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Less than 1% of India's water bodies monitored by central, state pollution control boards

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Representative image. Credit: PTI Photo

Of the 9.45 lakh water bodies in the country, the central and state pollution control board (CPCB/SPCB) is monitoring the quality of only 562, including 172 in Karnataka, a report by Actionaid said.

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rivers, lakes, tanks and other water bodies, the number of water bodies covered by the programme are very limited: 348 lakes, 134 tanks and 107 ponds.

As per the guidelines issued by the Union environment ministry in 2017, common physico-chemical parametres like acidity (pH), total coliform and dissolved oxygen level and others. Results of the water quality tests have to be updated every month.

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quality reports on their website. Ladakh, Lakshadweep and Manipur didn't have an official website.

As many as 13 states/UTs gave data that was older than six months.

In Karnataka, the KSPCB gives data by grading the water quality between A (drinking water) and E (industrial cooling). "The lack of details of each parametres makes it impossible to assess the level of pollution," Raghavendra B Pachhapur, senior lead projects, ActonAid Association, said.

Pachhapur explained that the difference between category 'D' (fisheries) and 'E' was too little. "If full data of all parametres is made available, people will be better informed. In fact, there are lake protection groups and other activists who observe the changes in parametres. They can help officials in preventing the degradation," he said.

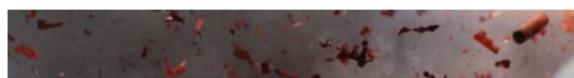
The report stressed the need to increase the monitoring of water bodies to cover at least those located in urban areas with high populations. "IN urban areas with a population of 1 crore, all the lakes should be monitored and in smaller cities and towns, at least 50% of the lakes should be monitored," it added.

The report urged the CPCB to advise states , including the KSPCB, to provide full data of the lake water quality rather than mere grades. It said water quality data should be uploaded in the public domain, enabling civic organisations to act swiftly.

"CPCB should ensure that water quality data should be easily accessible to any user in the most interactive mode," the report added.

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