

Rationale of interbasin water transfer in India in the broad context of long-distance transfers

Sharad K. Jain

Nothing is static in nature. All ecosystem components, organisms, and elements are in a perpetual state of motion and evolution. A number of processes (natural as well as anthropogenic) operating on the Earth move large volumes of natural resources over long distances. Water is also transferred over long distances physically and virtually by natural forces as well as by human-engineered systems. A comprehensive appraisal of all transfers and their interactions would offer a holistic understanding of their impacts. In many regions of India, water availability has large spatial and temporal mismatches with demands, and water transfers are one of the techniques to overcome the mismatches. Since water has a critical role in the evolution and sustenance of social and natural ecosystems, special care is needed to understand the impacts of water transfers and design the systems that minimise any adverse outcomes.

Keywords: Environmental impacts, India, long-distance transfers, transfer of food and industrial products, virtual energy transfer, virtual water trade.