

Save water today for tomorrow

March 22 is World Water Day. A day to take stock of this fast diminishing natural resource and what we can do to change the situation.



A little drop: A great deal of sustenance. Photo: AFP

Mother Earth, the only planet where life goes on and on, is distinguished from other planets due mainly to the presence of Water. Water gives life to earth; the earth in turn gives life to plants and animals. "What was that critical evolution on the earth that gave birth to water"? The answer was beyond the imagination of man. Since time immemorial, water was a common concern, a common resource, a resource that was managed by the community through collective wisdom. Ancient communities worshipped water as one of the five key elements; the other elements are earth, fire, air and atmosphere (sky). Earth (soil) and Water were the two primary natural elements upon which civilizations emerged. Once water united people and ignited life, now it is struggling for life, it has been caught and treated as a commodity, arrested in a bottle and sold. Its management has been gradually shifted from Community to so-called water experts to Corporates, to what next?

Time to act

The way we treat water today doesn't augur well for a good future. The generations of tomorrow and the day after are going to suffer for no fault of theirs. But everything is not lost. Sure, we are not in a hopeless situation. If the present generation has the will and commitment they will not be cursed by future generations.

The present situation is grim and if allowed to continue future wars will be on water. There is a sense of urgency to act today.

The Centre of Excellence for Change (CEC), a non-governmental organisation in Chennai which is spearheading change initiatives in water sector, has been working with the youth in Tamil Nadu through universities and schools who are involved in water conservation activities. They have taken oath to conserve water at home, school and college and sensitise people, particularly youth, to do the same with long term water perspective.

The Centre of Excellence for Change

Comprising officials of TN Food and Water Department.

waterandchange@gmail.com

Some water facts

About 97 per cent of earth water is saline and only three per cent is fresh, out of which only one per cent is readily available for human consumption.

The overall amount of water on our planet has remained the same for two billion years.

In a 100-year period, a water molecule spends 98 years in the ocean, 20 months as ice, about two weeks in lakes and rivers, and less than a week in the atmosphere.

Groundwater can take a human lifetime to traverse a mile.

A person can live about a month without food, but only about a week without water.

A quarter of the world's population is without safe drinking water. One in five does not have access to safe drinking water.

According to U.N., around the world a child dies from water related disease, every 15 seconds.

In India, each day thousands of children, under the age of five, die as a result of water borne diseases.

we need to rethink the way we use water. we need to get involved in water conservation not only at home but also in our schools.

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