

**JOINT DECLARATION BY
THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU)
ON AN INDIA-EU WATER PARTNERSHIP (IEWP)**

The Republic of India and the European Union

REALIZING the shared vision for a more sustainable management of water resources and tackling the challenges posed by water management in the context of growing population, competing water demands and a changing climate;

RECOGNIZING the inter-dependencies in the field of environment of India and the EU and the trans-boundary character of many environmental problems, as well as the suggestion of launching an India-EU Water Partnership made during the recently concluded first Indo-European Water Forum held in New Delhi on 23-24 November, 2015, jointly organized by India and the European Commission;

DESIRING to identify key environmental issues and approaches to sustainable development where exchange of experiences and cooperation could be mutually beneficial to strengthen and further develop cooperation between India and the EU in the field of water management;

HAVE REACHED the following understanding:

I. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this Joint Declaration is to strengthen technological, scientific and management capabilities of India and the EU in the field of water management on the basis of equality, reciprocity and mutual benefit.

II. AREAS OF COOPERATION

India and the EU endeavour to encourage and promote cooperation on:

1. Work towards the establishment of an India-EU Water Partnership (IEWP), bringing together representatives of relevant stakeholders, including interested EU Member States and Indian States, European and Indian institutions, businesses and civil society.
2. Exchange views on regulatory approaches, including procurement, governance, best practices, business solutions and research and innovation opportunities in the water field in India and Europe, taking into account lessons learnt in the implementation of the EU's Water Framework Directive and the already ongoing exchange of information on cooperation under major river conventions, such as the Danube and the Rhine.
3. Continue technical exchange on water issues, notably through study visits to the EU and European experts' missions to India.

4. Jointly organize Indo-European Water Forum events at regular intervals to discuss and share views on water-related matters of common interest.
5. Support the implementation of the Ganga Rejuvenation Initiative of the Indian Government, in particular through quick-win business solutions based on EU best practices, by developing a consolidated analysis taking into account joint research activities and identifying key problems and solutions, including innovations European solutions, and by contributing to an analysis of a possible appropriate governance and legal set-up for the Ganga River Basin. The IEWP should be part and parcel of a coordinated approach by the EU and its Member States – and in coordination with other relevant players – on these and other relevant aspects of the Ganga Rejuvenation Initiative.

III. FORMS OF COOPERATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

1. The Partnership should elaborate an action-oriented annual work programme contributing to achieving the aforementioned objective and addressing the elements outlined above.
2. A Joint Working Group comprising of technical experts of equal number from India and the EU should be constituted to discuss, finalise, implement and monitor the activities to be carried out in fulfilment of this Joint Declaration. The Joint Working Group should preferably hold its meeting through video-conferencing and at least twice in a year. Physical meetings should take place alternately in India and Europe.
3. Progress on the implementation of this Partnership should be regularly assessed by both sides including their nominees, viz- representatives from the Indian Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, the EU Delegation to India, and the Environment Directorate-General of the European Commission, as mutually agreed to from time to time.
4. Future annual work programmes may be agreed to accordingly to these assessments and taking into account arising challenges and opportunities.

IV. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

India and the EU will bear their own expenses arising from the cooperation activities carried out under this Joint Declaration.

V. NON-BINDING CHARACTER

This Joint Declaration is not intended to create any legal or financial obligations under domestic or international law in respect of either side.

Brussels, 30th March 2016