

Kerala first state to adopt Water Budget

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In news— Kerala became the first state to adopt a water budget recently as a solution to water scarcity during summer months to ensure equitable water distribution.

About the Kerala Water Budget-

- The first phase of the project would cover 94 gram panchayats and 15 block panchayats.
- The **idea of a water budget was first mooted by the state in 2019.**
- The current Budget was prepared based on the availability and consumption of water in the state.
- **It gives data about the availability of water at a particular place** and its consumption based on the population in the region.
- The move is intended to create awareness among people regarding the proper use of water, avoiding its wastage.
- **The budget was prepared by the Centre for Water Resource Development Management and the state water department.**
- The Public Water Budget was released by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, along with the launch of the third phase of the **Ini Njan Ozhukatte (Let me flow now) project**, for the rehabilitation of irrigation networks in the Western Ghats.
- According to government estimates, as part of the Ini Njan Ozhukatte project, the state has recovered hundreds of water bodies and will be using satellite data to assess the status of water bodies in 230 gram panchayats in its third phase.

What is a water budget?

- It is a hydrological tool used to quantify the flow of water in and out of a system.
- In other words, it is an accounting of all water stored and exchanged on the land surface (rivers, lakes), subsurface (aquifer, groundwater), and atmosphere (precipitation, evaporation).
- The concept behind a water budget is that the rate of change of water stored in an area is balanced by the quantity and rate at which water flows into and out of that area.
- This concept is used by hydrological engineers to form the basis of effective water-resource sustainability, management, and environmental planning.