

# 12,000 water sources dried up in state: Study

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More than 12,000 natural water sources have dried up in Uttarakhand till last decade.

Besides these water bodies, subsidiary sources, which enrich these main sources, have also dried up due to lack of required forestation and increased urbanisation. This figure has emerged in a study undertaken by a Dehradun-based NGO, Center for Ecology Development and Research, in collaboration with the South Asia Institute of Nepal and an NGO from Britain.

According to the study done especially in Nainital and Mussoorie hills by scientists from three institutes, due to increase in demand of water in the hill region owing to speedy urbanisation, the entire weight fell on these existing water sources, speeding up their drying up and depletion. "Even if rejuvenation measures for big water bodies such as the Nainital lake and surrounding lakes were considered, small and subsidiary water bodies were ignored, resulting in lack of water in the big bodies," said Vinay Kumar, a scientist from the Centre for Ecology Development and Research.

According to the report, the Nainital lake has witnessed low volume of water due to less generation caused by encroachment in the Sukhtal catchment region of the lake and drawing of over 40 MLD water from the lake to residential areas. Mussoorie hills faced a water crisis as small water sources, helping water generation in 21 traditional naulas (covered water ponds) in the hills have been neglected.

"If steps to check erosion of these natural water sources are not taken at the earliest, the state is likely to face a water crisis in the coming years," said Vinay.

The scientists have suggested in their report sent to the Union Water Resources Ministry that if mass plantation and forest conservation are not taken immediately and unplanned urbanization checked, the crisis would deepen as natural resources of water in the hill region have a tendency to deplete. "The methods of traditional chal and khal, prevalent in the hill region for centuries and water harvesting methods will help in improving the situation," said Vinay.

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/uttarakhand/12-000-water-sources-dried-up-in-state-study/284985.html>

