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# Maintain 15-20 pc environmental flow in rivers: NGT

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**NGT has ordered states to maintain environmental flow of 15-20 percent in rivers**

All the [states have been directed by the National Green Tribunal \(NGT\) to maintain a minimum environmental flow](#) of 15 to 20 percent of the average lean season course in their rivers.

Moreover, the states have also been told that if they are unable to adhere to this average percentage, it may approach the environment ministry. The NGT has also agreed to pass an appropriate order in case it is desirable to fix any lower percentage of environment flow than the prescribed one.

### **Parliamentary panel recommends constitution of empowered group on interlinking rivers**

The [parliamentary panel in its report has recommended](#) the Centre to form an empowered group of state ministers on interlinking of rivers along the lines of state finance ministers on goods and services tax (GST). The suggestion has been made in the wake of the Ken-Betwa river-linking project hitting a roadblock due to objections from the Madhya Pradesh government. The committee has also opined that the Centre should formulate a detailed project for interlinking of rivers that will comprehensively examine environmental, socioeconomic and financial aspects related to the project.

### **HC directs Bihar government to submit action plan on defunct tube well**

The [Patna high court has directed the Bihar government](#) to submit an action plan and time frame within four weeks to make 4,095 non-functional tube wells in the state operational for irrigation purposes. While the court has ordered the state to inform of any hindrance being created by any department in this regard, the state water resources department and the energy department have been playing blame games for the defunct tube wells.

### **Panel eases coal mine expansion rules**

In order to bring significant relief to India's coal industry, the expert panel of the [environment ministry has done away with the public hearing](#) on expansion projects of coal mines involving an increase in production capacity by up to 40 percent in two to three phases. While the environmentalists are unhappy with the decision, the coal ministry has argued that the public hearings in the process of forest clearance of coal expansion projects are time-consuming.

### **Delhi HC orders Centre to reduce stubble burning**

In order to reduce stubble burning during autumn and winter months, the [Delhi high court has ordered the Centre to develop environment-friendly farming practices](#). The Centre has also been ordered to explore the possibility of creating a fund for innovation in farming techniques. The high court directed Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and the Delhi governments to file status reports every alternate month on steps taken to educate farmers on the same.

*This is a roundup of important policy matters from August 8 - 14, 2017. Also, read the [news this week](#).*