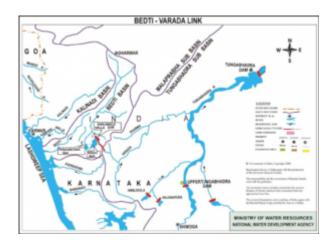
## Bedti-Varada project

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In news-Recently, environmental groups in Karnataka have criticised the project to link the Bedti and Varada rivers in Karnataka, calling it 'unscientific' and a 'waste of public money'.

## What is Bedti-Varada project?

- The project was envisaged in 1992 as one to supply drinking water by the then government.
- The plan aims to link the Bedti, a river flowing west into the Arabian Sea, with the Varada, a tributary of the Tungabhadra river, which flows into the Krishna, which in turn flows into the Bay of Bengal.
- The Bedti is known as Gangavali in the estuary region.
- A massive dam will be erected at Hirevadatti in Gadag district under the project. A second dam will be built on the Pattanahalla river at Menasagoda in Sirsi, Uttara Kannada district.
- Both dams will take water to the Varada via tunnels of length 6.3 kilometres and 2.2-km.
- The water will reach at a place called Kengre. It will then go down a 6.88 km tunnel to Hakkalumane, where it will join the Varada.
- The project thus envisages taking water from the water surplus Sirsi-Yellapura region of Uttara Kannada district to the arid Raichur, Gadag and Koppal districts.
- A total of 302 million cubic metres of water from Pattanahalla and Shalmalahalla tributaries of the Bedti and Varada rivers, while 222 million cubic metres of water will be drawn from the barrage at Suremane built against the Bedti river.



## Problem associated with the project-

- It is claimed that over 500 acres of forests will be lost.
- It is also claimed that both rivers do not have so much water to feed three districts for both domestic and farming purposes.
- It would need 61 megawatts of power to pull the water all the way to Gadag. It is difficult to redirect a westward-flowing river to flow eastward. In February, which is early summer, the Bedti and Varada rivers begin to dry up.
- In addition, flora and fauna will also suffer due to this project. The Bedti valley has been designated as an active biodiversity zone by the International Union for Conservation of Nature(IUCN).
- The area is home to 1,741 types of flowering plants as well as 420 species of birds and animals.
- It would affect the nutrients that the river carries with it are responsible for sustaining fish stocks, especially in the Bedti's estuary in Dedi.