

Policy Framework

State Water Policy

The state formulated its first State Water Policy in 1994 following the principle enunciated in the National Water Policy 1987. Thereafter, a number of developments have taken place; new information and knowledge have been generated and new issues and challenges have emerged in the field of development and management of water resources. It was therefore felt necessary by the State Government to review the State Water Policy, 1994. After due consideration, the State Government have prepared Water Policy called “Odisha State Water Policy-2007”. Following order of priority in water allocation has been made in State Water Policy-2007. (1) Drinking Water and domestic use (2) Ecology (3) Irrigation, Agriculture and other related activities including fisheries (4) Hydropower (5) Industries including Agro Industries (6) Navigation and other uses such as Tourism.

Meanwhile, Government of India revised the Water Policy and brought out National Water Policy 2012. National Water Policy 2012 underscores the need for revision of State Water Policy in accordance with this policy keeping in order the basic concerns and principles as also a unified national perspective. Considering this, department has taken initiative for revision of State Water Policy.

Institutional Framework

(A) State Planning Board

A key organization of State Government, the Board provides policy direction in formulating plan scenario and both short term and long term development objectives. The Board has a member for Water Resources Development of the State.

(B) Water Resources Board

Government of Odisha constituted the Water Resources Board, the apex body in water sector with Chief Secretary of the state as Chairman and Development Commissioner as Vice-Chairman. Agriculture Production Commissioner, Secretaries of various departments viz. Water Resources, Rural Development, Forest and Environment, Housing & Urban Development, Agriculture, Energy, Finance, Revenue & Disaster Management are members. Engineer-in-Chief, Planning & Designs of Department of Water Resources is the member Secretary of Board. Besides, Engineer-in-Chief (Water Resources), Chief Engineer (Minor Irrigation), Chief Engineer (PP&F), Director (WALMI), Director (Technical, OLIC), Director (Hydrology & Water Planning), Chairman (State Pollution Control Board) are also members. The Board is the highest forum to ensure interdepartmental co-ordination and is involved in water planning and development processes such as formulation of State water policy, integrated planning of water resources, allocation of water resources to various water use sectors, prioritization of water resources development, environment management plan, etc.

(C) Department of Water Resources

The Department is responsible for planning, developing and managing the State’s water resources for irrigation, bulk water supply, flood control and drainage along with implementation of Major, Medium, Minor irrigation projects and their operation and maintenance.

Legal Framework

(A) Odisha Irrigation Act and Rule

The Odisha Irrigation Act came into force in 1959 and the Odisha Irrigation Rules in 1961. The Act covers the legal aspects related to construction and maintenance of irrigation works. It also prescribes the basic water rates to be made applicable to various class of irrigation systems for which water is to be supplied. The act was amended in the year 1998 to accomodate regulation of use, diversion, consumption of water for industrial and commercial purposes other than agriculture. The Odisha

irrigation rules were ammended time to time depending upon the requirement.

(B) Odisha Pani Panchayat Act & Rule

The primary objective of this Act is to ensure optimum utilization of water by farmers for improving agricultural production, to involve farmers’ organizations in the management and maintenance of the irrigation system to ensure dependable supply and distribution of water. The Pani Panchayat Rule provides guidelines for formation, membership, duties and responsibilities of Water Users’ Associations.

