

Institutional Architecture for Groundwater Management in Punjab

This lecture will lay out the institutional architecture that exists at the federal and provincial level for Punjab for the management and sustainability of groundwater as a resource in Pakistan. Agriculture is a key contributor to Pakistan's economy and groundwater is contributing 50% of agriculture water requirements. In addition, it also meets our domestic, industrial and horticultural needs. The institutional architecture for groundwater resource development, regulation and management in Pakistan is missing or rudimentary at best, leading to overexploitation of this important resource. The institutional setup for its use management exists in the Punjab province but not a single department is focusing on resource development and management. This is the reason why resource is being depleted in certain areas in addition to quality deterioration and saline water intrusion. There are many challenges for the resource management in the absence of any policy framework and regulation. The Punjab Irrigation Department has realized its importance and has started working on IWRM policy framework and groundwater regulation. The Department is even considering reorganising itself to become 'water resource management' department, rather than merely the irrigation department. These, and other current efforts for management of groundwater will be discussed in the session by Dr. Muhammad Javed, who has extensive experience of working in the water resource sector in Punjab.