



## SUPPORT TO GANGA REJUVENATION

### SITUATION

The river Ganga is of enormous historical, economic, physical and metaphysical importance to India and is lifeline to millions of Indians living on its banks. It is considered a goddess in Hindu mythology and also has been prime witness of other religions.

Originating in the western Himalayas, Ganga flows south and east through five states in India. The Ganga river basin covers one third of India's land area and is home to 43% of its people. Ganga is one of the world's largest, and most polluted, rivers. Untreated sewage and industrial effluent are the main pollutants: around 1 billion litres of raw sewage end up in Ganga every day. Pollution poses a real threat to livelihoods as well as the ecosystem. Over-extraction of water for different purposes such as irrigation and hydropower plants that slow river flow has exacerbated matters.

Ganga rejuvenation efforts began in 1985 with the first Ganga Action Plan. However, in 30 years the condition of the river ecosystem has not significantly improved, and in some stretches has even worsened. The issue regained momentum in 2014, with the launch of the Namami Gange programme by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

During a visit of Chancellor Angela Merkel to India in October 2015, the German government offered support and the benefit of its experience in restoring rivers in Europe, such as the Rhine, Danube and Elbe. This signaled the beginning of the project "Support to Ganga Rejuvenation".

### Objective

The objective of the project "Support to Ganga Rejuvenation" is to ensure that responsible stakeholders at the national and state level increasingly apply integrated approaches for Ganga rejuvenation.

## APPROACH

The project intervenes at both national and state level.

Work area 1, Strategic support and advice at national level, aims to strengthen the capacities of the national institutes involved in Ganga rejuvenation. It works with the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), enhancing its knowledge and understanding by sharing German and European experiences in river basin management. It supports knowledge exchange by helping set up information and data management systems, and promoting awareness raising and public outreach activities. A key success factor is increased acknowledgment of the national mission as the main coordinating body for restoring the Ganga.



Work Area 2, Support of implementation in the state of Uttarakhand, aims to develop the capacities of the State Project Management Group (SPMG) responsible for planning, coordinating and implementing Ganga restoration measures. Another major aim is to demonstrate that pollution caused by municipal wastewater and industrial effluents can be reduced by efficient management of wastewater and functionality of treatment plants. Visible and measurable efficiency improvements in Uttarakhand will encourage others to do the same elsewhere.

Support to Ganga Rejuvenation will work in close coordination with other Indo-German projects, notably “Support to National Urban Sanitation Programme (SNUSP II)” and “Sustainable Environment friendly Industrial Production (SEIP)”.

## EXPECTED ACHIEVEMENTS

- Results of the Indo-German knowledge exchange are embedded in the Ganga restoration efforts of NMCG.
- Water pollution monitoring data, required for coordinating restoration measures at the national level, are available for decision-makers
- Success stories of restoration measures and good practices in public participation (including gender aspects) are disseminated through public media.
- SPMG Uttarakhand implements its planning, steering and support tasks at the state level.
- Measures for improving the efficiency of plants treating industrial effluent are identified and prepared for implementation.
- Efficiency improvements (operation, maintenance, rehabilitation) for municipal wastewater treatment plants (STP) are identified and agreed upon with the operators.
- Joint planning and operating guidelines for wastewater and effluent treatment plants are improved with respect to operational, technical and financial aspects, based on the analysis of existing treatment plants.



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