

63% of waterbodies in Yamuna floodplain dry: Report

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New Delhi: A Centre for Science and Environment report has said that 63% of Delhi's wetlands and waterbodies in the Yamuna floodplain are dry.

The 'State of India's Environment Report 2023' stated that loss in waterbodies makes the city prone to floods. Three major floods have occurred in the city since 2000.

The report added that the climate resilience of cities is hampered by frenetic construction, diminishing green spaces, polluted air and water as well as indiscriminate disposal of so-

lid waste that chokes waterbodies and the stormwater drainage network.

"This leaves urban areas vulnerable to the growing heat stress, flooding and deteriorating air and water quality. Cities need to start planning for resilience to minimise the impact of the changing climate and compromised quality of life," the report said.

It also stated C&D waste, made up of debris and material leftover from the construction, destruction and renovation of buildings, roads and other infrastructure, is a known effect of developmental activities.

"Generation, transportation and

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Wetlands reduce pollution levels, improve groundwater tables and, in general, better a city's ecosystem. It is, therefore, extremely worrying that more than half of Delhi's wetlands in the Yamuna floodplains are dry. The government should take note of this development and ensure that the process to restore them begins on a priority basis. In 2022, the Wetlands Authority of Delhi did not notify a single wetland. There should be some urgency on that front as well.

disposal of this waste emits dust, and when it is dumped in low-lying areas or waterbodies, it obstructs natural drainage, contributes to waterlogging and pollutes the water and soil," the report said, adding scientific management of C&D waste to minimise dust emissions should be prioritised.

The report said increasing human interference in catchment areas is destroying waterbodies. It also blamed inefficient solid waste management, exploitation of floodplains, destruction of drainage, disposal of sewage, fall in groundwater level and unplanned tourism, saying they compound the problem.