

# Enviro Monitor

August 2018

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**As carbon dioxide levels rise, India faces big crop nutrition deficiency.**

India could be the country worst hit by the falling crop quality the world over due to rising carbon dioxide levels, according to a study led by the Harvard T H Chan School of Public Health. The study estimates that 50 million more people in India — the largest number anywhere in the world — could face zinc, iron and protein deficiency due to dipping crop quality. India alone is the largest contributor to all 3 nutritional vulnerabilities: 50 million additional people to the newly zinc-deficient population, 38 million newly protein deficient, and 502 million women of childbearing age and children under 5 who are vulnerable to disease resulting from increasing iron deficiency, says the [study](#), published in *Nature Climate Change*.

**Rise in extreme weather events in India raises concerns over climate change impact.** As heavy rains pound Kerala and overflowing rivers inundate most of the state, the increasing number of instances of extreme weather events in India has deepened concerns about the impact of climate change. The intensity of daily rainfall is indeed increasing, especially along the western coast and in the north-eastern states, observed Dr D S Pai, head, climate prediction group, India Meteorological Department (IMD), Pune. One such analysis done by IMD researchers has indicated increased disaster potential for instant flooding over central India, where the intensity and frequency of heavy and very heavy rainfall have been increasing. In its recent State of the Climate Report, the US-based National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) also raised concerns about the number of casualties in India because of extreme rainfall events last year. As many as 800 lives were lost in heavy rain and flood related incidents during the monsoon last year, it noted.

**Fast melting Arctic ice may hit Indian monsoon: Study.** The polar Arctic zone, which has been melting for much of the last two centuries, shows an accelerated pace after 1970, a new paper published by scientists at the National Centre for Antarctic and Ocean Research (NCAOR) at Goa. The Centre also said that faster melting of Arctic ice can have adverse implications for Indian monsoon rain. The scientists hope that the study will help in further understanding of the global climate and particularly India's south-west monsoon as they hinge on the rate of melting of polar ice caps.

[Hindustan Times](#), 13 August 2018 | [Mint](#), 17 August 2018 | [Indian Express](#), 29 August 2018



**Germany to provide euro 120 mn soft loan for Clean Ganga Mission.**

In an effort to clean the Ganges, Germany is providing a soft loan of euro 120 million (Rs 990 crore approximately) to India to strengthen sewage water treatment infrastructure in Uttarakhand, Charge d'Affaires Jasper Wieck said. Elaborating on the work done by the German Embassy, Wieck said the project would focus on extension and replacement of sewerage system (around 360 kilometres) including complete house connection, construction of sewage treatment plants of around 15 million litres per day (mld). The initiative also includes construction of 13 sewage pumping stations.

**Antibiotics you throw away may be breeding superbugs.** Tonnes of antibiotics, painkillers and other medicines are flowing down the Yamuna. According to scientists at AIIMS, the habit of throwing away leftover medicines in household garbage is partly to blame for this. The drugs could be coming back to us in milk, vegetables and other agricultural produce, and also giving rise to superbugs that most

antibiotics cannot kill. In 2015, researchers from AIIMS' ocular pharmacology division started studying pharmaceutical contamination in the Yamuna to explain the emergence of superbugs. The team, headed by Dr T Velpandian, analyzed water samples from seven places along the river, including its entry and exit points in the city, 35 bore wells in Delhi NCR and water percolating through waste at the Ghazipur landfill. They found the concentration of dissolved drugs increased manifold along the Yamuna's course.

**India's most polluted: 30% have no cleanup plan.** A number of India's most polluted cities are not too keen to clean up their act, according to a list maintained by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). Of the 102 cities singled out by the Centre for their alarming pollution levels, only 73 have submitted a plan of remedial action to the CPCB. Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Nagpur and Jaipur are among the prominent cities that are yet to submit their plans. These cities were among those marked out by the CPCB and asked – as part of the National Clean Air Campaign (NCAP) – to implement 42 measures aimed at mitigating air pollution. These included steps such as implementing control and mitigation measures related to vehicular emissions, re-suspension of road dust and other fugitive emissions, bio-mass, municipal solid waste burning, industrial pollution, and construction and demolition activities.

[The Hindu, 29 August 2018](#) | [The Times of India, 29 August 2018](#) | [The Times of India, 30 August 2018](#)



**Cabinet clears Rs 1600 crore mission to map coasts.** India is set to get more disaster warning systems along its coasts. The system is part of a programme called O-SMART (Ocean Services, Technology, Observations, Resources Modelling and Science) that is being piloted by the Union earth sciences ministry. O-SMART will provide economic benefits to a number of user communities in the coastal and ocean sectors, namely, fisheries, offshore industry, coastal States, defence, shipping, ports, etc.

**Five major river-linking projects to commence from December.** Work on five major river linking projects, including the one that would transfer surplus water from Godavari to Cauvery, is expected to commence from December, Minister for Transportation, Water Resources and Ganga Rejuvenation Nitin Gadkari, said. Among the projects, two are linked to bringing surplus water from Indravati river, a tributary of Godavari to Cauvery, to solve the water woes of Tamil Nadu. Among other projects that are expected to take off are the Damanganga-Pinjal link project, the Ken-Betwa link project, and the Par-Tapi-Narmada link project.

**Mahadayi tribunal allows Karnataka to divert water.** Karnataka has been allowed to divert 2.18 tmcft of water at the proposed Bhandura dam and 1.72 tmcft at the Kalasa dam for providing water to North Karnataka, according to a recommendation by the Mahadayi Water Tribunal (MWT). Goa has historically been opposed to such a diversion on the grounds that it needed this water for its own purposes as well maintaining ecological flow. The tribunal was constituted in 2010 to equitably allot Mahadayi water among Karnataka, Goa and Maharashtra. As per Tuesday's order, Maharashtra has been allowed to use 1.33 tmcft — for drinking water and irrigation — and Goa, a maximum of 24 tmcft for 59 proposed projects. This will be over and above Goa's existing utilization of 9.39 tmcft. So far only 5% of the water of the Mahadayi is being utilized. The MWT has also allowed Karnataka to utilize an additional 1.5 tmcft for "in-basin consumptive use" but asked it to pare down the scope of the Kotni

Hydro Project to ensure that it utilizes no more than 8 tmcft. Demands by Karnataka for using nearly 12 tmcft were rejected by the tribunal.

[The Hindu](#), 15 August 2018 | [The Hindu Business Line](#), 27 August 2018 | [The Hindu](#), 30 August 2018



**10 new centres to manage green waste.** South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) is going to start 10 new green waste management centres in the next eight months. This step will reduce burning of leaves — which has been banned by National Green Tribunal — and result in production of compost, an eco-friendly fertilizer. The areas under SDMC generate 20-25 metric tonnes of green waste every day. Currently, south corporation operates 29 such centres in four administrative zones that are designed to bring down the volume of green waste, which is one of the biggest factors of methane production and frequent fires in the capital’s overflowing landfill sites.

**365 tonnes of non-recyclable plastic collected, says East Delhi civic body.** The East Delhi Municipal Corporation (EDMC) said it has collected 364.8 metric tonne of non-recyclable multi-layered plastic such as tobacco sachets and chips wrappers, which can’t be recycled, as part of a targeted collection drive in the last nine months. The initiative was launched as a pilot scheme in November last year in collaboration with a non-government organisation Indian Pollution Control Association (IPCA) in order to ensure “scientific management and disposal of plastic waste”.

**Keeping Leh free of plastics.** The steady environmental deterioration has spurred more than 4,000 volunteers in the Women’s Alliance of Ladakh to take measures to tackle plastic waste. Jammu and Kashmir, where Ladakh is located, has banned plastic bags. Using a plastic bag carries a fine of Rs 5000 or up to one month in jail, or both. In Ladakh, alliance volunteers — backed by the local council and the police — inspect shops and markets up to three times a year.

[The Times of India](#), 13 August 2018 | [The Hindu](#), 16 August 2018 | [Hindustan Times](#), 22 August 2018