

₹19,000-crore afforestation plan launched

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The Centre envisages a ₹19,000-crore project to rejuvenate 13 major rivers by planting trees, officials in the Environment and the Jal Shakti Ministries said at a joint press conference on Monday.

These 'forestry' interventions are expected to increase the cumulative forest cover by 7,417.36 sq. km. in the vicinity of these 13 rivers and would prevent 50.21 million tonnes of CO₂-equivalent in 10-year-old plantations and 74.76 million tonnes CO₂-equivalent in 20-year-old plantations.

They would help recharge groundwater, reduce sedimentation, generate ₹449.01 crore from non-timber and other forest produce as well as provide employment of 344 million man-days.

The rivers are the Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, Sutlej, Yamuna, Brahmaputra, Luni, Narmada, Godavari, Mahanadi, Krishna and Cauvery funded by the National Afforestation & Eco-development Board, (MoEF&CC). The two Ministries made public multiple voluminous Detailed Project Reports, for each of these rivers, prepared by the Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education, Dehradun, (ICFRE).