

Notified Blocks- Ban on Tubewells boring in Punjab

- In 1970, GOI circulated a Draft Model Bill named “The Ground Water (Control and Regulation) Act 1970 for establishment of Ground Water Authority in the State with powers to notify areas for control and regulation of Ground Water Development.
- 14-01-1997**
- In 1997, Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) was constituted by GOI under sub-section 3 of Environment (Protection) Act 1986 for the regulation and control of Ground Water Management & Development.
- 30-09-2003**
- The CGWA vide notification dated 30-9-2003 declared Ludhiana city and 5 Blocks i.e Moga-I, Moga-II of Moga District, Sangrur, Mehal Kalan and Maler Kotla-II(Ahmedgarh) of Sangrur District as notified areas and issued directions for registration of ground water abstraction structures.
- 02-12-2006**
- The CGWA through Notice in the Tribune dated 2.12.2006 issued directions to the concerned DCs for imposing ban on the installation of tubewells in the notified areas without prior approval.
 - GOP in the various communications sent to CGWA and Ministry of Water Resources GOI, pointed that regulation of ground water by legislation is not very successful in agrarian state like Punjab where 65% farmers have small to medium holding. It was suggested that instead of resorting to coercive measures, it would be better to take corrective measures such as, recharging of ground water, diversification of crops and mass awareness etc to check falling water table.
 - Advocate General, Punjab also opined that CGWA being constituted an Authority under Section 3(3) of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 can give direction under section 5 and can invoke all the penal provisions under Sections 15 to 21 of the Act, which has to be complied with. However, the State Government can project its point of view and persuade CGWA for amendment of the notifications/directions.
 - Hon’ble Chief Secretary in the meeting with Punjab State Water Resources Committee on 07.07.2010 decided that all concerned DCs of notified areas i.e Moga, Sangrur and Barnala districts be issued directions to ensure the implementation of directions of CGWA by completely banning the installation of any tubewell by farmers having holdings above 4 Hectare of land.
- 13-08-2011**
- CGWA vide notice dated 13.8.2011 has declared 12 more “Over-exploited” Blocks of Punjab, out of total 39 of the country, as “Notified Areas” for regulation of Ground Water abstraction/development. These blocks are Nakodar, Shahkot & Lohian of Jalandhar district, Pattran of Patiala district, Phagwara of Kapurthala district, Nihalwinghwala of Moga district, Dhuri, Sunam, Barnala, Sherpur & Malerkotla of Sangrur district and Khanna of Ludhiana district.
 - In all 18 Blocks of Punjab out of total 82 of the Country have been declared as “Notified Areas” till date.
 - 7 Blocks of Haryana State & 20 Blocks of Rajasthan State have also been identified by CGWA as over-exploited blocks.