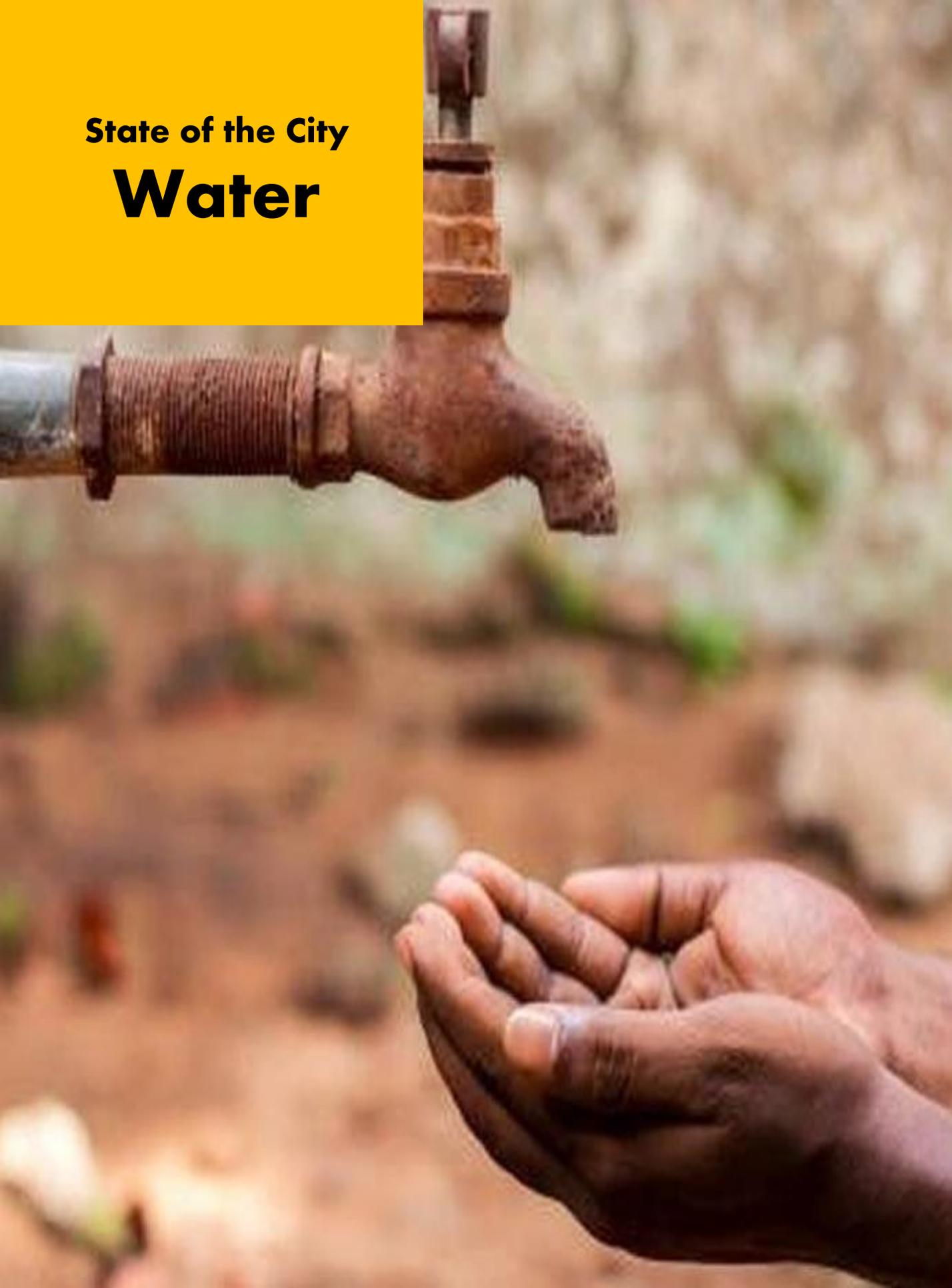


State of the City
Water



PROBLEMS

- Current plans for water security continue to rely on bringing more water from far off places by tapping or diverting rivers.
- Although the metropolitan region receives a reasonable amount of rain annually, very little is harvested.
- BWSSB has historically delivered water only to those who have a piped connection. This has left large numbers of people without the public service.
- Infrastructure for water management is aging and in need of upgradation and/or replacement.
- Commons water is widely extracted by the public with almost no regulation.
- Pricing of water is regressive. There is no guarantee of lifeline supply, with the result that the poor pay more for water than the rich.
- Water quality is a big unknown, but it is widely believed to be below the appropriate levels for healthy human use.
- Re-use of treated water is minimal.

THEREFORE ...

- A comprehensive water security plan for the city is needed. One option, Innondu Cauvery, was announced a few years ago. It needs to be operationalized.
- Extraction of groundwater must be better regulated, and its sale should align to norms and prices for piped supply.
- BWSSB must accept responsibility for supplying water to all buildings. Where supply of water is not immediately possible through piped lines, it must do so by other means.
- BWSSB must hire geophysicists, hydrogeologists, conservation experts, communication experts, and other experts to build its in house capacity.
- The BWSSB and the Pollution Control Board must measure and maintain records of water quality and establish a channel for regular public communication.
- The Urban Development Policy adopted a decade ago promised to establish a regulator for urban services (including water). This should be done immediately.
- A lifeline water program should be created to ensure a minimum supply of quality water to all citizens.