

Droughts

Low rainfall coupled with erratic behaviour of the monsoon in the state makes Rajasthan the most vulnerable to drought. Of all the natural disasters, drought can have the greatest impact and affect the largest number of people and livestock. Drought invariably has a direct and significant impact on food production and the overall economy. Drought, however, differs from other natural hazards. Because of its slow onset nature, its effects may accumulate over time and may linger for many years. The impact is less obvious than for events such as earthquakes or flood but may be spread over a larger geographic area. Because of the pervasive effects of drought, assessing its impact and planning assistance becomes more difficult than with other natural hazards.

The State Drought Monitoring Cell (SDMC) in collaboration with the Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, and Water Resources departments, and the National Crop Forecasting Centre (NCFC) would carry out assessment of expected damage which would include impact on agricultural production, depletion of water resources, impact on livestock population, land degradation and deforestation as well as human health.

The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation in collaboration with the SDMC and NCFC would standardize the Unit of deceleration of drought and would evolve alternative methods of quicker assessment of crop yield to mitigate the impact of drought in time.

SDMC would facilitate the integration of data and expertise from multiple institutions such as ICAR, NRSC, IMD, Agricultural Universities, State Departments of Irrigation, Ground Water, Revenue, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry etc., to evolve a robust method for drought intensity assessment. Once the indicators cross the defined threshold level (level to be decided by the state), the SDMA Secretariat would help in declaring drought at sub-district levels.