Farm sector uses 70% water, says IIT-Hyderabad research

‘Need to study indirect water footprint and quantify water usage in urban India’
The Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad (IIT-H) researchers, after having undertaken a study of water footprint in the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA), found that agriculture accounts for nearly 70 per cent consumption of ‘physical’ water, in what is known as the ‘Green water footprint’.

‘Virtual’ water
Urban areas consumed nearly 20 times more ‘virtual’ water through their various consumption items than physical water, contributing to the ‘Red footprint’. Assessing the water footprint using a consumer-centric approach, they said maximum ‘virtual’ water consumption was seen to come from the food industry (70%), followed by electric power sector (25%) but fossil fuel sector used only 1% of total water consumed by this city.

“The obvious image of water consumption that comes to mind is the active or direct water ingestion by human beings, but the water footprint of humankind extends far beyond. Water that is hidden in non-obvious human commodity is called ‘virtual water’ and the ‘water footprint’ measures the amount of water that has gone into goods and services that we use, ” said the visiting Professor of Department of Civil Engineering, Prof. Chandrasekharam, who conducted the study along with his research scholar Dagani Koteswar Rao.

“There has been much research on managing the direct water footprint in cities at across the world, but there are significant gaps in our understanding of indirect water footprint in Indian cities,” said Mr. Rao, urging on the need to develop ways to quantify water usage in urban India.

Research on

However, the study did not consider industrial and commercial water usage pattern, clarified Prof. Chandrasekharam and added that further research is ongoing to check these areas as well. Further studies into other urban regions in the country will help the public and policy makers to take proactive steps in conserving water. This recent study has been published in the reputed peer-reviewed international journal ‘Sustainable Cities and Society’.
Source: The Hindu
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