

Define Industry Catchments, focus on integrated management and distribution, develop enduring partnership with all stakeholders, says the National Draft Water Policy : Dr Mihir Shah, Chairman, National Water Policy Committee

“Enduring partnership with all stakeholders including people’s active involvement will be crucial in emergence of transparent and participatory approach for water management” said Dr Mihir Shah, Chairman, National Water Policy Committee. He further added “participatory process in water management yield sustainable results”. Speaking at the 7th CII Water Innovation Summit, he gave a clarion call to Indian industry to reduce their dependence on fresh water source. He further, urged industry to define their catchment & catchment systems, and within these catchments the operational water efficiency of industry can be monitored by comparing with existing benchmarks. Similarly, in unequivocal terms Dr Shah mooted for urban water planning through the prism of demand management. Therefore, going forward “3R’s namely, reduce, recycle and reuse will be the mantra for integrated water supply and wastewater management”, said Dr Shah. Infact, Dr Shah visualized a huge role for industry in positively impacting the domain of urban water management.

On the New water Policy, which is under consideration by the Government, Dr Shah shared that the new water policy which is under consideration is the outcome of a remarkable National consensus among Central Government, State Government, Academia and Practitioners. Elaborating more on the principles of policy, Dr Shah highlighted on importance of solutions which are in coherence with the nature and reiterated for “nature-based solutions” for water storage and supply and “interdependence among sectors and departments”. As groundwater is a blind spot in urban water management, he stressed for prioritising participatory, sustainable and equitable management of groundwater. According to him, in the contemporary context, “affordable water” for various stakeholder can emerge through “social consensus”. In this context he referred to appropriate water pricing, graded fee system, levying economic cost for commercial purposes and protecting the rights of vulnerable sections of the society to have access to basic amenities of life.

Urban water management will be of key importance and strategies involved here need to include - Demarcation, protection, restoration of catchments, recharge, blue-green infrastructure for controlling runoff’s, compensation for eco system services and participatory management of urban recharge and discharge areas including quality, summarized Dr Shah. He emphasised that the thrust of urban water planning should move towards demand management of water. According to him private sector has a huge role to play on urban water management and capacity building. There is a huge scope of investment and private sectors involvement to be based on 4Ps . Public - private - People’s partnership.

On the data management and analysis for the water, Dr Shah emphasised on the need for reliable and timely availability of data so that there could be an adequate and timely response to manage the uncertainties and unpredictability of the future. We need to use major new technologies like new cloud bases digital tools, GIS, open source etc and new design-driven approaches which can be helpful in decision making, echoed Dr Shah.

Mr Nikhil Sawhney, Member, Board of CII-Triveni Water Institute & Vice Chairman & Managing Director, Triveni Turbine Ltd, called for effective water management to address the looming water scarcity. He also stressed for policies & reforms promoting investments and feasible & viable PPPs will be crucial for attracting participation of industry in the domain of urban water management. Mr Sawhney also concurred with the idea of Dr Shah of aggressively adhering to demand side management, as the water resources continues to dwindle.

Mr Rajesh Sharma, Chairman, CII National Council on Water acknowledged that efficient management and utilization of water resource is a critical challenge. In this context, he felt for an urgent need to create a movement on water “Jal Andolan” which embraces participation of all stakeholders. It is the people who must take the responsibility collectively to save the planet and make it more prosperous.

The two day summit would witness eminent stakeholders to deliberate on pertinent issues at the various plenaries discussing- **Climate Change and Water Connect**; Leveraging Technology to Improve Water Efficiency and Management: Exploring Partnerships between Corporate – Startup and Institution; Safe Drinking Water Quality and Best Practices in Water Management. Some of the eminent speakers featuring in the summit includes-**Dr Anil K Kakodkar**, Chief of Jury, CII National Awards for Excellence in Water Management, and Chairman, Rajiv Gandhi Science & Technology Commission; **Mr Dhruv M Sawhney**, Chairman, CII-Triveni Water Institute; **Dr Alok Sikka**, Country Representative - India IWMI; **Dr Mrutyunjay Mohapatra**, Director General of Meteorology, India Meteorological Department; **Mr George Rajkumar**, Country President, Grundfos India; **Mr Ananya Singhal**, Joint Managing Director, Secure Meters Ltd.; **Shri Avinash Mishra**, Advisor (Land & Water Resources)NITI Aayog; **Mr Pinaki Bhadury**, Member of the Jury, CII – National Awards for Excellence in Water Management & Solutions Lead – Industrial, Chistats; **Prof. Stefan Krause**, Chair of Ecohydrology and Biogeochemistry, School of Geography, Earth & Environmental Sciences, University of Birmingham, U.K.; **Mr Anuj Sharma**, Chief Executive Officer, Piramal Sarvajal; and **Mr Ravindra Sewak**, Country Director, Safe Water Network.

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