

Sub-Theme: Technology and Community for Water Security

Topic: Community Participation in Ground Water Recharge

Background:

Excessive ground abstraction for meeting water requirements, has stressed aquifer systems, leading to widespread groundwater level declines, particularly in highly exploited regions. Some of the recent initiatives to address this include national initiatives such as Atal Bhujal Yojana (Atal Jal) and the Jal Shakti Abhiyan – Catch the Rain. Further, various state-level programmes also focus on site-specific and watershed-based recharge interventions. In addition, the growing role of community participation is also crucial for enhanced ownership, site suitability, long-term performance, and awareness for responsible groundwater use.

Objective:

- To highlight role, challenges and limitations of community participation in groundwater.
- To share best practices and case studies of successful community-led and participatory groundwater recharge initiatives from different regions of the country.
- To discuss scientific (aquifer mapping, remote sensing, monitoring systems), institutional, and social frameworks for community engagement in planning, implementation, and monitoring.

Suggested Sub-Topics:

- Community-led Groundwater, incl. traditional and indigenous, Recharge Models.
- Integrating Science and Community Action.
- Institutional and Governance Frameworks.
- Monitoring, Impact Assessment, and Performance Evaluation.
- Climate Change, Resilience, and Adaptation.
- Scaling-up and Replication of Successful Groundwater Recharge Models.

Expected Outcome:

- Enhanced understanding among policymakers, practitioners, and researchers on community participation in improving groundwater recharge interventions.
- Compilation of best practices/ success stories of community-led groundwater recharge.
- Listing of key challenges and enabling factors, and development of conceptual and operational framework, for participatory groundwater recharge.
- Identification of way forward for participatory approaches under Government schemes.