

# Pakistan approves its first national water policy

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's four provincial chief ministers unanimously approved the country's first National Water Policy (NWP) this week at a Council of Common Interests (CCI) meeting this week.

The agreement was reached as the Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi chaired the 37th CCI meeting at Prime Minister's Office on April 24.

The policy was drawn up following consultation with all major stakeholders and a national level consultative seminar was also held to reach a consensus.

Chief Minister Punjab Mohammed Shehbaz Sharif, Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah, Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pervez Khattak, Chief Minister Balochistan Abdul Quddus Bizenjo attended the meeting along with federal ministers and senior officials.

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission of Pakistan Sartaj Aziz briefed the CCI on draft National Water Policy (NWP) of Pakistan.

NWP includes the water uses and allocation of priorities, integrated planning for development and use of water resources, environmental integrity of the basin, impact of climate change, transboundary water sharing, irrigated and rain-fed agriculture, drinking water and sanitation, hydropower, industry, ground water, water rights and obligations, sustainable water infrastructure, water-related hazards, quality management, awareness and research, conservation measures, legal framework and capacity building of water sector institutions.

The PM's office said: "The CCI was briefed that implementation of NWP will be undertaken through the National Water Council (NWC) to be chaired by the Prime Minister and comprising of federal ministers for water resources,

finance, power, planning development and reforms with all provincial Chief Ministers as members.

“The NWC shall oversee the implementation of NWP and a steering committee, headed by the federal minister for water resources, will monitor the implementation with representatives from federal and provincial governments and concerned departments,” Prime Minister Office said in statement.