

Actions we can take for rejuvenation of the Bharalu River

- Avoid dumping garbage into the river.
- Stop flow of untreated sewage and effluent to the river.
- Set up Sewage Treatment Plant for cleaning domestic, municipal and industrial waste water before releasing to the river.
- Remove encroachment from the river and its banks.
- Restore the natural water ways connecting the river Bharalu with other rivers and wetlands of Guwahati city.
- Clean the river and dredge it to make it deeper and wider so that its water carrying capacity increases.
- Disseminate awareness among citizens about the value of clean and flowing rivers.
- Adopt appropriate law and policy for protecting, conserving and rejuvenating the Bharalu and other degraded rivers and wetlands of Assam.
- Mainstream management of the water bodies into a sustainable urban development plan for the city of Guwahati.

Benefits of rejuvenating the river Bharalu

- We will have a clean and vibrant river with a healthy microclimate.
- Aquatic flora, fauna and biodiversity will return to the river.
- Riparian environment and ecosystems will improve to provide better ecological services.
- Tourism potential can be created by developing river fronts.
- Intensity and hazards of urban flooding will get reduced.
- Ground water recharge and quality will get better.
- Ecohydrological health of the associated water bodies will also improve.
- Water security of the urban citizens will increase in the long-run.
- It will boost the transformation of Guwahati into a smart city in a real sense.

The Bharalu is one of the main waterbodies of Guwahati and a tributary to the Brahmaputra River. It serves as the natural drainage for stormwater runoff of the city. The river, which was once a pride of the city, has now become a symbol of shame for the urban elite citizenry. It is high time we take proper care of the river and restore it to a healthy state. The need of the hour is to prepare and execute an integrated time bound action plan incorporating views of experts and citizens for the rejuvenation of the river and its associated water bodies.



IT'S TIME FOR ACTION ; IT'S TIME TO SAVE THE BHARALU !

Created, published and propagated by the Water, Climate and Hazard Division, Aaranyak, Guwahati; Administrative Office, House Number # 13, Tatyak Ni Byeloni, Bishnu Rabha Park, Beltola Trail, Bhicupara Link Road, PO Beltola, Guwahati- 781028, Assam, India.

Email: info@aaranyak.org ; watch@aaranyak.org Telephone & Fax: +91-361-2230250/3161

www.aaranyak.org

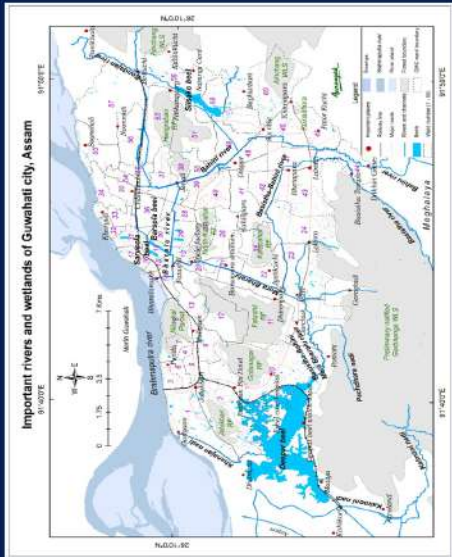
Aaranyak

THE BHARALU RIVER, GUWAHATI ONCE A PRISTINE WATER COURSE, NOW A DIRTY DRAIN! BHARALU CRIES FOR SURVIVAL! CAN WE LET IT DIE?



THE BHARALU RIVER

The Bharalu River originates from the Ri Bhoi district of Meghalaya and enters the Guwahati city through the South-eastern corner. The river then flows through the densely populated residential, industrial, and commercial areas of the city located in the central, eastern and southern parts flowing finally to the Brahmaputra at Bharalukhuli. Also known as the Bishnu-Bharalu, the Bharalu river catchment, approximately 120 sq. km, has experienced intense urbanisation in the last thirty years leading to acute pollution, and ecohydrological degradation. The river once presented a beautiful waterscape, was a source of potable water and a habitat of variety of fish and other aquatic flora and fauna. But now it is known as one of the most polluted rivers of India. The river, that used to provide recreation to the citizens of Guwahati, has now become a foul-smelling obnoxious drain carrying all the filth of the city.



How did it happen ?

- Dumping of garbage and waste water from household and commercial establishments on the river and its banks
- Release of untreated sewage and industrial effluent to the river
- Encroachment on the river and obstruction to its flow
- Abuse of the river by the citizens of Guwahati in various ways
- Lack of enforcement of laws and policies
- Want of scientific approach to river restoration and management



How has it affected us ?

- Polluted and stagnant water
- Visually unpleasant water body with a foul smell
- Unhealthy and unhygienic environment on river banks
- Possibility of contamination of sub-surface and ground water
- Sources of health hazards such as Malaria, Dengue, Encephalitis, Diarrhea, Hepatitis, etc.
- Loss of biodiversity resulting in a river without significant aquatic life
- Increased flooding due to the loss of water carrying capacity of the river
- Contribution to global warming and climate change due to emission of greenhouse gases from stagnant dirty and contaminated water
- Alienation of the river from society

What should we do now to reverse pollution and degradation?

Prepare and implement an integrated action plan for river restoration and sustainable management in consultation with experts and citizens incorporating appropriate scientific research and technological application focussing on hydrological connectivity of the Bharalu with other rivers and wetlands of Guwahati city.

