

Yettinahole could meet fate of Telugu-Ganga project: Experts

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Scientists attached to Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru equate the state government's proposed Yettinahole Drinking Water Project with the unsuccessful Telugu-Ganga Project executed from 1997 to 2006 which was aimed at supplying water to Chennai besides irrigating drought-prone areas of Chittoor from rivers Krishna and Pennar.

Though the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel under Prof. Madhav Gadgil spoke on rivers which had dried up below the dam structure due to diversion of water and recommended that inter-basin transfers should be completely

avoided in the Western Ghats, the state government proposes to divert Yettinahole and streams flowing in the west to the eastern districts of Chikballapur and Kolar which are water scarce areas.

Supporting Madhav Gadgil's recommendation, a report 'Environmental Flow in Yettinahole,' by IISc scientists T.V. Ramachandra, Vinay S. and Bharath Atihal pointed out that Telugu Ganga Project also known as Krishna Water Supply Project was to provide 15 TMC of water to Chennai which was later revised to 12 TMC but the project failed to meet its objective.

The Telugu Ganga project, IISc scientists say, was meant to utilize water from rivers

Krishna and Pennar by diverting water from Srisailem reservoir in Andhra Pradesh to Poondi reservoir in Tamil Nadu covering a distance of 406 km through a series of interlinked canals and reservoir. It was also meant to irrigate 2,32,702 hectares of drought prone areas of Kurnool, Chittoor and Cuddapah districts. As per the records on water supply to Chennai city, IISc scientists have noted that the project failed to meet drinking water requirements of the residents of Chennai and records show that Chennai received inadequate water from the project except in 2000 when the metropolitan city received the maximum of 5 TMC of water.