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Watershed Development for Water Conservation in India

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Watershed Development for Water Conservation in India

Practice: 8 MCQs

At a glance

Catching rain where it falls, from ridge to valley

01 **Why it matters**Rainfed farming covers 51% of net sown area.
02 **The direction**Upper catchments are treated before the plains.
03 **Who leads**A Gram Sabha committee, helped by an expert team.
04 **The current push**WDC-PMKSY 2.0 runs from 2021 to 2026.

- The Government approved the 2.0 scheme in December 2021.
- Plain-area unit cost rose to Rs 22,000 per hectare.
- Centre and State share costs 60:40 in most States.
- By 1 September 2026, 1,220 projects were sanctioned.
- Every figure here is a dated snapshot from the cited pages.

WatershedLand that channels rain and runoff to streams and rivers, and finally to an outflow point.
PIAThe Project Implementing Agency that supports village bodies.
SpringshedThe area that feeds a spring.
WDFThe Watershed Development Fund, fed by farmer contributions.

Watershed development treats land that channels rain and runoff to streams, rivers and finally an outflow point. This lesson covers why India needs it and how the schemes evolved. It then covers the WDC-PMKSY 2.0 rules, who runs the work on the ground and the latest 2025-26 progress. It ends with one past UPSC question. Figures are dated snapshots. Where sources differ, both numbers are shown with dates.

Contents

1. Why watersheds matter
2. How the schemes evolved
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Why does India need watershed projects?

Rainfed farming is large, low-yielding and exposed to drought. Watershed work is the main tool the government uses for these areas.

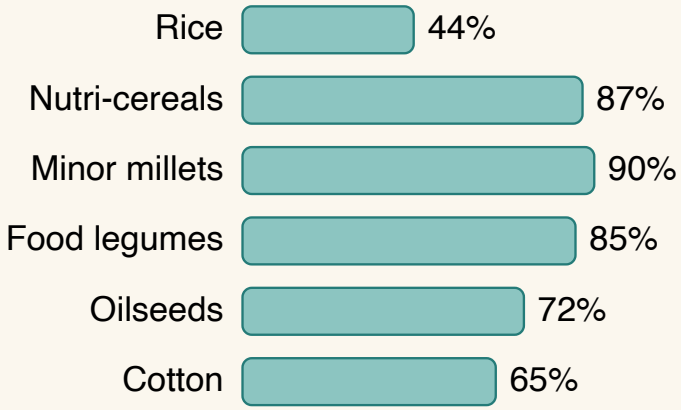
1. How important is rainfed farming?

The WDC-PMKSY 2.0 guidelines say rainfed agriculture covers **51% of net sown area**. It gives 40% of total food production.

The same page says what share of each crop rainfed areas account for:

- 44% of rice.
- 87% of major nutri-cereals and maize.
- 90% of minor millets.
- 85% of food legumes.
- 72% of oilseeds.
- 65% of cotton.

Yields differ sharply. Irrigated areas average about 3 tonnes per hectare. Rainfed regions average only **1.1 tonnes per hectare**.



Rainfed land is vital for millets, pulses and oilseeds.



A pearl millet field in summer (2025). Photo: Herovaclicks, CC BY 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons. File page. Licence: CC BY 4.0.

True or False: Rainfed farming gives more than half of India's total food production.
Source: DoLR, Guidelines for New Generation Watershed Development Projects, WDC-PMKSY 2.0, item 1

2. How much land is degraded?

The 2021 guidelines cite the Desertification and Land Degradation Atlas of India, 2021. It estimates land degradation at **97.85 million hectares**. That is 29.77% of the total geographical area.

The older Common Guidelines of 2008 gave a different baseline. They say about 146 million hectares are degraded and 85 million hectares are rainfed arable land. The total area they use is 329 million hectares.

The two figures come from different studies and different years. Quote the year with the number.

2008 estimate	2021 estimate
Degraded 146 M ha	Degraded 97.85 M ha
Rainfed arable 85 M ha	Share of area 29.77%
Total area 329 M ha	

The studies differ, so quote the year with the number.

Source: DoLR, WDC-PMKSY 2.0 Guidelines, item 2

Source: Common Guidelines for Watershed Development Projects-2008 (Revised Edition 2011), IELRC copy, item 2

3. Why does groundwater come into it?

The 2021 guidelines say groundwater serves **almost 60% of the nation’s irrigated area**. It has fallen in several regions, and some are declared Dark Zones.

The guidelines add that spring-fed Himalayan and hill regions are in trouble too. They say almost 50% of an estimated 4 to 5 million springs in the Himalayan, Ghats and other hill regions are drying up.

Source: DoLR, WDC-PMKSY 2.0 Guidelines, item 3

4. How does NCERT define watershed management?

Watershed management is the efficient management and conservation of surface and groundwater. It involves preventing runoff and recharging groundwater through percolation tanks and recharge wells.

In a broad sense, it covers all natural and human resources within a watershed. Success depends largely on **community participation**.

Few projects have succeeded so far. In most cases the programme is still in a nascent stage.

Source: NCERT Class XII, India: People and Economy, Chapter 4 Water Resources, item 4

How did India's watershed programmes evolve?

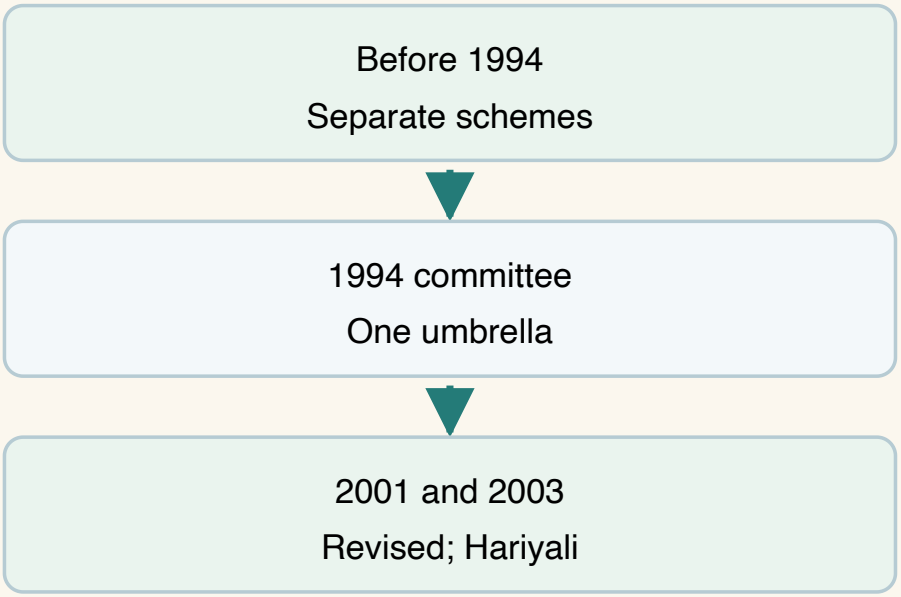
The approach moved from separate area schemes to one watershed framework. Each step changed who plans and who pays.

5. What did the Hanumantha Rao Committee of 1994 change?

A Technical Committee under **Prof. C.H. Hanumantha Rao** was appointed in 1994. It assessed the Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP) and the Desert Development Programme (DDP).

The Committee found the programmes were fragmented and run through rigid guidelines. It brought DDP, DPAP and the Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP) under a single umbrella.

Rural Development Ministry projects from 1994 to 2001 followed these guidelines. The Ministry revised them in 2001 and again in 2003 as the “Hariyali Guidelines”.



DDP, DPAP and IWDP came under one umbrella.

Source: Common Guidelines for Watershed Development Projects-2008 (Revised Edition 2011), IELRC copy, item 5

6. What was Hariyali?

A PIB release says Hariyali was launched on **27 January 2003**. Its aim was to involve Panchayati Raj Institutions in watershed programmes.

Hariyali is a Central Government watershed project. It helps rural people conserve water for drinking, irrigation, fisheries and afforestation. Gram Panchayats execute it with people's participation.

Source: PIB, 28 April 2003, Ministry of Rural Development, item 6

Source: NCERT Class XII, Water Resources, item 6

7. What are the Common Guidelines of 2008?

The Common Guidelines were framed with the Planning Commission. They give one framework for all watershed projects of all ministries.

The 2008 text lists key features. Projects get a duration of 4 to 7 years in three phases: preparatory, works and consolidation. Project units average 1,000 to 5,000 hectares, and hilly areas get smaller ones.

The unit cost had been Rs 6,000 per hectare since April 2001. It was raised to **Rs 12,000 per hectare in plains** and Rs 15,000 per hectare in hilly and difficult areas.

Before 2008	2008 rules
Rs 6,000 per ha	Plains: Rs 12,000
Since April 2001	Hills: Rs 15,000
	4 to 7 years
	Units 1,000-5,000 ha

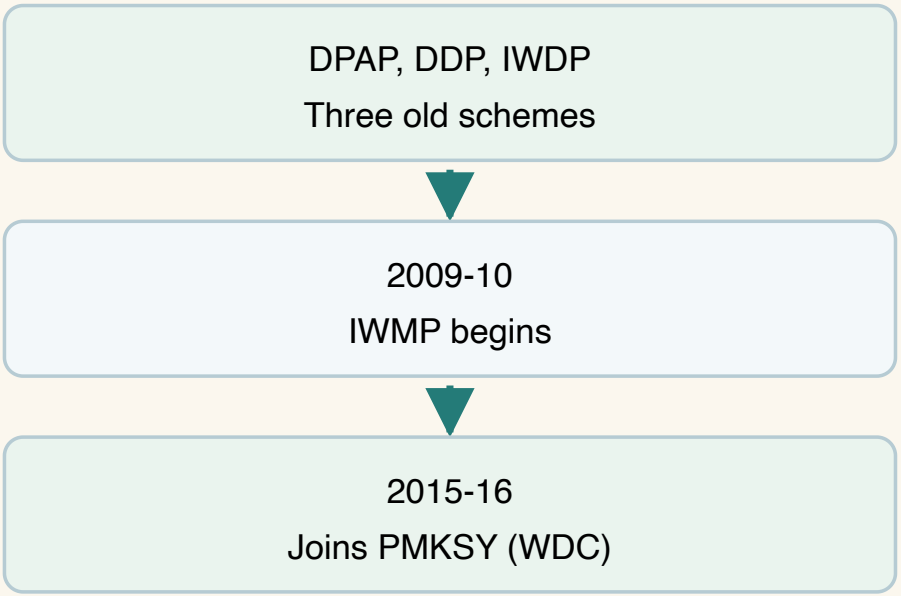
The 2008 text also set three project phases.

True or False: The 2008 Common Guidelines raised the plains unit cost to Rs 12,000 per hectare.
Source: Common Guidelines for Watershed Development Projects-2008 (Revised Edition 2011), IELRC copy, item 7

8. What is the Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP)?

A PIB release of 13 December 2011 calls IWMP the integration and modification of three schemes. They are DPAP, DDP and the Integrated Wasteland Development Programme.

The Department of Land Resources says it **implemented IWMP from 2009-10**. It was amalgamated into the Watershed Development Component of PMKSY in 2015-16.



IWMP was merged into the PMKSY component.

Source: PIB, 13 December 2011, Integrated Watershed Management for the Promotion, item 8

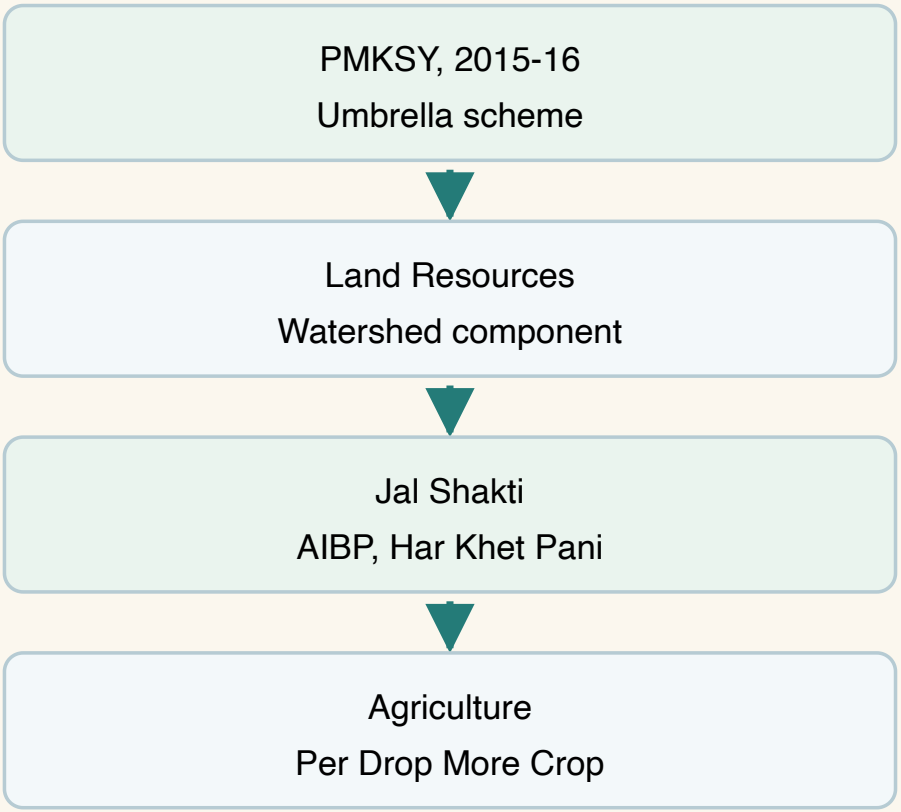
Source: DoLR, Watershed Development Component of PMKSY, item 8

9. Where does watershed work sit inside PMKSY?

PIB says PMKSY was launched in 2015-16. It is an umbrella scheme with several components.

The Watershed Development Component is run by the Department of Land Resources, Ministry of Rural Development. A 2022 PIB release says the Ministry of Jal Shakti runs the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme and Har Khet Ko Pani.

Per Drop More Crop was part of PMKSY until December 2021. After that, the Agriculture Department runs it under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana.



Watershed work is only one PMKSY component.

Source: PIB, 24 July 2025, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana, item 9

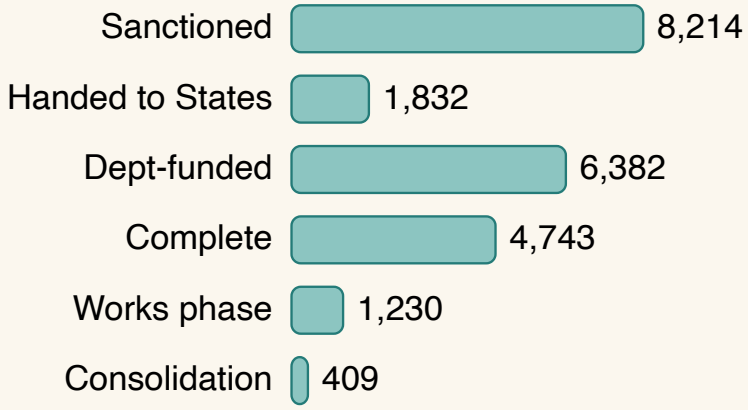
Source: PIB, 4 August 2022, PMKSY, item 9

10. What did WDC-PMKSY 1.0 achieve?

A PIB release of 8 February 2021 gives the status on 31 January 2021. Of 8,214 sanctioned projects, 1,832 were handed to the States. The Department funded the other 6,382.

Of those 6,382 projects, **4,743 (74.32%)** were reported complete. 409 were in the consolidation phase and 1,230 in the works phase.

End-line evaluations of 2,457 completed projects showed better surface water and groundwater. They also showed higher productivity, vegetation cover and household incomes.



The complete count is 74.32% of Department-funded projects.

Source: PIB, 8 February 2021, Status of the Watershed Development Component of PMKSY, item 10

How does WDC-PMKSY 2.0 work?

The 2.0 version runs on guidelines issued in 2021. It changes the money, the timeline and the type of work.

11. What are the headline terms of WDC-PMKSY 2.0?

The Government approved WDC-PMKSY 2.0 on **15 December 2021**. The project period is 2021-26.

The physical target is **49.50 lakh hectares**. The indicative Central outlay is Rs 8,134 crore.

Approval	Targets
15 Dec 2021	49.50 lakh ha
Period 2021-26	Centre Rs 8,134 cr

The outlay figure is the indicative Central amount.

Source: DoLR, Watershed Development Component of PMKSY, item 11

12. How are costs and funding shared?

The unit cost rose from Rs 12,000 to **Rs 22,000 per hectare** for plain areas. It rose from Rs 15,000 to Rs 28,000 per hectare for hilly and difficult areas. It is up to Rs 28,000 per hectare in IAP and LWE districts.

The Centre and State share costs **60:40**. For hilly States and the North-East, including Sikkim, the ratio is 90:10. For Union Territories, the Centre pays 100%.

The project period was cut from 4 to 7 years down to 3 to 5 years.

Unit cost	Sharing
Plains: Rs 22,000	Centre:State 60:40
Hills: Rs 28,000	Hilly, NE: 90:10
Was 12,000 / 15,000	UTs: Centre 100%
	Period: 3 to 5 yrs

Unit costs are per hectare.

True or False: The Centre and State share costs 60:40 in every State under WDC-PMKSY 2.0.
Source: DoLR, Watershed Development Component of PMKSY, item 12

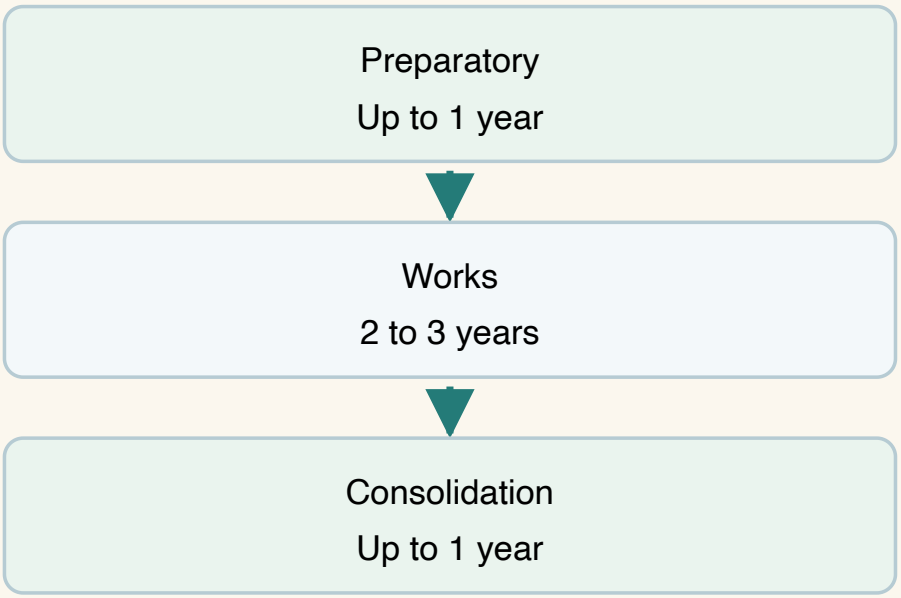
Source: DoLR, WDC-PMKSY 2.0 Guidelines, item 12

13. What are the three project phases?

The guidelines set three phases:

- Preparatory phase: up to 1 year.
- Works phase: 2 to 3 years.
- Consolidation and withdrawal phase: up to 1 year.

The guidelines say the phases should not be read rigidly. Some Phase III activities can begin in Phase I or II.



The phases should not be read rigidly.

Source: DoLR, WDC-PMKSY 2.0 Guidelines, item 13

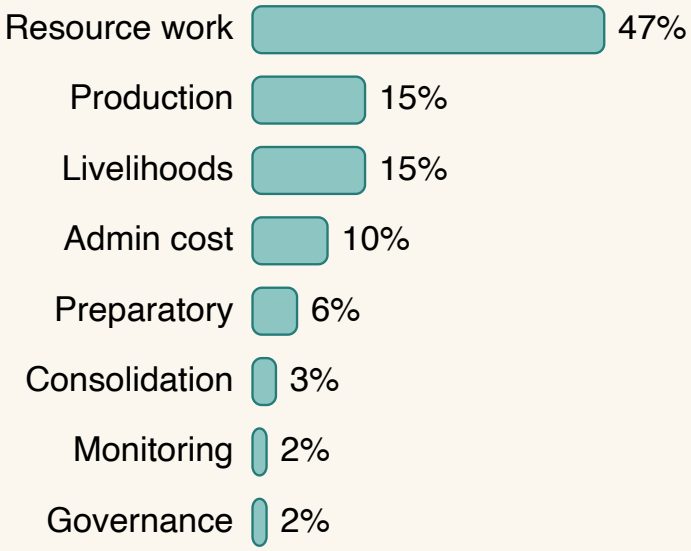
14. How is a project budget split?

The guidelines give a head-wise split of each project budget:

- Administrative management cost: 10%.
- Monitoring and evaluation: 2%.
- Preparatory phase: entry point activity 2%, DPR preparation 1%, institution and capacity building 3%.

- Works phase: natural resource management 47%, production system 15%, natural resource governance 2%, livelihoods and micro-enterprises 15%.
- Consolidation and withdrawal phase: 3%.

States may set aside 25% of the scheme outlay as a flexi-fund. The State-level committee must approve its use.



The shares add up to 100%.

Source: DoLR, WDC-PMKSY 2.0 Guidelines, item 14

15. What is new in the approach?

The guidelines call for a shift away from mainly engineering treatment. They want more biological and agronomic measures such as trees, cropping systems and soil moisture.

They also stress water productivity, crop alignment and diversification. Farmer Producer Organisations and User Groups are given a larger role. Rejuvenation of springs is added as an activity.

DoLR sums up the guiding aim as **Ecology, Economy and Equity**.

Source: DoLR, WDC-PMKSY 2.0 Guidelines, item 15

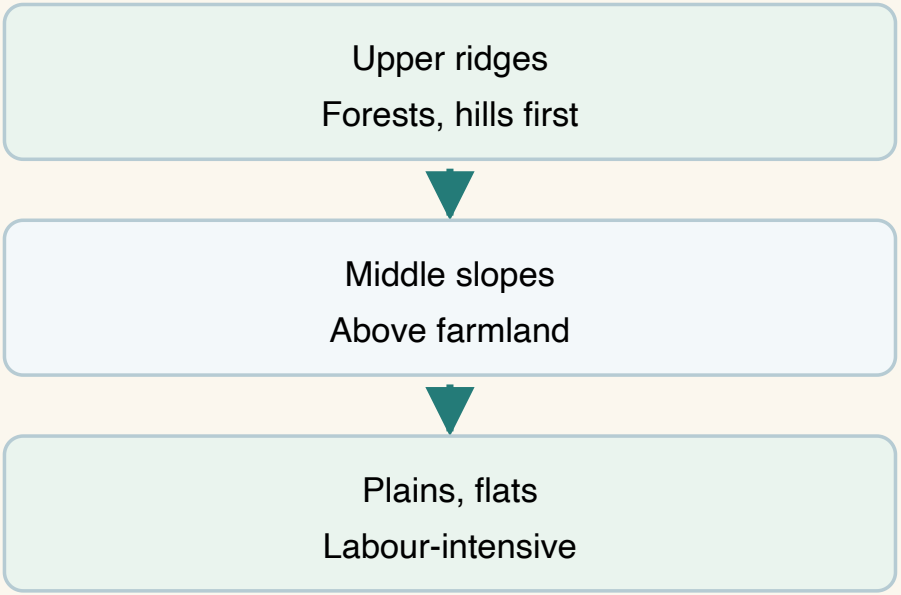
Source: DoLR, Watershed Development Component of PMKSY, item 15

16. How does the ridge-to-valley approach work in the rules?

The 2008 Common Guidelines call for a multi-tier **ridge-to-valley sequence**. The forests and hills in the upper catchments are treated first, where water sources originate.

In the upper reaches, the Forest Departments and Joint Forest Management Committees lead the work. The intermediate slopes above farmland are the second tier. The plains and flat areas are the third, with labour-intensive works.

The 2021 guidelines say the ridge-to-valley approach should conserve soil and water. This raises Soil Organic Carbon.



Each tier is treated after the one above it.



Terrace farming on rainfed paddy fields in Uttarakhand, India (2016). Photo: Ramwik, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons. File page. Licence: CC BY-SA 3.0.

True or False: The ridge-to-valley sequence treats the plains first and the upper forests last.
Source: Common Guidelines for Watershed Development Projects-2008 (Revised Edition 2011), IELRC copy, item 16

Source: DoLR, WDC-PMKSY 2.0 Guidelines, item 16

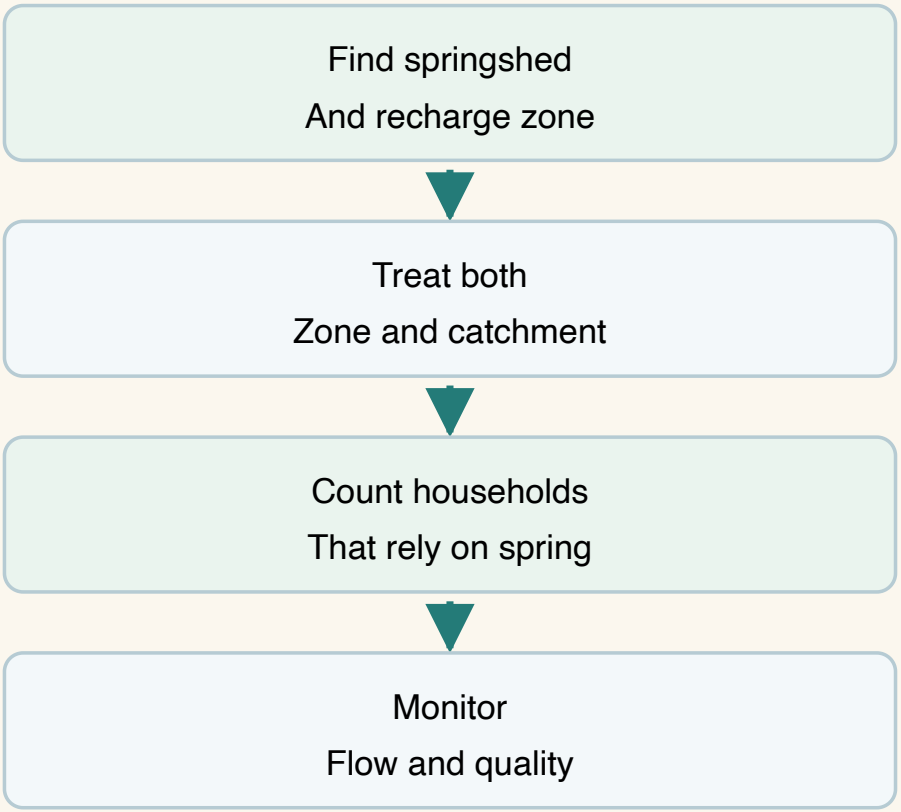
17. What is a springshed, and how is it treated?

A springshed is the area that feeds a spring. NITI Aayog recommended adding springshed rejuvenation to WDC-PMKSY 2.0. DoLR says it is now an activity within the approved cost.

The guidelines list the steps:

- Identify the springshed and its aquifer recharge zone.

- Treat both the recharge zone and the runoff catchment.
- Count the households that depend on the spring.
- Monitor spring discharge and water quality at planning, implementation and impact stages.



Springshed work is now an approved activity.

Source: DoLR, Watershed Development Component of PMKSY, item 17

Source: DoLR, WDC-PMKSY 2.0 Guidelines, item 17

18. What is a participatory water budget?

The guidelines say watershed plans must include **participatory water budgets**. They are carried out once each in the pre-rainy and post-rainy seasons.

The community discusses the data. It then decides rules for groundwater extraction, sharing and crop choice. The rules last only if the Gram Panchayat institutionalises them.

Source: DoLR, WDC-PMKSY 2.0 Guidelines, item 18

19. Who pays for which structure?

The unit cost mainly covers soil and water work on private land. It also covers farming systems, livelihoods, FPOs and climate adaptation.

Water harvesting and plantations on community land may preferably be met from MGNREGS and afforestation programmes. So are the diversion of water from distant sources and treatment of forests in upper catchments.

Unit cost pays	Others may pay
Soil, water work	MGNREGS, forestry
On private land	Community ponds
Farming, FPOs	Upper catchments

Community land work comes from other programmes.



A check dam overflowing during the rainy season, from a pond in Telangana (2023). Photo: Kasyap, CC0, via Wikimedia Commons. File page. Licence: CC0.

Source: DoLR, WDC-PMKSY 2.0 Guidelines, item 19

Who runs watershed work on the ground?

The rules put villagers at the centre. A Gram Sabha committee holds the project, and expert teams help it.

20. What is the Watershed Committee?

The Gram Sabha forms the Watershed Committee. It is registered under the **Societies Registration Act, 1860**. It can alternatively be a sub-committee of the Gram Panchayat chaired by the Sarpanch.

It has **at least eleven members**:

- Five represent user groups and Self Help Groups.
- Three come from the FPO.
- One is a Gram Panchayat member.
- One is from the Watershed Development Team.

The committee needs at least two women and two SC/ST members. The Chairperson or Co-Chairperson must be a woman. The Secretary is a paid functionary.

Members	Must include
At least 11	2 women or more
Five: user groups	2 SC/ST or more
Three: FPO	Woman (co-)chair
One each: GP, WDT	Paid secretary

The Gram Sabha forms the committee.

True or False: A Watershed Committee needs at least two women members.
Source: DoLR, WDC-PMKSY 2.0 Guidelines, item 20

21. What do the PIA and Watershed Development Team do?

A Project Implementing Agency (PIA) supports the village bodies. It builds a Watershed Development Team (WDT) of experts.

The guidelines say a PIA should have one WDT for each project of about 5,000 hectares on average. The State Level Nodal Agency can set finer norms.

Source: DoLR, WDC-PMKSY 2.0 Guidelines, item 21

22. How do farmers contribute?

The 2008 guidelines require a Watershed Development Fund (WDF). The minimum contribution is 10% of the cost of natural resource work on private land. For SC/ST, small and marginal farmers it is 5%.

Both texts set a share for individual-benefit activities. General-category farmers pay 20% and SC/ST members pay 10%. The 2021 text states it as a share of the total activity cost. The money goes to the WDF.

2008 rules	2021 rules
NRM, private land	Individual benefit
10% of cost	General: 20%
SC/ST, small: 5%	SC/ST: 10%
Farming: 20%, 10%	

The money goes to the Watershed Development Fund.

Source: Common Guidelines for Watershed Development Projects-2008 (Revised Edition 2011), IELRC copy, item 22

Source: DoLR, WDC-PMKSY 2.0 Guidelines, item 22

23. What is the role of NRAA?

The National Rainfed Area Authority is an attached office of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare. It was constituted on **3 November 2006**.

The 2021 guidelines make NRAA the Knowledge Partner of the Department of Land Resources. It helps with area prioritisation and new technology tools.

True or False: The National Rainfed Area Authority functions under the Department of Land Resources.
Source: NRAA, home page, item 23

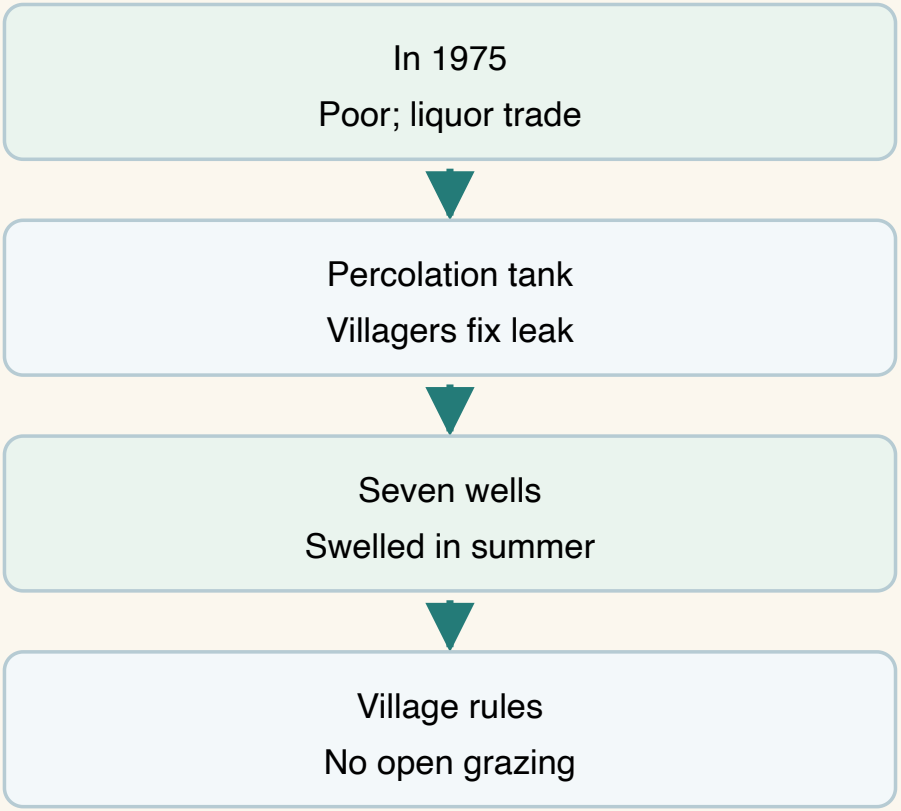
Source: DoLR, WDC-PMKSY 2.0 Guidelines, item 23

24. What does Ralegan Siddhi teach?

NCERT presents **Ralegan Siddhi in Ahmadnagar**, Maharashtra as a national example. In 1975 the village was in poverty and illicit liquor trade.

A retired army person began watershed work there. It began with a percolation tank whose leaking embankment villagers repaired. Seven wells below it swelled with water in summer.

Villagers banned open grazing and sugarcane. They encouraged pulses, oilseeds and other low-water crops. NCERT notes that fertiliser and pesticide use is still very high.



Community action was the key factor.

Source: NCERT Class XII, Water Resources, item 24

What are the latest developments?

The scheme period ends in 2026. Recent releases show progress and the push for a post-2026 plan.

25. What did the 1 September 2026 review say?

DD News reported a review by the Union Rural Development Minister on 1 September 2026. Under WDC-PMKSY 2.0, **1,220 projects covering 52.93 lakh hectares** have been sanctioned.

The total sanctioned cost is Rs 12,404 crore. The Central share is Rs 8,134 crore. Of that, **Rs 6,955.75 crore (85%)** has been released.

Reported results include:

- 1.24 lakh water harvesting structures built or rejuvenated.
- About 1.40 lakh hectares moved to two or three crops.
- Another 3.08 lakh hectares with protective irrigation.
- 28.50 lakh farmers benefited.
- 1.45 lakh hectares covered with afforestation, horticulture and planting.
- 2.85 crore person-days of work generated.

The Minister called watershed development a key means to a “Drought-Free India”.

Sanctioned	Central share
1,220 projects	Share: Rs 8,134 cr
52.93 lakh ha	Released:
Cost Rs 12,404 cr	Rs 6,955.75 crore
	That is 85%

The sanctioned cost is a dated snapshot.

Source: DD News, 1 September 2026, item 25

26. What happened in 2025?

On 13 January 2025 PIB announced **56 new projects** costing Rs 700 crore. They are in 10 States and cover about 2.8 lakh hectares. Each project is about 5,000 hectares, and smaller in hill States.

The same release says 1,150 projects covering about 50 lakh hectares were sanctioned in 2021-22 at Rs 12,303 crore.

Watershed Yatra was a mass outreach campaign. The 4 February 2025 release says it covers 805 projects, 6,673 Gram Panchayats and 13,587 villages in 26 States and 2 UTs.

Source: PIB, 13 January 2025, 56 new watershed projects, item 26

Source: PIB, 4 February 2025, Watershed Yatra, item 26

27. What are Watershed Mahotsav and Mission Watershed Punarutthan?

The National Watershed Conference was held on **10 and 11 November 2025** in Guntur, Andhra Pradesh. A PIB note before the event lists its agenda: a review of WDC-PMKSY 2.0 progress and talks on the roadmap beyond 2026.

The release says the Minister was to inaugurate Watershed Mahotsav on 11 November. It also says a drive to restore assets from earlier projects would be launched. That work is to use MGNREGA funding.

A PIB release of 25 November 2025 uses the name Mission Watershed Punarutthan, apparently the same drive. It is meant to maintain and repair structures built under WDC-PMKSY 1.0.

Source: PIB, 10 November 2025, Watershed Mahotsav and National Watershed Conference, item 27

Source: PIB, 25 November 2025, Review of WDC-PMKSY and Watershed Mahotsav, item 27

28. What are Neeranchal and REWARD?

Neeranchal was a World Bank project approved on 17 July 2014 for nine States. Its cost was USD 357 million, with USD 178.50 million from the Bank.

A 2019 World Bank paper says it performed poorly. Only USD 1.06 million had been disbursed. India asked on 22 July 2019 to cancel the undisbursed **USD 177.28 million**.

REWARD is a newer project. A World Bank press release of 10 December 2021 announced a USD 115 million loan. It gives USD 60 million to Karnataka, USD 49 million to Odisha and USD 6 million to DoLR. DoLR says the programme runs from 2021 to 2026.

Neeranchal	REWARD
2014: cost 357 m	USD 115 million
Bank credit 178.5 m	Karnataka: 60 m
Disbursed: 1.06 m	Odisha: 49 m
Cancel ask: 177.28 m	DoLR: 6 m

The two projects are separate.

True or False: Neeranchal disbursed most of its World Bank funds.
Source: World Bank, Neeranchal Restructuring Paper, 2019, item 28

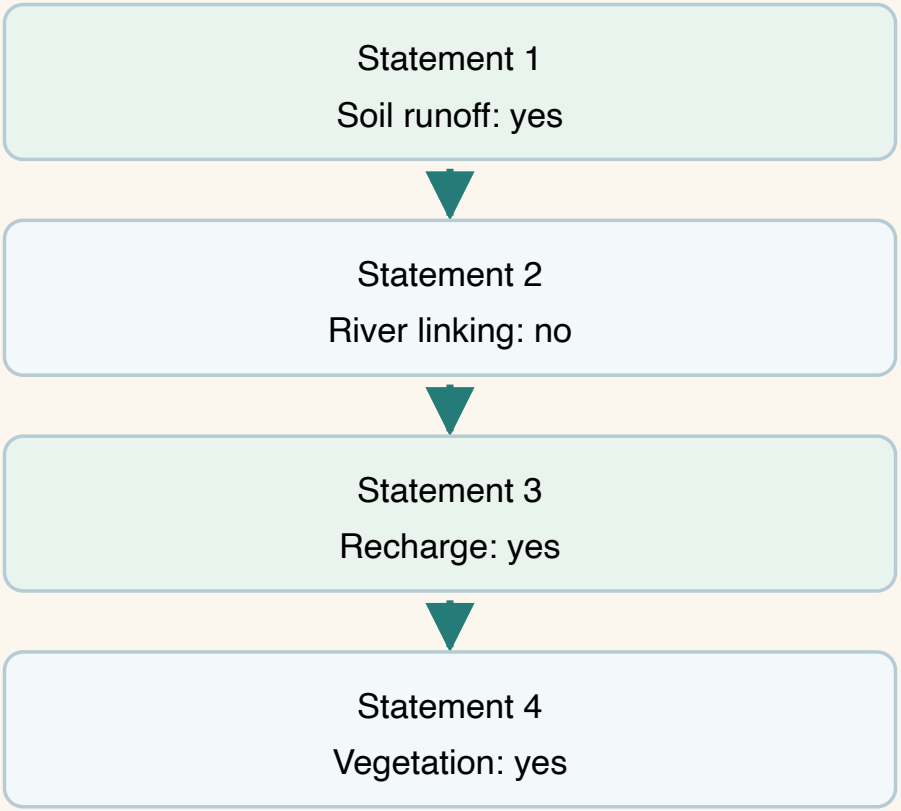
Source: World Bank press release, 10 December 2021, item 28

Source: DoLR, REWARD, item 28

Which UPSC question has tested this topic?

29. Which UPSC Prelims 2014 question tested the Integrated Watershed Development Programme?

Official key (Series A, Q56): C. The key sheet for Series A shows “No. of items dropped” as “NIL”.



This gives the official key (c).

Source: UPSC, CSP 2014 General Studies Paper I question paper, Wayback copy, item 29

Source: UPSC, CSP 2014 General Studies Paper I answer key, Wayback copy, item 29

Four questions to think through

Why does watershed work start in the upper catchments?

Water sources originate in the upper catchments. The 2008 guidelines therefore treat forests and hills there first. The slopes and plains below come next.

Why do rainfed regions need watershed work?

Rainfed land covers 51% of net sown area but gives only 40% of food production. Rainfed yields average 1.1 tonnes per hectare, against about 3 on irrigated land. So holding water on the land can lift output where the gap is widest.

Why did the 2021 rules add springsheds and biological measures?

Almost 50% of an estimated 4 to 5 million springs in the Himalayan, Ghats and other hill regions are drying up. Groundwater also serves almost 60% of the irrigated area. So the rules add springshed treatment, trees and soil-moisture measures to engineering work.

Does a large sanction prove that a watershed project works?

No. Neeranchal had a USD 178.50 million World Bank credit approved, but only USD 1.06 million had been disbursed by August 2019. Sanction is not delivery. The 2026 review therefore counts money released and results on the ground.

Check your understanding

Your 7 quick checks Answered 0 of · Correct
This score resets when the page reloads.

Continue to the 8 MCQs

✅ Test Yourself

Try 8 practice questions on watershed development.

Practice MCQs

1. What is a watershed?

A. An area of land draining to a single common outlet

B. A dam built across a major river

C. A type of monsoon wind pattern

D. A government irrigation department

See answer ↓

2. Which professor headed the 1994 Technical Committee that reviewed DPAP and DDP?

A. Prof. Yash Pal

B. Prof. M.S. Swaminathan

C. Prof. C.H. Hanumantha Rao

D. Prof. Amartya Sen

See answer ↓

3. Under WDC-PMKSY 2.0, what is the usual cost-sharing ratio between the Centre and a State?

A. 90:10

B. 75:25

C. 50:50

D. 60:40

See answer ↓

4. The National Rainfed Area Authority is the Knowledge Partner of DoLR. Under which ministry does it function?

A. Ministry of Jal Shakti

B. Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare

C. NITI Aayog

D. Department of Land Resources

See answer ↓

5. What is the minimum membership of a Watershed Committee under the 2021 guidelines?

A. Ten

B. Seven

C. Fifteen

D. Eleven

See answer ↓

6. In the 1 September 2026 review, how many WDC-PMKSY 2.0 projects had been sanctioned?

A. 1,220

B. 8,214

C. 1,150

D. 805

See answer ↓

7. What happened to the World Bank's Neeranchal project by 2019?

A. Only USD 1.06 million was disbursed, and India asked to cancel the rest

B. It was approved in 2021 with a USD 115 million loan

C. It was merged into REWARD in 2021

D. It was fully disbursed and finished in nine States

See answer ↓

8. What are the benefits of implementing the 'Integrated Watershed Development Programme'?
1. Prevention of soil runoff
2. Linking the country's perennial rivers with seasonal rivers
3. Rainwater harvesting and recharge of groundwater table
4. Regeneration of natural vegetation Select the correct answer using the code given below.

A. 1 and 2 only

B. 2, 3 and 4 only

C. 1, 3 and 4 only

D. 1, 2, 3 and 4

See answer ↓

Answer Key

1. **A.** A watershed is land that channels its rain and runoff to streams and rivers, and finally to an outflow point. The option's single common outlet is the usual shorthand for that outflow point. The 2008 Common Guidelines set project units of 1,000 to 5,000 hectares on average. The 2021 guidelines plan one expert team for each project of about 5,000 hectares. ↑ Q1
2. **C.** The 1994 Technical Committee worked under Prof. C.H. Hanumantha Rao. It found the programmes fragmented and run through rigid guidelines. It brought DDP, DPAP and the Integrated Wastelands Development Programme under one umbrella. Projects from 1994 to 2001 followed these guidelines. ↑ Q2
3. **D.** The Centre and State share costs 60:40. For hilly States and the North-East, including Sikkim, the ratio is 90:10. For Union Territories, the Centre pays 100%. The project period was cut from 4 to 7 years down to 3 to 5 years. ↑ Q3
4. **B.** NRAA is an attached office of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare. It was constituted on 3 November 2006. It does not function under the Department of Land Resources. The 2021 guidelines make it the Knowledge Partner of DoLR for area prioritisation and new technology tools. ↑ Q4
5. **D.** The 2021 guidelines require at least eleven members. The 2008 guidelines set the figure at 10. Five members represent user groups and Self Help Groups, and three come from the FPO. The committee needs at least two women and two SC/ST members. ↑ Q5
6. **A.** DD News reported 1,220 sanctioned projects covering 52.93 lakh hectares. The figure of 1,150 is the 2021-22 count from PIB in January 2025. The figure of 8,214 is the WDC-PMKSY 1.0 total. The figure of 805 is the Watershed Yatra project count. ↑ Q6
7. **A.** Neeranchal was approved on 17 July 2014 for nine States at a total cost of USD 357 million. A 2019 World Bank paper says it performed poorly. India asked on 22 July 2019 to cancel the undisbursed USD 177.28 million. The USD 115 million loan belongs to REWARD, a newer project. ↑ Q7
8. **C.** The official UPSC key for Series A, Question 56 is (c). Statements 1, 3 and 4 are benefits of watershed work. Preventing runoff and recharging groundwater are core aims of watershed management. Statement 2, linking rivers, is not a watershed benefit, so the key leaves it out. ↑ Q8

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