Press Note on Groundwater Conservation

The Punjab Water Regulation and Development Authority (PWRDA) has notified the ***"Punjab Groundwater Extraction and Conservation Directions, 2023"*** which have come into effect from the 1st of February, 2023. The new Directions apart from regulating groundwater also encourage users to conserve water through water conservation schemes. The Authority will also fund public water conservation projects to be implemented by State Government Departments.

PWRDA is the first Water Authority in India to implement the concept of water conservation credits. Users may opt to implement a water conservation scheme with the approval of the Authority, either within the Unit or outside. The User will be entitled for water conservation credits for the water conserved by it. For every cubic meter (1,000 liters) of water conserved, the user will earn a rebate equal to Rs. 2.50. The maximum rebate available to a Unit will depend on the zone in which the Unit is located and the volume of groundwater being extracted by it, as described in the table below:

Groundwater Assessment Zone	**Volume of Groundwater extracted (cubic meters/Year)**			
	>3600-18000	>18000- 180000	>180000- 900000	>900000
	% of groundwater be conserved for maximum rebate			
Green	50%	100%	150%	200%
Yellow	100%	150%	200%	250%
Orange	150%	200%	250%	300%

* For Groundwater Assessment zones see the map of Punjab on website: **https://pwrda.org**

Example : To earn the maximum water conservation rebate the User in Orange Zone who extracts 36000 cubic meters in a year (3000 cubic meters per month) can conserve upto twice the volume of water extracted by it.

The Groundwater Extraction Charges will also be utilized by the Authority for funding the Public Water Conservation Schemes of various State Departments, such as a project for improvement of irrigation water conveyance efficiency so as to bring more area under canal water apart from improving the recharge of groundwater.

PWRDA shall facilitate rapid deployment and scaling up of water saving technologies in Agriculture. For this purpose, a pilot project for water conservation in coordination with the State Government has been initiated in the district of Sangrur to save upon groundwater in the State. The project covers an area of 1720 acres spread over 29 villages in the district. Similar water saving projects are being planned to motivate farmers towards judicious use of water in agriculture.

Users are encouraged to implement water conservation schemes with approval of PWRDA both in their premises (e.g. rainwater harvesting) and also outside their units (e.g. collaborating with farmers to save irrigation water) to earn water conservation credits.