Water Use Efficiency:** Improving water use efficiency involves adopting advanced irrigation in agriculture, using water-efficient technologies in the industry, and promoting water-saving fixtures and behaviours in households to reduce water consumption significantly.

**Water Recycling and Reuse:** Utilize greywater from household fixtures such as sinks, showers, and laundry machines for purposes like water to water gardens and flush water Management: Commit to sophisticated wastewater treatment technologies to recover and repurpose water for various applications, from industrial activities to potential being safe for drinking in certain instances.

**Rainwater Harvesting:** Set up rooftop systems to gather and save rainwater for uses other than drinking. Build extensive rainwater collection infrastructures to restore groundwater levels and supply water for farming.

**Ecosystem Restoration:** Initiate actions to safeguard and rejuvenate essential freshwater sources of watersheds. Revitalise and preserve wetlands to enhance water purity, replenish underground water supplies, and offer habitats for diverse species.

**Innovative Technologies:** Leverage intelligent sensors and Internet of Things (IoT) technologies to enhance the monitoring and management of water supply systems. Focus on the development and advocacy of growing crop varieties that are resilient to drought and require less water.

**Water Management Policies:** Implement water management policies to coordinate water, land, and resources, maximising welfare and ecosystem sustainability. Set prices to reflect water's true value, promoting conservation and ensuring affordability for all.

To tackle the challenge of water scarcity, it's essential to foster cooperation among different sectors, think creatively, and dedicate ourselves to sustainable methods. Through these approaches, we aim to achieve a more stable and sustainable future for water resources, benefiting everyone.

**MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION:**

**Q. How should communities balance economic growth with the need for water conservation, especially in heavy water-water industries?**

[Amit Pradhan](#)

