

# Analysis on Interlinking Of Rivers in India

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## Abstract

India and many other countries in the world are facing water crisis in various sectors like agriculture, industry and domestic. By the middle of 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is estimated that, the world population will increase to about 9 billion and out of these about 4 billion may have to live in water scarcity. Due to the growing shortage of water in India, it is apprehended that the availability of fresh water per capita per year would reduced to 1140m<sup>3</sup> in the year 2050 from 1820m<sup>3</sup> consumed in the beginning of the century. In order to have sustainable development, it has been proposed to undertake a national project to transfer water from potentially water surplus Himalayan rivers like the Ganges and the Brahmaputra to the water scares river basin of the western and peninsular India. Under a highly ambitious project called National River Linking Project (NRLP), it is proposed to build 30 river links and approximately 3000 storage facilities to convert 37 Himalayan and peninsular rivers to form a gigantic water grid. In this paper, some of the major activities of the NRLP have been outlined. The merits and demerits of this ambitious and costly national project have been described and discussed. Due to the availability of limited information for assessing the project, high cost, environmental and rehabilitation problems and national and international disputes to be involved, the project is considered to be highly complex. In view of various genuine obstacles and the complexity of our socio economic systems, it has been suggested to undertake alternate more viable projects comparatively on smaller scales to solve Nation's Water Crisis. These include Rain Water Harvesting, Water Conserving and preventing wastage, Recharging aquifer and utilizing ground water, Proper distribution and pricing of water. All these projects are techno economically viable and should be carried out in a more scientific manner. Industries should be motivated to further promote rain water harvesting and recycling their waste water. It has been suggested to undertake the water resource management in an integrated manner so that the water scarcity in various sectors can be solved.

**Keywords:** water scarcity, sustainable development, interlinking of rivers, rain water harvesting, recharging aquifer, integrated water resource management