

# Water as a focus for regional relations and sustainable resource economies

Chatham House's work with partners in India

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Glada Lahn, Senior Research Fellow, Energy, Environment & Resources

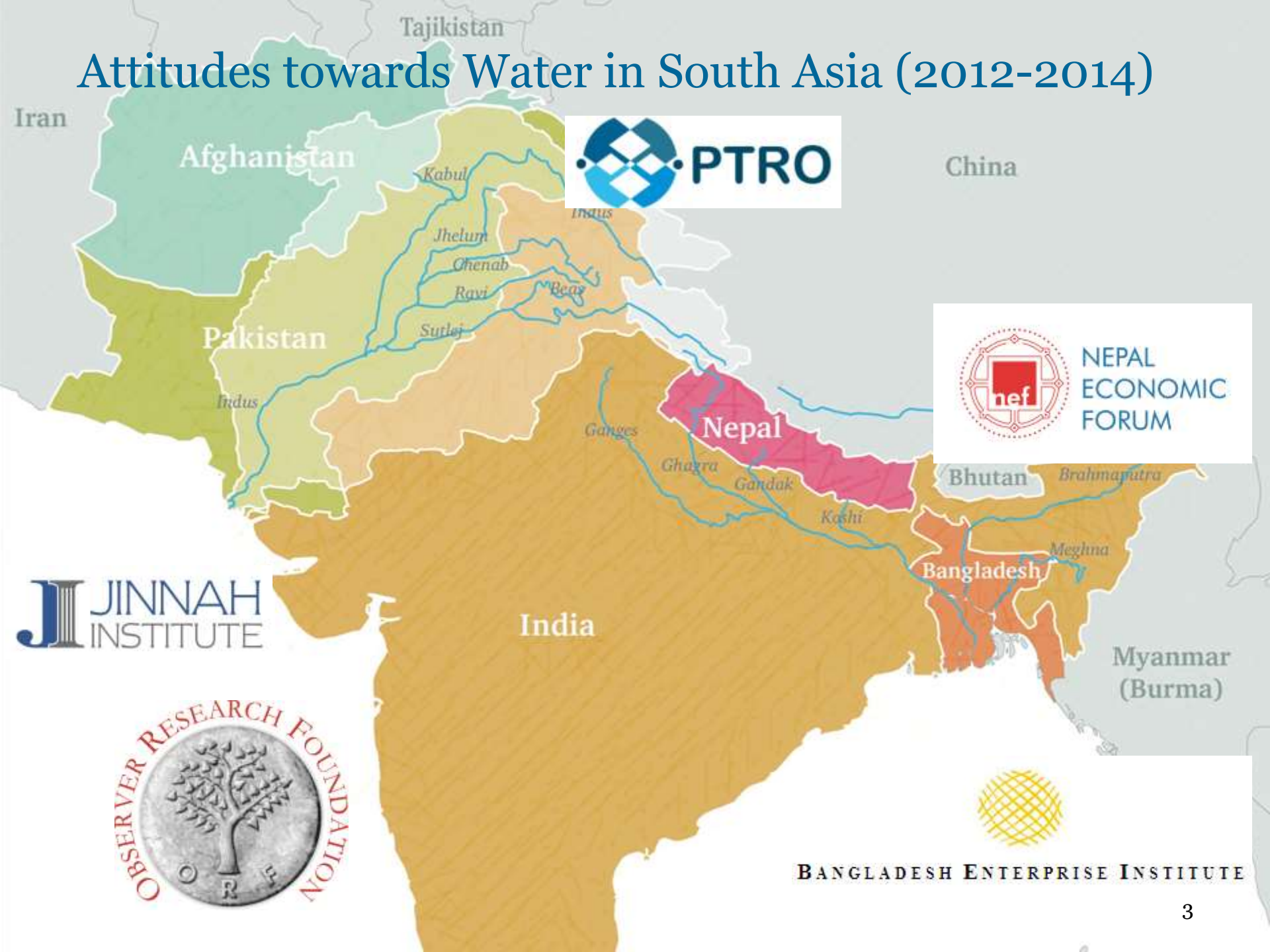
India-UK Water Security Exchange Initiative - DEFRA, 15 February 2016

# Ways of working with partners

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- Independent – unhindered by an institutional agenda
- Stakeholder-led research
- Workshops, interviews, online dialogues
- Collaborative development of recommendations
- Network-building and strengthening
- Briefings and reports disseminated amongst policy-makers, business, civil society, media, academia etc.
- Moving debate forward
- Practical guidance for foreign policy/ domestic reforms/developmental approaches etc.

# Attitudes towards Water in South Asia (2012-2014)



BANGLADESH ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

# A project to better understand the political economy of South Asia's Rivers

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## The problem:

- Inter- and intra-state disputes over water and competition for water use amongst users in South Asia
- Hundreds of millions of people face growing water stress as a result of over-exploitation, climate change and inadequate cooperation in the region
- Water is a highly-emotive and politically-charged issue

## Aims:

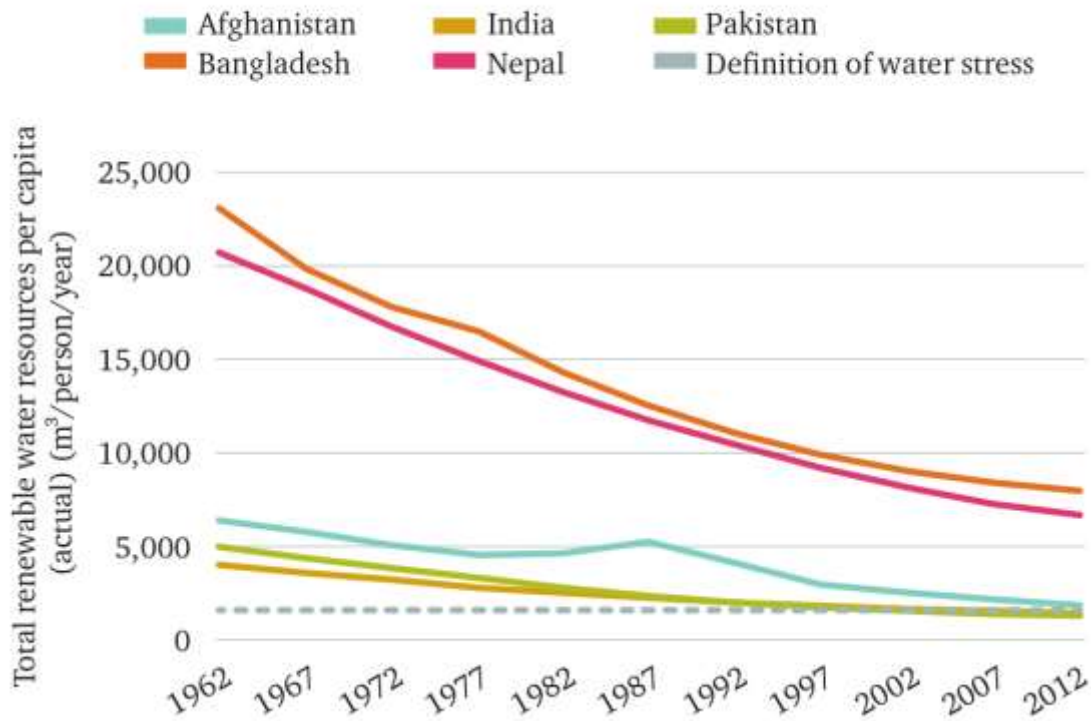
- To inform approaches to water management and transboundary relations in South Asia
- To increase understanding of the attitudes of policy-makers and opinion formers towards water
- To increase understanding of what works and doesn't work in terms of improving water management

## What we did:

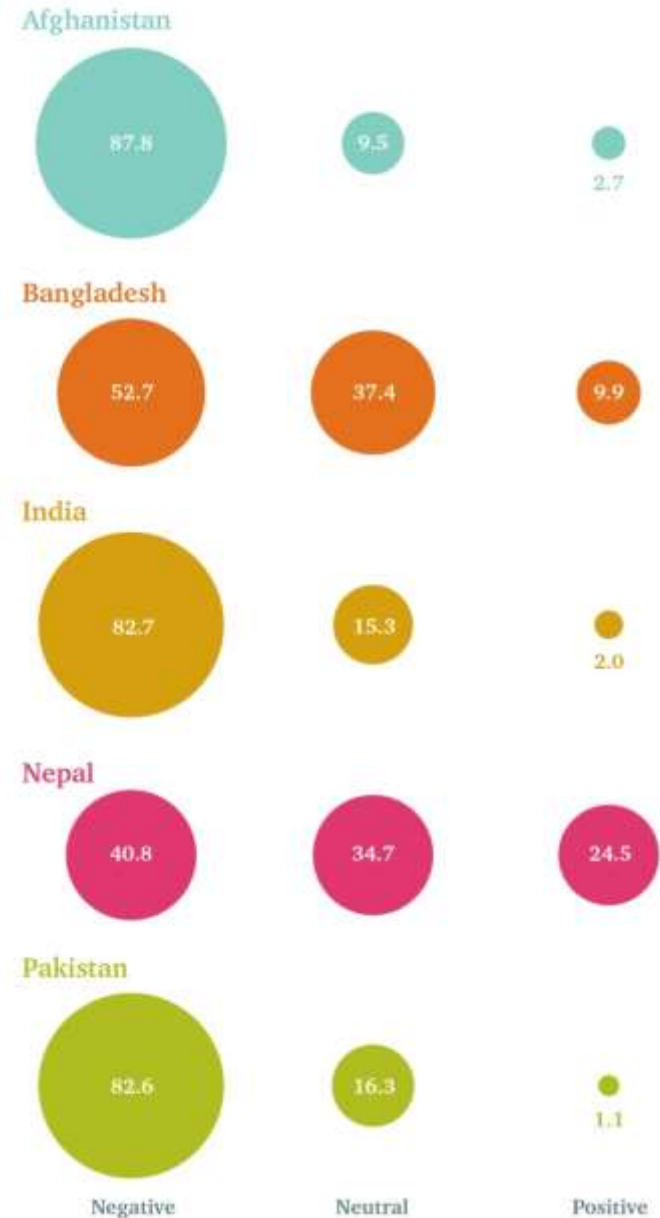
- Interviews with 500 policy-makers, opinion-formers, civil society, private sector working on water in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan
- Examined in-country case studies of best-case water management
- Email survey to validate and corroborate interview findings
- Produced the report “Attitudes to Water in South Asia”, widely distributed and read amongst participating respondents

# Expressing a regional challenge

## Falling per capita water availability



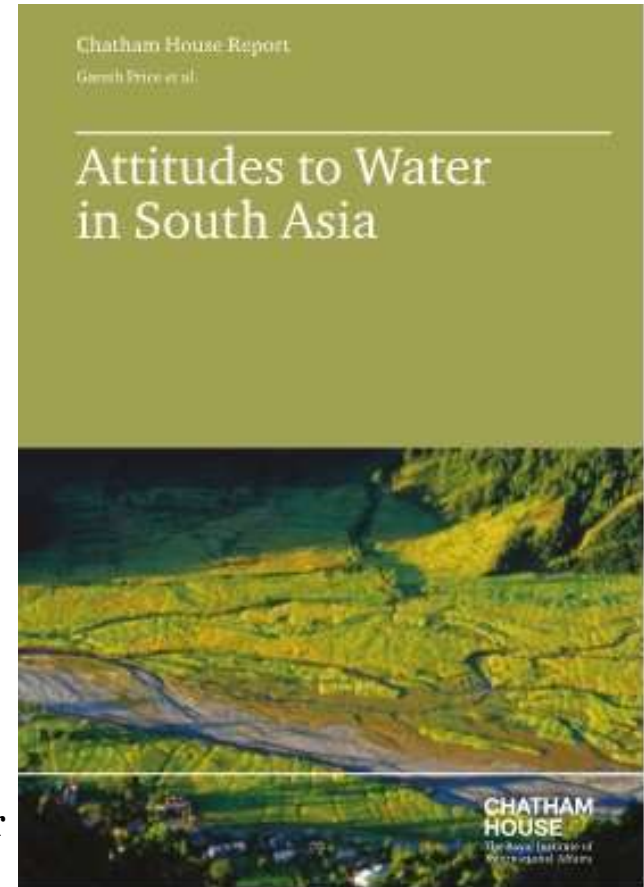
## How do you rate current water management?



# Key findings: trans-boundary water

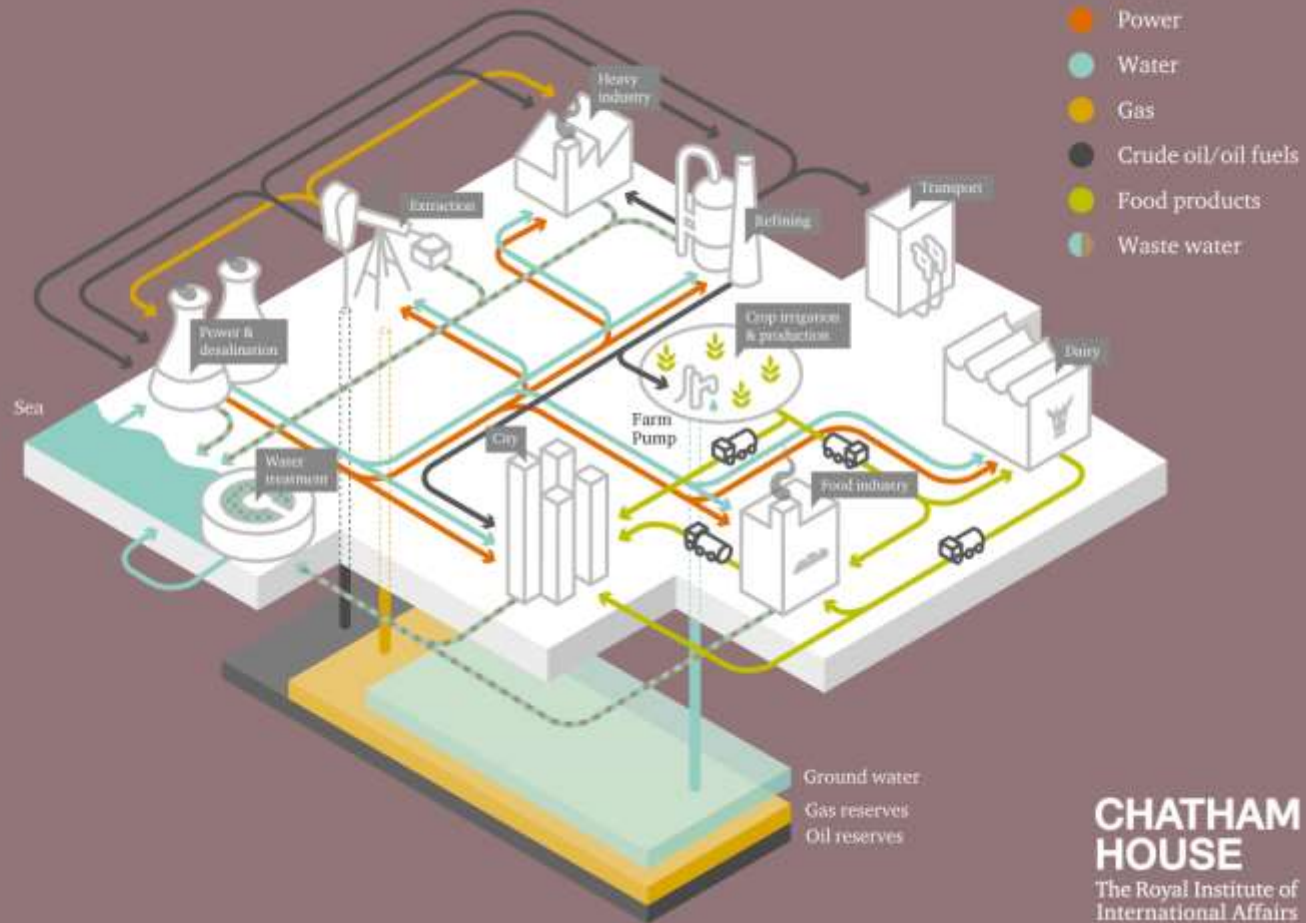
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- Few working treaties, inadequate to changing conditions
- Current zero-sum approaches inhibit cooperation and adaptation
  - Changes imply one party will be worse off
- Widespread distrust across the region
  - Attitudes to neighbours was uniformly negative
- Numerous explanations for poor water management
  - Incoherent policies (because of coalition governments, federal systems,... )
  - Lack of rigorous data collection
- Need to reconceptualize water in terms of uses and outcomes
  - Opportunities for transboundary cooperation re disaster planning/shared ecosystem goals/mutually beneficial interdependencies
- Improving domestic management – especially reducing water intensity in agriculture



# Valuing Vital Resources

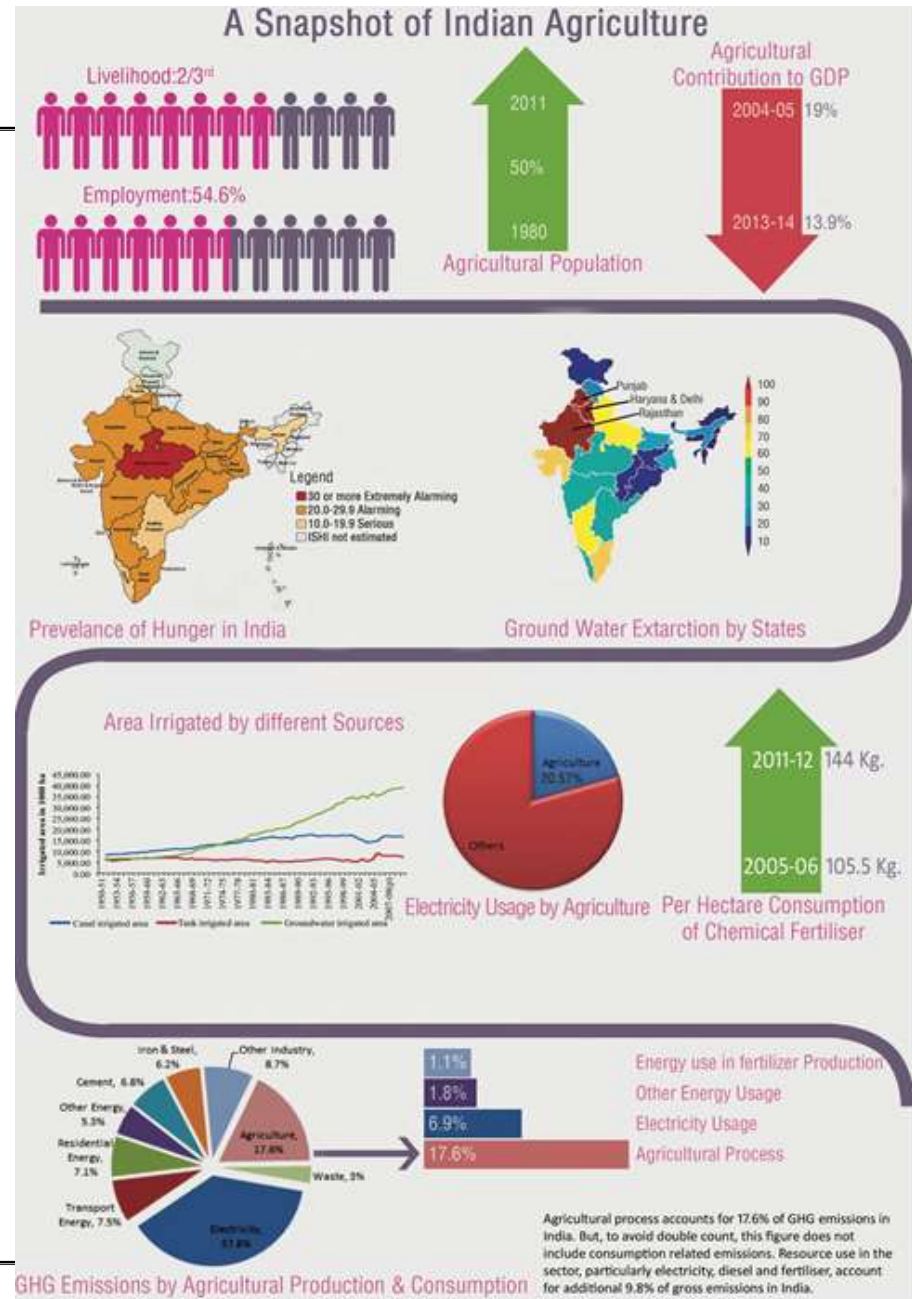
How should governments and societies value energy, water and food in economies dependent on exhaustible resources?



# The project



- Resource intensity in Indian agriculture
- Current input incentives for farmers
- Understanding decision-making around power, irrigation & crop-production
- Potential reconfiguration of incentives
- Considering & testing the case for a more integrated approach





# Workshop & seminar at the Habitat Centre, New Delhi

Centre for Sustainable Agriculture, Secundrabad, Andhra Pradesh

Institute for Resource Analysis & Policy, Hyderabad, Telengana

International Water Management Institute-India, New Delhi.

Prayas Energy Group, Pune Maharashtra

Columbia Water Center India Office, Center for International Projects Trust ,

The Energy Resources Institute, New Delhi

Centre for Resource Management, Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi.

Competition Commission of India

Indian Agricultural Research Institute New Delhi.

Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), Government of India, New Delhi

Haryana Electricity Regulatory Commission.

International Water Management Institute, Anand, Gujarat.

Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi

Sustainable Energy for All, Vienna, Austria

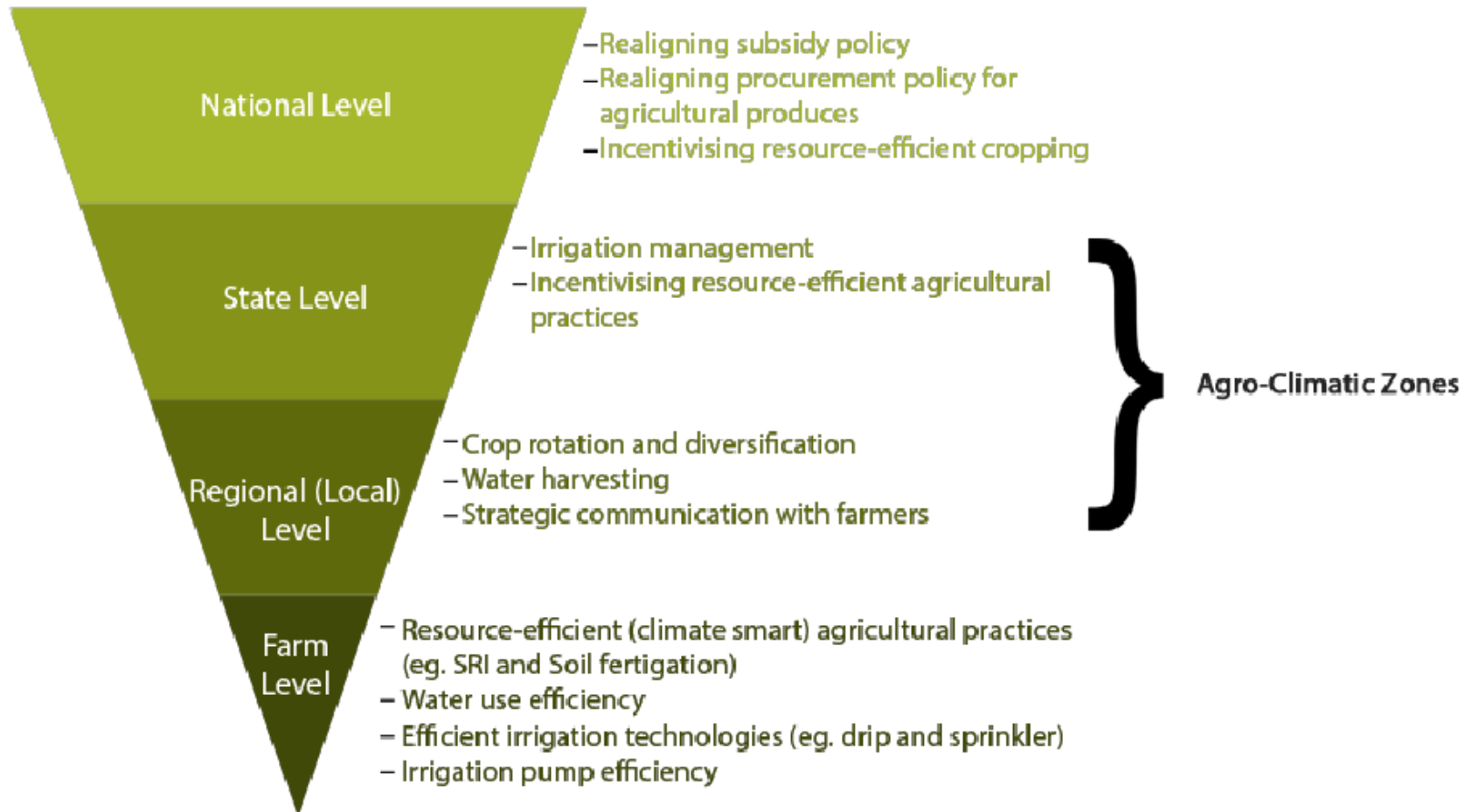
International Crops Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics, Hyderabad, Telengana

Lok Sabha

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# Potential for aligning governance and incentives around sustainable use of resources

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# Thank you

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Please stay in touch:

[glahn@chathamhouse.org](mailto:glahn@chathamhouse.org)

<https://www.chathamhouse.org/about/structure/eer-department>

[gprice@chathamhouse.org](mailto:gprice@chathamhouse.org)

<https://www.chathamhouse.org/about/structure/asia-programme>