

ICRIER suggests a radical change in cropping pattern

'Water guzzling crops can be shifted to East India from the water-scarce tropical regions'

COGENCIS

New Delhi, April 19

Cultivation of water-intensive rice and sugarcane crops should be shifted to the eastern regions of the country due to water availability issues, the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) said in a report today.

"Rice cultivation needs to be shifted from the north-western water-stressed States like Punjab to the water-abundant eastern region, while sugarcane needs to be shifted from the water-scarce tropical regions of Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh to the traditional water-abundant sub-tropical region of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar," it said.

The report suggests strengthening of marketing opportunity of sugarcane and procurement policies of rice in



the water-abundant States of eastern region.

Creating markets, buying

It also calls for setting up markets for the less water-intensive crops that give much higher value applied in water scarce States.

Emphasis should be on adoption of irrigation technologies and practices that encourage water savings, such as micro irrigation system in sugarcane and rice, the research body said.

"Though increasing land productivity has been closely scrutinised by researchers and

policy makers, the emphasis towards improving water productivity, particularly in terms of irrigation water applied by farmers, has been very limited," the report said.

Strong procurement

While Punjab uses almost double the amount of water than West Bengal for irrigation to produce 1 kg of rice, and triple than that of Bihar, profitability of paddy cultivation on per hectare basis remains very high in Punjab due to robust procurement policy and highly subsidised power, the report added.



ND-X

Business Line
20.04.2018

✓