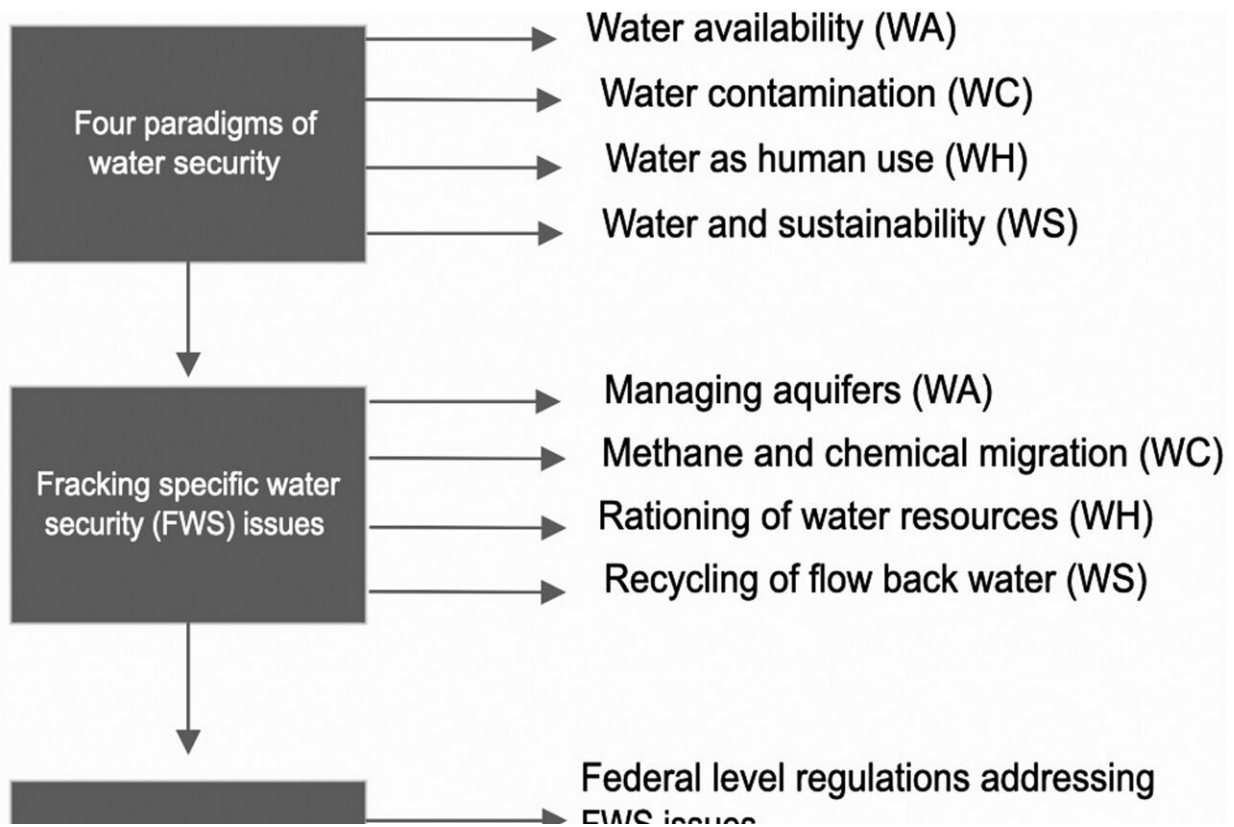


Fracking frenzy in India: A water crisis in the making?

August 14 2024, by Georgie Gould



Schematic flow of the argument. Credit: *Environmental Law Review* (2024). DOI: 10.1177/14614529241230680

India's plans to scale up fracking operations without robust regulations could spell disaster for the country's finely balanced water security,

according to research from the University of Surrey.

The research is [published](#) in the journal *Environmental Law Review*.

India is positioning [shale gas](#) as a key transitional energy source and has announced 56 [fracking](#) projects across six states. Despite the promise of energy independence, Surrey's study raises alarm bells about the country's preparedness to handle the unique water risks posed by fracking.

Hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, involves injecting high-pressure fluid into shale rock to release [natural gas](#). This process has been controversial worldwide due to its significant environmental impacts, particularly on water resources. The study points out that India's regulatory framework for fracking is currently based on rules designed for conventional drilling processes, which do not adequately address the distinct challenges fracking presents.

Shashi Kant Yadav, lead author from the University's School of Law, which has a specialism in environmental regulatory issues, and his co-authors identified four key fracking-specific water (FSW) issues that need urgent attention:

- **Water contamination:** Fracking fluids and the release of methane can contaminate groundwater supplies.
- **Water usage:** Fracking operations consume vast amounts of water, which can deplete local water supplies.
- **Wastewater management:** Handling and disposing of the contaminated water that returns to the surface is a complex challenge.

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