

Ref: PILAP/HO/2021/632

Dated: 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2021

**The Secretary,  
Ministry of Climate Change,  
G-5/2, Islamabad**

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION UNDER THE RIGHT OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT, 2017**

Dear Sir,

The Public Interest Law Association of Pakistan (PILAP) is a public interest association concerned with the primary objective of enabling the citizens of Pakistan to attain the realization of their civil, human, economic, social and political rights, as guaranteed by the Fundamental Rights laid down in the Constitution of Pakistan. PILAP addresses matters of public interest by means of advocacy and by seeking redress for the people of Pakistan through the justice system. It respectfully submits as under:

1. That in view of the impending global climate crisis that is taking shape, we seek information on water management systems and policies in Pakistan that are to be used to combat water scarcity in our country. A recent report released by the UN titled "The State of Climate Services 2021" points out that there are currently 2.3 billion people around the world who have inadequate access to water. This number is set to reach 5 billion by 2050. It highlights that while in South and Southeast Asian regions there was heavy flooding last year, many countries, including Pakistan, do not have the capacity to store that extra water for later use.
2. That furthermore, in a list of the most water-stressed countries released by the World Resources Institute in 2019, Pakistan ranks at number 14 and the risk of water shortage is categorized as extremely high.
3. That access to clean, potable water is a fundamental right safeguarded by the Constitution. Article 9 guarantees life and liberty for all. The Honourable Supreme Court of Pakistan has held that the right to life includes the "right to basic amenities and living standards.....and access to clean drinking water etc." (2019 SCMR 247 SC). The Supreme Court has also held that the "right to clean water stemmed from the right to life enshrined in the Constitution as a Fundamental Right. Water was a resource to which everyone was entitled, and it was indispensable to those who wished to lead a dignified life. Access to water formed the basis of many other rights including the right to life, health and quality of life." (2018 SCMR 2001 SC). Furthermore, the August Supreme Court has upheld the Public Trust Doctrine which

---

**PUBLIC INTEREST LAW ASSOCIATION OF PAKISTAN**

Plot # 18-C, 2nd Floor, Office # 202, Zamzama Lane # 2, Phase-5, DHA, Karachi.  
Phone: +9221 32417049, +9221 32417087, +9221-35304110 Email: info@pilap.pk



enjoins that public resources, especially natural resources, are to be regulated by the state for the benefit of the public (Suo Moto Case No. 25 of 2009). By this standard, state authorities are duty bound to regulate access to water.

4. That if efficient water management systems are not put in place at the earliest the state will move further away from being able to provide this basic fundamental right. The warning signs are staring us in the face and it would be unwise not to have policies in place in order to deal with this looming crisis.
5. That, in view of the above, PILAP respectfully submits this application under the right granted by the Right of Access to Information Act, 2017 as under:
  - i) What policies have been implemented or measures taken by the Federal Government to harvest water from rainfall and glacier-melt?
  - ii) Given the contentious issue of sharing of the Indus waters between Pakistan and India, what agreements, if any, and other solutions have been put in place by the Federal Government to sort out the points of conflict such as upper and lower riparian rights?
6. That in the circumstances, PILAP would be grateful for a reply at the earliest.

Thank you.

---

**PUBLIC INTEREST LAW ASSOCIATION OF PAKISTAN**

Plot # 18-C, 2nd Floor, Office # 202, Zamzama Lane # 2, Phase-5, DHA, Karachi.  
Phone: +9221 32417049, +9221 32417087, +9221-35304110 Email: info@pilap.pk