

Dr Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister and Chairperson, Ganga River Basin Authority
Prime Minister's Office
South Block, Raisina Hill,
New Delhi,
India-110 101.

Dear Prime Minister

I am writing to express my grave concern about the fate of the river Ganga and the decline of the Gangotri glacier as a result of global warming. Apart from its profound historical and spiritual significance, its health and preservation is integral to the ongoing economic stability of India.

I would also like to draw your attention to the adverse impacts of further hydroelectric damming along the upper reaches of the Ganga. Such damming will unnaturally tunnel in the Ganga's river flow, adversely affecting the fragile Himalayan ecology.

Moreover, further downstream, industrial and domestic pollution of the Ganga continues unabated, in flagrant breach of India's environmental laws. No effective action has been taken to protect the river from industrial or domestic pollution, except declaring the Ganga to be a national river.

In light of the above, I request that you urgently seek the implementation of the following measures to preserve this sacred river:

- Declare the upper reaches of the Ganga a heritage zone and permanently cease any hydroelectric damming of the Ganga. No development should be permitted in this region which could adversely affect the environment;
- Ensure that proper measures are immediately implemented to clean up the river further downstream. Previous action plans have thus far been ineffective in genuinely improving the water quality of the Ganga;
- Proactively prohibit industrial and domestic pollution (including initiating prosecutions and shutting down or relocating offending industries) including assigning police to guard the river;
- Banning polythene in all places of spiritual pilgrimage, and restricting visitors and vehicular traffic at sacred sites upstream; and
- Prohibiting any further environmentally unsound development or encroachments along the riverbank.

I am writing to you as I believe that you are now the only person who can take the effective and immediate steps that are required to protect this iconic river.