

Workshop on Mainstreaming Water Policy at Village Panchayat

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The workshop focused on various dimensions related to water policy at the Village Panchayat level. Discussions centred around the role of Panchayats in water management, the design of water policies, and their operational aspects, with participation from 42 individuals including Village Panchayat Presidents, ward members, Sangamam leaders, and staff.

During the event, Shri. Saurabh Kumar, IFRS (Retd), Former Ambassador of India to the UN Offices, delivered a special address on water policy at the Village Panchayat level. He emphasized the crucial role of Panchayats in designing inclusive water policies that consider the inputs of all families within their jurisdiction.

Key points discussed during the meeting included the importance of Village Panchayats, as the third tier of democratic governance, to take bold steps in formulating water policies that prioritize water as a common resource for all. The workshop highlighted the importance of engaging local institutions and traditional knowledge in crafting these policies, as well as addressing water conservation activities in alignment with climate change factors.

To facilitate the development of water policies, it was suggested to collect relevant data with community consultation. This includes demographic details of the Panchayat, landscape mapping of biodiversity, livestock



population assessments, documentation of existing water resource structures, and analysis of water availability at the Panchayat level.

Several resolutions were proposed in connection to formulation of water policies at the Panchayat level. These resolutions encompassed various areas,

- Policy for Governing Existing Water Resources
- Policy for Creating New Water Sources and Renovation
- Policy for Water Conservation and Management
- Policy for Collection of Community Contribution for Water Services
- Policy for Collaboration with Line Departments for Convergence of Water Conservation Activities among Stakeholders
- Roof Water Harvesting Policy for Individual Houses and Common Buildings of the Panchayat
- Policy for Community Management of Common Water Body Resources
- Policy for Integrating Social Capitals for Effective Water Governance
- Policy for CSR and Mainstream Resources

The way forward involves conducting a series of consultative events at the Panchayat level to finalize the water policy document. This document will then be presented at Gram Sabha events to gather opinions and seek approval from the community members.