

Study to evaluate price-based approach for water management

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Pune: Think tank Pune International Centre has initiated a study to evaluate the real cost of water in the city and Pimpri Chinchwad to reduce wastage.

The project sought to develop evidence-based policies to rationalise water tariffs and bridge the gap between perception of users regarding water prices and the actual costs.

The study would be done in collaboration with Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics (GIPE) and Pune Knowledge Cluster. In Jan, the think tank conducted a roundtable where 36 experts participated.

Dinanath Kholkar, research track lead, Pune International Centre, said, “We are interacting with Austin municipality to understand how water metering is done at individual levels. They also track how much water is being consumed and how much is being wasted.”

“Around 40% water is wasted from the point it is stored to where it is distributed. There is no uniformity when it comes to water meters. Use is tracked at society and not individual levels. Currently, water pricing can be tracked through property tax at individual level and water meters at society level,” Siddharth Desai, joint MD, Kishor Pumps, said.

“Our contention is we should look at levers which can change the behaviour of non-consumptive water use. A strong lever is the pricing mechanism. It is an existential good and has a unique connotation in our minds. This is what we can base the pricing mechanism on,” Gurdas Nulkar, director, Centre for Sustainable Development, GIPE, said.

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