

Addressing Water Footprint

What is the issue?

\n\n

Water management and resource development must also be included in the corporate agenda, just like the carbon footprint.

\n\n

What is the need?

\n\n

\n

- **Water footprint** - Industrial societies thrive on an extensive use of water to run their manufacturing facilities.

\n

- These industries discharge large quantities of water from their sites and leave a worrying water footprint.

\n

- **Water crisis** - A recent report has pointed out that around 75 million Indians have no access to safe drinking water supply.

\n

- Water supply in India for long has been dependent on two principal sources — rivers and groundwater.

\n

- Sadly, Indian rivers continue to shrink as a result of gross industrial pollution.

\n

\n\n

\n

- Also, growth in population over the decades has resulted in the depletion of groundwater resources, leading to a water crisis.

\n

- Indian government has announced a water index to rank states on the merit of their water management capabilities.

\n

- Beyond this and other such government efforts towards water conservation, India needs the contribution of the industrial entities.

\n

\n\n

How can corporates contribute?

\n\n

\n

- **Companies** - Companies need to first assess their water footprint or the total volume of freshwater that is used for company operations.

\n

- Corporates can adopt a three-pronged sustainability approach of reducing, recycling and replenishing water resources.

\n

- Metering, monitoring and controlling water usage at manufacturing facilities and commercial establishments can be a good start.

\n

- By proactively reducing the water footprint, companies can also turn water into a competitive advantage.

\n

- **CSR** - Investments must be channelized towards Corporate Social Responsibility endeavours.

\n

- Corporates can educate rural communities on traditional methods such as rainwater harvesting and groundwater restoration.

\n

- They can also focus on empowering farming communities with water efficient techniques like drip irrigation.

\n

- **Collaborations**- Partnering with private institutes and universities for research on water management and resource development will be critical.

\n

- Fostering relations with local water administrators and researchers could also be promoted.

\n

- **Assessment** - The objectives of an organisation should be aligned in consideration with wider values of people, planet and profit.

\n

- Accordingly, corporates need to revise the way an organisation's success is measured.

\n

- It should necessarily include the sum total of all actions in economic, environmental and social areas.

\n

- The assessment should take into account, both positive and negative impact

by adopting strategic projects and measuring the impacts.

\n

- The renewed emphasis on clean water and sanitation are essential for achieving the sustainable development goals.

\n

- It is also crucial in resolving the looming water crisis and keeping up the government's 'water for all' promise.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: Financial Express

\n

