

Guidelines to regulate and control groundwater extraction

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In news

The Ministry of Jal Shakti notified guidelines to regulate and control ground water extraction in the country

NGT order on 2018 guidelines

The National Green Tribunal noted that the 2018 guidelines were unsustainable and would result in fast depletion of groundwater and damage to water bodies, if implemented

The new guidelines will replace the 2018 guidelines which were struck down by the National Green Tribunal in 2019

Key Guidelines are:

- **NOC by industries:** All Industries, infrastructure projects, and mining projects abstracting groundwater, will be required to seek a No Objection Certificate(NOC) from the Central Ground Water Authority or the concerned state Ground Water Authority.
- **Exemption from seeking NOC:** Following categories of consumers will be exempted from seeking a NOC for ground water extraction:
 - **Individual domestic consumers in rural and urban areas** for drinking water and domestic uses
 - **Armed Forces Establishments** and Central Armed Police Forces establishments in rural and urban areas

- **Agricultural activities**, and
- **Micro and small enterprises** drawing ground water less than 10 cubic meter/day
 - As per the new guidelines, **States may review their policy on free or subsidised electricity to farmers**, bring a water pricing policy, and work towards crop rotation, diversification, and other such initiatives to reduce overdependence of farmers on groundwater.
- **Different charges on ground water abstraction for different types users:** All residential apartments, group housing societies, industries, mining, and infrastructure projects will have to pay ground water abstraction charges based on the quantity of ground water extraction and the category of assessment unit
- **Compensation:** The guidelines prescribe a minimum environmental compensation of one lakh rupees on industrial, mining and infrastructure users for extracting ground water without a NOC.