

Revamping Haryana's Johads - Model Ponds

Why in news?

- Haryana's Johads (community-owned water conservation structures) are all set for a revamp by the State government.
- The Pond and Waste Management Authority, governed by Haryana's Pond and Waste Management Authority Act is working on rehabilitation.

What is the Pond and Waste Management Authority Act?

- The objective of the Act is to establish an authority in the State -
 - i. for development, protection, rejuvenation, conservation, construction and management of pond
 - ii. for utilisation of pond water and treatment thereof
 - iii. to manage and utilise treated effluent of sewage effluent treatment plants for irrigation, thereby reducing over-exploitation of ground water
- The Authority's primary functions are:
 - i. to conduct survey and study the ponds, their boundaries and protected areas
 - ii. to analyze pond water for ascertaining its suitability for irrigation and other uses
 - iii. to take steps for regulation, control, protection, cleaning, beautification, conservation, reclamation, regeneration, restoration and construction of ponds
 - iv. to make environmental impact assessment of the ponds
 - v. to develop infrastructure (pumping machinery, channels and pipe systems for pond water utilization, sewage effluent treatment plants)

What is the plan?

- Haryana's Johads are community-owned rainwater storage wetland mainly used for harnessing water resources.
- The state government has come out with a plan of rehabilitating over 16,400 ponds in rural areas across the state.
- The objective is to analyze pond water to ascertain its suitability for irrigation and other uses.
- The basic idea is to analyse water resources, other than canal water, for irrigation purposes.

- It is done in coordination with the departments of animal husbandry and dairying, irrigation and urban local bodies.
- The Authority has started surveying the ponds.
- **Model ponds** - The Authority shall be developing 18 model ponds on a pilot project basis.
- Based on this, a future action plan will be prepared for renovation of other ponds.
- The main focus of the model ponds will be -
 - i. beautification
 - ii. demarcation of area for fishing and animals
 - iii. conservation of water to be used for irrigation purposes
- To begin with, each district of the state shall have a model pond each.

How does the rehabilitation process work?

- In April 2019, Haryana's Pond and Waste Management Authority asked urban local bodies to identify water bodies under their jurisdiction.
- [This was based on the National Green Tribunal's orders.]
- They were also asked to assign ponds a unique identification number.
- The government has created a Pond Data Management Software.
- It has started generating a 21-digit unique identification number for each such water body.
- A detailed database was prepared collecting details including name and type of water body (ponds, lakes, reservoirs), rural or urban, water conservation schemes.
- Name of basin and sub-basin in which it is located and whether it falls in a drought-prone or flood-prone area are also recorded.
- If done, it is said that Haryana would become the first state in the country to have a model village pond in each district.

What is the other project in this regard?

- The Command Area Development Authority (CADA) of Haryana has also taken up a pilot project on micro irrigation.
- It involves installation of solar powered micro irrigation infrastructure on 11 overflowing ponds of 11 villages of four districts.
- After successful implementation of these 11 schemes, similar project will be replicated in the remaining identified overflowing ponds in the state.

Source: Indian Express

