



Periodic Roundup: Environmental Law

JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2025

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Key Rulings from the Supreme Court, High Courts, and the National Green Tribunal

Union Territory of J&K & Anr v. Raja Muzaffar Bhat: Supreme Court upholds mandatory requirement of providing a replenishment study in a district survey report for sand mining projects

In its order dated August 22, 2025, the Supreme Court of India (“**Supreme Court**”) upheld the requirement to submit a district survey report (“**DSR**”) that includes a replenishment study for obtaining environmental clearance (“**EC**”) for sand mining projects.

In this case, the State Environmental Impact Assessment Authority (“**SEIAA**”) of Jammu and Kashmir (“**J&K**”) granted EC for a mining project although the J&K Union Territory Expert Appraisal Committee had pointed out that the DSR for the area had not been prepared in accordance with prescribed guidelines due to the non-availability of a replenishment study. Such grant of EC was challenged before the National Green Tribunal (“**NGT**”), which quashed the EC due to the absence of a valid DSR. Such order of the NGT was appealed before the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court upheld the decision of the NGT and reasoned that a DSR without a replenishment study is untenable because the purpose of a DSR, *i.e.*, to scientifically locate the place of sand mining, cannot be achieved without such a study. Accordingly, in the absence of a valid study with a DSR – being the foundation of ECs granted for sand mining projects, the SEIAA cannot assess if such project can be undertaken in a sustainable manner. *Read more [here](#).*

Chitrabhan Singh Rathore and others v. State of Chhattisgarh and others: NGT orders maintenance of minimum green belt in order to validate the expansion of a coal washery

In this case, the applicants challenged the operation and expansion of a coal washery before the NGT. The washery was allowed to expand by state authorities. The applicants alleged that such expansion caused air, dust, and water pollution; adverse health impacts; and damage to the agricultural produce of adjacent villages. The applicants also raised questions on the legality of the land acquired for the expansion of the coal washery.

The NGT analyzed the permissions granted by the relevant state authorities, and further, constituted a fact-finding committee to inspect the site and file a detailed report. The committee found that the expansion of the coal washery was being done in compliance with legal requirements. However, the committee noted the need for remedial measures to offset the environmental impact of such washery.

Accordingly, the NGT dismissed the petition while directing the respondents who operated the coal washery to maintain a minimum green belt and take appropriate actions for plant preservation and protection. It also directed local authorities to conduct regular health camps to check the health of locals periodically (within 30 day-intervals). *Read more [here](#).*

Ridhima Pandey v. Union of India: Supreme Court issues directions to prepare and submit a national carbon reduction roadmap for the power generation sector

In its order dated July 22, 2025, the Supreme Court considered the impact of power generation on climate change and carbon emissions and issued directions for preparing and submitting a national carbon reduction roadmap, specifically for the power sector.

The case emerged from the 2017 petition filed by Ridhima Pandey before the NGT, arguing that the Government of India had failed to take adequate steps to mitigate climate change.

The amici curiae’s submissions to the Supreme Court indicated that sectors such as construction,

crop residue management, and power generation contribute approximately 30%, 3%, and 8%, respectively, to India's overall carbon emissions. Accordingly, the Supreme Court concluded that, to address the issue of overall emissions contributed by the power sector, all relevant stakeholders must be made party to the proceedings. As a consequence, the Supreme Court impleaded the Central Electricity Authority (“CEA”) and the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (“CERC”) as respondent parties to the proceedings. The Supreme Court also directed the Ministry of Power (“MoP”) to convene a joint meeting with the CEA and the CERC to discuss a plan of action with respect to the reduction of emissions in the power sector and file a joint affidavit in this regard. *Read more [here](#).*

[Delhi Pollution Control Committee v. Lodhi Property Company Limited: Supreme Court upholds the power of pollution control boards to impose compensatory damages for restitution of harm caused to the environment](#)

Through its order dated August 4, 2025, the Supreme Court upheld the statutory power of regulators, specifically the pollution control boards, to impose and collect restitutionary and compensatory damages or require the furnishing of bank guarantees as an *ex-ante* measure towards potential or actual environmental damage.

The order was passed in relation to an appeal by the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (“PCC,” and such Delhi PCC, “DPCC”) against the judgement of the division bench of the Delhi High Court. The DPCC issued show cause notices to certain residential complexes, commercial complexes, and shopping malls for operating without valid consents to establish (“CTEs”) under the [Water \(Prevention and Control of Pollution\) Act, 1974](#) (“Water Act”) and [Air \(Prevention and Control of Pollution\) Act, 1981](#) (“Air Act”), and together with the Water Act, “Acts”). Eventually, the DPCC directed such entities to pay compensatory damages and furnish bank guarantees. An appeal was filed before a single judge-bench of the Delhi High Court, which held that the DPCC lacked the statutory mandate to impose such penalties. In an appeal before the division bench of the Delhi High Court, the decision of the single judge-bench was upheld.

These decisions were overturned by the Supreme Court, which held that the DPCC has the statutory power and authority to penalize entities with environmental damages. The Supreme Court observed that the powers of pollution control boards under the Acts are broad and *in pari materia* (i.e., on the same subject or matter) to the powers of the Central Government (“Government”) under Section 5, read with Section 3, of the [Environment \(Protection\) Act, 1986](#) (“EP Act”), which permits the Government to impose costs for remedial measures and direct the payment of certain amounts to be utilized for remedial measures. While considering the broad nature of powers under Sections 33A and 31A of the Acts, the Supreme Court held that statutory regulators, such as pollution control boards, are authorized to impose compensatory damages to remedy harm caused to the environment or demand the furnishing of bank guarantees to safeguard against potential damage to the environment. The Supreme Court clarified that there is a distinction between an action for environmental damages for restitution/remediation and the imposition of penalties/fines at the culmination of punitive action, where the latter requires a determination of guilt pursuant to statutorily prescribed procedures. *Read more [here](#).*

[In News Item appearing in Swadesh Bhopal dated 27.07.2024 v. Central Pollution Control Board: NGT issues directions to balance interests of jaggery farmers and the environment](#)

In this case, the NGT took *suo moto* cognizance of the alleged large-scale air pollution from jaggery-making units (‘kolhus’) operating across various districts in the state of Madhya Pradesh, notably Narsighpur, based on a news-report published in *Swadesh Bhopal*. The news-report alleged that many kolhus operate illegally, emit dense smoke and harmful gases, cause health and visibility hazards, and that the Madhya Pradesh Pollution Control Board was not taking cognizance of such complaints.

Based on air quality monitoring reports which revealed that particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) concentrations significantly exceeded the National Ambient Air Quality Standard, the NGT recognized that these units were a major source of air pollution. Accordingly, concerned state authorities were

directed to ensure strict enforcement of the guidelines issued by the Central Pollution Control Board (“CPCB”) for kolhus in [2018](#) and [2019](#). These guidelines mandate specific measures regarding location, fuel usage, furnace design, and a minimum stack height of 10 meters for kolhus.

On August 28, 2025, the Central Zone Bench of the NGT issued a series of directions to uphold the principle of ‘sustainable development’ by balancing the livelihood of jaggery farmers with environmental protection, including the relocation of kolhus to ensure that such units are not set up within 0.5 kilometers of residential areas, schools, hospitals, or sensitive zones, and promoting the adoption of cleaner technologies, such as the eco-friendly furnace developed by the Indian Institute of Petroleum (IIP), Dehradun,¹ together with governmental support for implementation. The NGT also called for a collaborative approach among state departments for the registration, monitoring, and compliance of these units, spreading awareness of cleaner practices. [Read more here.](#)

[M/s Shams Leather Finishers v. Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board: NGT dismisses an appeal challenging orders directing closure of a tannery and imposing environmental compensation](#)

Pursuant to its order dated July 4, 2025, the NGT dismissed an appeal against the order of the Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board (“UPPCB”) directing the closure of the appellant’s tannery due to non-compliance with environmental standards and payment of environmental compensation.

In this case, the appellant was engaged in the business of processing raw hides into finished leather, which was identified as a “grossly polluting industry”. Inspections conducted on the premises of the appellant’s tannery by a CPCB-approved third-party inspector revealed that the unit was operating in violation of environmental norms, with its primary effluent treatment plant (“PETP”) being non-functional, and untreated effluent being directly discharged into a drain outside the premises. Although a subsequent inspection found the PETP

to be functional, samples from its outlet still showed effluents exceeding prescribed standards. Accordingly, the UPPCB directed the closure of the plant and ordered the payment of environmental compensation.

The appellant challenged this order on the grounds that the procedure for inspection provided under the Water Act had been violated. The NGT dismissed the appeal holding that there were no procedural lapses and the appellant’s arguments were unsubstantiated. [Read more here.](#)

[Rohit Thakran v. State of Haryana and others: NGT applies the ‘Polluter Pays’ principle and imposes environmental compensation on Haryana Shehri Vikas Paradhikaran](#)

In this case, the applicant contended that two water bodies/reservoirs in Adampur Village, Gurugram had been damaged by Haryana Shehri Vikas Pradhikaran (“HSVP”) and the Town and Country Planning Department. Finding merit in the applicant’s submissions, the NGT concluded that HSVP had caused damage to the water bodies in question and the environment. Applying the ‘polluter pays’ principle and exercising its powers under Sections 15 and 20 of the [National Green Tribunal Act, 2010](#), the NGT directed HSVP to deposit an environmental compensation of INR 5 million with the Haryana SPCB within three months, which amount was to be utilized for remediation of the damaged environment and restoration of water bodies.

Further, the NGT directed the constitution of a committee to prepare a comprehensive rejuvenation plan for the affected water bodies. The NGT clarified that in the absence of an express statutory provision detailing the mode of computation for environmental compensation, it is empowered to utilize fundamental environmental principles to determine appropriate compensation. [Read more here.](#)

¹ Indian Institute of Petroleum (IIP), Dehradun is the constituent laboratory under the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (“CSIR,” an autonomous body under the Government’s Ministry of Science and Technology)

C. R. Jaya Sukin v. Union of India: Supreme Court upholds SIT findings on Vantara's compliance with wildlife, financial, and environmental laws

On September 15, 2025, the Supreme Court disposed writ petitions challenging the operations of the Greens Zoological Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre and Radhe Krishna Temple Elephant Trust (“**Vantara**”). The Supreme Court accepted the findings of the report of a Special Investigation Team (“**SIT**”) constituted in coordination with the Central Zoo Authority (CZA), the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the Enforcement Directorate (ED), the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), and the Additional Director General of the Directorate of Wildlife Preservation under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (“**MoEFCC**”).² The SIT report concluded that Vantara's operations did not contravene the provisions of the [Wild Life \(Protection\) Act, 1972](#), the [Recognition of Zoo Rules, 2009](#), the [Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002](#), or the [Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora](#) (CITES).

The Supreme Court observed that the processes relating to animal acquisition and import under Vantara's rescue and conservation programs had been undertaken pursuant to multi-tiered statutory approvals and valid permits. The Court found the allegations of wildlife smuggling and money laundering to be devoid of merit, particularly in light of the fact that multiple prior inquiries had arrived at similar conclusions. The SIT further affirmed that Vantara's facilities and practices exceeded prescribed standards for animal welfare and veterinary care. This conclusion was corroborated by the independent conferment of the “Global Humane Certified Seal of Approval” by the Global Humane Society. Moreover, the SIT found all allegations of misuse of carbon credits and water resources or financial impropriety to be unsubstantiated.

In reliance upon the SIT's conclusive determination, the Supreme Court dismissed all pending and future

² The Additional Director General of the Directorate of Wildlife Preservation is the designated national authority responsible for implementing the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) (i.e., the CITES Management Authority of India)

proceedings relating to such matters. *Read more [here](#).*

Vellore District Environment Monitoring Committee v. The District Collector: Supreme Court directs periodic environmental audit of CETPs and IETPs in Tamil Nadu

On September 16, 2025, the Supreme Court directed the constitution of a three-member Environmental Audit Committee (“**EAC**”) to undertake a comprehensive audit of eight common effluent treatment plants (“**CETPs**”) and their member units, encompassing 457 CETP member units and 27 integrated effluent treatment plants (IETPs) operating within Tirupattur, Vellore, and Ranipet districts of the state of Tamil Nadu.

The Supreme Court appointed two members from the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras (IIT), and nominated V. Nagarajan, Principal of the Jansons Institute of Technology, Coimbatore, to the EAC, and directed that audits be conducted at pre-determined intervals, with the first report to be submitted within six months. The Supreme Court further ordered the timely requisitioning of data from the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (“**TNPCB**”) and directed such state to provide necessary infrastructure to ensure the effective functioning of the EAC.

Pursuant to an affidavit dated August 28, 2025, the CPCB confirmed preparatory consultations with the TNPCB and the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI)³ – for finalizing audit protocols, including scientific water and salt balance studies, performance evaluations, and compliance frameworks, to address inadequately treated effluents. *Read more [here](#).*

In the matter of 'News Item titled Brari Nambal': NGT orders corrective measures to arrest ecological decline of a lagoon

On September 1, 2025, the NGT directed the J&K Lake Conservation and Management Authority (“**LCMA**”) and the Srinagar Municipal Corporation to undertake remedial measures for the restoration of

³ NEERI is a Government-funded research institute operating under the CSIR with a focus on water supply, sewage disposal, communicable diseases, and industrial pollution

Brari Nambal lagoon, situated between the Dal and Anchar lakes, and to reflect such compliance within their status reports.

The NGT had taken cognizance of the matter on the basis of a news-item published on April 13, 2025 in *Greater Kashmir*, which highlighted certain malfunctioning sewage treatment systems. Pursuant to such cognizance, the J&K Pollution Control Committee (“**J&KPCC**”) filed a detailed report on August 29, 2025, highlighting a reduction in the lagoon’s recorded area from 43 hectares to 41.71 hectares as per geographic information system data. Additionally, it was noted in such report that neither of the sewage treatment plants, one managed by the LCMA and the other commissioned by the Urban Environmental Engineering Department, conformed to prescribed effluent discharge standards.

Further, the J&KPCC observed that previous restoration initiatives under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation and the Prime Minister’s Development Package had not produced meaningful results owing to persistent encroachments, deficient sewage management, and lack of institutional coordination. Recording such persistent violations of environmental norms, the NGT emphasized the necessity for immediate corrective and coordinated intervention. *Read more [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).*

[Deepak v. State of Haryana and others: NGT considers regulatory control over ‘Ready Mix’ concrete plants in Haryana](#)

On September 3, 2025, the Principal Bench of the NGT recorded the report submitted by the Chief Secretary and the SPCB of Haryana (“**HSPCB**”) regarding compliance with regulatory measures for ‘ready mix’ concrete (“**RMC**”) plants operating in the state of Haryana.

The proceedings arose from an application alleging unregulated and polluting activities of RMC plants. Pursuant to the NGT’s directions, the Chief Secretary and HSPCB submitted their responses and a report outlining the regulatory framework and enforcement measures.

The report highlighted that RMC plants have been classified under the green category of industries under the consent management system pursuant to

the HSPCB’s Policy Order dated December 4, 2020, as amended on August 1, 2025. It was emphasized in such report that no RMC plant can operate without obtaining a valid CTE and consent to operate (“**CTO**”), respectively, under the Acts.

Further, the HSPCB informed the NGT that enforcement measures had been initiated against RMC plants operating without valid CTEs and CTOs. Closure directions under Section 33A of the Water Act and Section 31A of the Air Act had been issued against 21 RMC plants found to be operating without such valid consents, along with the imposition of environmental compensation. *Read more [here](#) and [here](#).*

[Devendra Phanikar Osuri v. Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board and others: NGT on cessation of illegal dumping of solid waste](#)

On September 3, 2025, the NGT directed the Narsapur Municipality, the Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board (“**APPCB**”), the Andhra Pradesh Coastal Zone Management Authority (“**APCZMA**”), and the District Magistrate, West Godavari, to undertake remedial measures for compliance with [the Coastal Regulation Zone \(“CRZ”\) Notification, 2019](#), and the [Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016](#) (“**Solid Waste Management Rules**”) within time-bound schedules.

The NGT had taken *suo motu* cognizance of the matter on the basis of an e-mail complaint dated December 18, 2023 alleging indiscriminate dumping of municipal solid waste (“**MSW**”) by Narsapur Municipality along the Vasista river flood bank. The Principal Bench of the NGT constituted a Joint Committee comprising the District Magistrate, the APPCB, the APCZMA, and CPCB, which submitted multiple reports confirming ongoing dumping in CRZ areas and non-compliance with statutory obligations.

The reports revealed that while biomining of 51,312 metric tonnes of legacy waste had been completed in June 2025, no designated processing yard was operational at the newly identified site owing to local opposition. As a result, fresh municipal waste continued to be generated without infrastructure for segregation, transport, or scientific processing. No leachate collection, fire prevention, dust suppression, or greenbelt development was in place,

contrary to the CPCB's previous directions issued in 2022.

Recording such persistent violations, the NGT emphasized the statutory duties of municipalities under Rule 15 of the Solid Waste Management Rules and held that partial compliance measures could not cure ongoing breaches of CRZ and environmental safeguards.

Accordingly, the NGT issued the following directions: (i) immediate cessation of dumping on riverbanks/CRZ areas; (ii) establishment of facilities for segregation, transportation, and processing of waste, with interim disposal at authorized waste-to-energy ("WtE") plants, within three months; (iii) installation of leachate treatment, fire prevention, dust suppression, and greenbelt development within three months; (iv) quarterly monitoring of river and groundwater quality by the APPCB with results published online; (v) levy of environmental compensation and coercive action by the APPCB in case of non-compliance; and (vi) submission of a consolidated compliance report within six months. *Read more [here](#).*

Lalitkumar Namdeo Chaudhari v. The Principal Secretary, Environment Department and others: NGT imposes monetary penalty for non-compliance with Solid Waste Management Rules

On September 3, 2025, the NGT directed the Faizpur Municipal Council of Jalgaon District in the state of Maharashtra to pay environmental damage compensation amounting to INR 146.50 million for non-compliance with sewage management obligations, and an additional INR 12.20 million for non-compliance in respect of solid waste and legacy waste management (calculated up to May 2025) owing to its indiscriminate dumping of MSW within the Dhadi river basin. The NGT directed such amounts to be deposited with the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board ("MPCB") within one month.

This NGT order came in lieu of earlier directions issued by the NGT on July 17, 2023, which had directed the concerned municipal council to adopt urgent measures for the purpose of ensuring compliance with the Solid Waste Management Rules and directed the MPCB to assess compensation for continued default. The 2016-2017 annual report by

the MPCB highlighted the lack of water treatment mechanisms adopted by the Faizapur Municipal Council on account of dumping.

Subsequently, an application filed on March 28, 2025 recorded that no significant steps had been taken by the concerned municipal council, and the MPCB had not furnished necessary calculations. Accordingly, the NGT imposed liability upon the Faizpur Municipal Council, affirming continuing violations and regulatory inaction. *Read more [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).*

Nitin Saxena v. MoEFCC and others: NGT directs disclosure and action on unauthorized tree felling in Bhopal

On September 15, 2025, the NGT issued directions to relevant authorities to place on record the order of the tree officer granting permission for the felling of 4,105 trees for the construction of the Kolar Six-Lane Road in Bhopal district in the state of Madhya Pradesh. Further, the NGT directed disclosures in respect of the following: (i) the amount, if any, deposited by the executing agency for compensatory plantation, (ii) the number of trees planted pursuant thereto, and (iii) the number of surviving trees resulting from such plantation efforts. Such NGT order was issued pursuant to two connected applications seeking restraint on the felling of trees for road projects, as per the provisions of the [Madhya Pradesh Vrikshon Ka Parirakshan \(Nagriya Kshetra\) Adhiniyam, 2001](#) (the "MP Rules").

The petitioner had argued that the permission for felling trees was issued by the Assistant Commissioner (Horticulture), Municipal Corporation, Bhopal, who is not a competent authority in this regard under the MP Rules. The Joint Committee appointed by the NGT submitted recommendations, including that a necessary approval under the [Forest \(Conservation\) Act, 1980](#) must be obtained for any road construction extending beyond 14.20 kilometers pursuant to a joint inspection with the relevant forest department for the additional length. The Joint Committee further recommended that compensatory afforestation should be undertaken by the forest department using the deposited amount within an aerial distance of five kilometers from the constructed road.

The Joint Committee's report explicitly observed that the felling of the 4,105 trees/shrubs by the public works department was carried out without the necessary statutory approval. Accordingly, the NGT directed the tree officer to clarify if delegation of powers was lawfully permissible and disclose the source of such authority. *Read more [here](#).*

Gajendra Rajpoot v. State of MP: NGT exonerates Lalitpur Power Generation of environmental violation allegations

On September 16, 2025, the NGT noted that Lalitpur Power Generation, located in Tikamgarh in the state of Madhya Pradesh, had been given a clean chit by the Joint Committee constituted by the NGT with respect to the alleged indiscriminate and illegal dumping of fly ash. The Joint Committee's findings established the absence of any environmental violations by the project proponent and alleged health concerns, leading the tribunal to hold that no further enforcement action was required.

While exonerating the project proponent, the NGT issued specific directions aimed at ensuring continued environmental compliance and ecological restoration. Such directions included strict adherence to the MoEFCC's [Ash Utilization Notification, 2021](#) relating to the disposal of fly ash. The proponent was directed to install wired fencing around all reclaimed sites and to undertake plantation on such sites using the '*Miyawaki*' plantation method (a technique for creating dense, fast-growing forests in small urban spaces by planting native trees and shrubs close together, mimicking natural ecosystems) to promote biodiversity and ecological restoration.

Further, the NGT directed that, in the event of filling pits or voids in the future, provision must be made for retaining water holes to serve as drinking sources for cattle and wildlife. The project proponent was also mandated to repair and maintain approach roads damaged by heavy vehicles while transporting fly ash. In addition, for the protection of ponds and water bodies within or adjoining low-lying areas, an earthen embankment, constructed in accordance with the cross-section specified by the CPCB, must be erected to prevent ash spillage and surface runoff. Moreover, the groundwater quality within a 500-meter radius of any low-lying filled area must be

monitored prior to such filling operations. *Read more [here](#).*

Regulatory Updates

MoEFCC notifies the Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management and Transboundary Movement) Amendment Rules, 2025

On July 1, 2025, the MoEFCC notified the Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management and Transboundary Movement) Amendment Rules, 2025 (“**HW Amendment Rules**”), which will come into effect on April 1, 2026.

The HW Amendment Rules introduce Chapter VIII to the Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management and Transboundary Movement) Rules, 2016 (“**HW Rules**”) in respect of Extended Producer Responsibility (“**EPR**”) for non-ferrous metal scrap. The HW Amendment Rules, *inter alia*, requires manufacturers, producers, collection agents, refurbishers, and recyclers to compulsorily register on the CPCB portal to engage in activities related to the generation, recycling, refurbishing, or handling of non-ferrous metal scrap. In addition, producers are required to recycle the non-ferrous metal scrap and fulfil the annual EPR targets specified in Schedule XI of the HW Rules in respect of products listed under Schedule-X of such rules. If producers fail to meet such EPR targets, they may fulfil the shortfall by purchasing EPR certificates from registered recyclers.

Pursuant to the HW Amendment Rules, the CPCB will establish an online portal for registration, filing of half yearly and annual returns, and reporting transactions related to EPR certificates and other relevant information. Manufacturers, producers, collection agents, refurbishers, and recyclers must file half yearly and annual returns on the CPCB portal to report their compliance with EPR targets. Failure to comply with the HW Amendment Rules, leading to environmental damage or public health risks, will result in the imposition of environmental compensation, in an amount determined based on guidelines issued by the CPCB. *Read more [here](#).*

MoEFCC notifies the Environment (Protection) Third Amendment Rules, 2025

On July 3, 2025, the MoEFCC notified the Environment (Protection) Third Amendment Rules, 2025 which inserts a new proviso in Schedule I of

the [Environment \(Protection\) Rules, 1986](#) (“**EP Rules**”) under serial number 5A, which relates to the standards for emission or discharge of environmental pollutants by thermal power plants. Pursuant to such amendment, the MoEFCC, in consultation with the CEA and the CPCB, is empowered to exempt certain thermal power plants from the requirement to install cooling towers through a reasoned order in writing. *Read more [here](#).*

MoEFCC notifies the Environment (Protection) Fourth Amendment Rules, 2025

On July 11, 2025, the MoEFCC notified the Environment (Protection) Fourth Amendment Rules, 2025 (“**EP Amendment**”), revising compliance timelines for emission standards under Schedule I of the EP Rules for coal and lignite-based thermal power plants. Pursuant to the EP Amendment, the CPCB is to constitute a taskforce comprising representatives from the MoEFCC, the MoP, the CEA, and the CPCB to categorize thermal power plants into three categories, *i.e.*, Categories A, B, and C, respectively, based on their location and pollution impact.

The EP Amendment also introduces differentiated compliance timelines for thermal power plants emitting sulphur dioxide (SO₂) and other pollutants. Thermal power plants declared to retire before December 31, 2030 may be exempted from meeting specified standards for SO₂ emissions upon providing an undertaking to the CPCB and the CEA, while others must comply within timelines ranging from 2027 to 2029 depending on their category. Non-compliant and non-retiring thermal power plants will be liable to pay environmental compensation ranging between INR 0.20-0.40 per unit of electricity generated. *Read more [here](#).*

MoEFCC notifies the Environment Protection (Management of Contaminated Sites) Rules, 2025

On July 24, 2025, the MoEFCC notified the Environment Protection (Management of Contaminated Sites) Rules, 2025 (“**EP Contamination Rules**”), which, *inter alia*, provides a detailed procedure for identifying, assessing, and remediating contaminated sites.

The EP Contamination Rules do not cover sites contaminated solely by radioactive waste or mining operations, oil spills, or solid waste from dump sites, since these are covered by other relevant legislation. However, if a site is contaminated by a mixture of radioactive waste, mining operations, oil spills, or solid waste from dump sites, and the contamination exceeds the specified response level, the remediation of such sites will be covered under the EP Contamination Rules.

Pursuant to the EP Contamination Rules, the process related to the identification of contaminated sites involves local bodies or district administrations identifying such sites either on their own or following complaints from the public and submitting a list of such suspected contaminated sites to the concerned SPCB or state PCC (together, “**State Board**”). Such authorities can also identify suspected contaminated sites through consent management systems under the Acts. Pursuant to such identification, the State Board will conduct preliminary assessments of these suspected sites within 90 days of receiving the list submitted. If contamination levels exceed the screening levels, the State Board may classify such sites as “probable contaminated sites” and submit the list to the CPCB. After a detailed site assessment of such probable contaminated sites, the sites may be listed as contaminated or delisted if contamination is below response levels. The revised list of contaminated sites will then be published for public comments, followed by the publication of a final list of contaminated sites on a centralized online portal and local newspapers.

The remediation of contaminated sites involves the State Board selecting a reference organization upon the publication of the list of contaminated sites and identifying the person responsible for the contamination of such sites. The State Board will direct the identified responsible person to prepare a remediation plan and undertake remediation, at its own cost, through the reference organization selected by the State Board. Upon approval of the remediation plan in accordance with the guidelines issued by the CPCB, the responsible person will be required to initiate remediation of the contaminated site pursuant to such approved plan and furnish half-yearly progress reports to the State Board and the CPCB until the completion of remediation.

After remediation, the State Board will notify the remediated site, specify permissible land uses or restrictions, and furnish such report to the CPCB. The State Board and the CPCB are empowered to impose environmental compensation on persons failing to comply with the EP Contamination Rules for sites which pose a risk to human health and the environment. Additionally, both the State Board and the CPCB can take action under various environmental laws, such as the EP Act and the Acts, as applicable. Pursuant to the EP Contamination Rules, the CPCB has identified 103 contaminated sites across India, out of which remediation activities have been initiated at seven sites. *Read more [here](#) and [here](#).*

MoEFCC notifies the revised methodology for calculating green credits in respect of tree plantation activities under Rule 5(1) of the Green Credit Rules, 2023

On August 29, 2025, in consultation with the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education – a registered society and autonomous body which acts as the administrator, the MoEFCC notified a revised methodology (“**Revised Methodology**”) for calculating ‘green credits’ (*i.e.*, units of incentives provided for a specified activity that delivers a positive impact on the environment) in respect of tree plantation activities under the [Green Credit Rules, 2023](#) (“**GC Rules**”). The Revised Methodology supersedes the earlier methodology issued in this regard under Rule 5(1) of the GC Rules pursuant to a notification dated February 22, 2024.

Earlier, the GC Rules had been issued by the MoEFCC under the EP Act through a notification dated October 12, 2023. Pursuant to the GC Rules, the calculation of green credits in respect of any activity undertaken will be based on the equivalence of resource requirement, parity of scale, scope, size, and other relevant parameters required to achieve the desired environmental outcome.

In general, green credits can be generated under the Green Credit Program (“**GC Program**”) under the GC Rules, and such credits are tradable on a domestic market platform – although green credits generated or procured to fulfill any obligation in compliance of an existing law will not be tradable. Pursuant to the GC Program, any person or entity may take any specified measure for the purpose of

protection, preservation, or conservation of the environment, including in respect of the following activities: tree plantation, water management, sustainable agriculture, waste management, air pollution reduction, mangrove conservation and restoration, ecomark label development, and sustainable building and infrastructure.

Launched at the national level under the GC Rules to incentivize environmentally 'positive' actions among various stakeholders by leveraging a market-based approach independent of the Carbon Credit Trading Scheme, 2023 under the Energy Conservation Act, 2001, the GC Program is expected to encourage (i) industries, companies, and other entities to meet their existing obligations under law, and (ii) other persons and entities to undertake voluntary environmental measures by generating or buying green credits.

Pursuant to the Revised Methodology, applicants can claim green credits after completing a minimum of five years of restoration activities on degraded forest land parcel(s) and achieving a minimum 40% canopy density on such lands. Green credits will be calculated based on the vegetation status - including the change in canopy density and the number of surviving trees – where one green credit will be awarded for each surviving tree older than five years. Green credits generated for compensatory afforestation or tree plantation under the GC Program will be non-tradable and non-transferable, except in case of transfers between a holding company and its subsidiary companies.

Green credits generated under the GC Program may be exchanged once for specified purposes, including to fulfill compensatory afforestation obligations in cases relating to diversion of forest land for non-forestry purposes as specified under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 and its rules/guidelines; meeting legal corporate social responsibility (CSR) requirements pursuant to costs incurred towards forest restoration activities; or complying with obligations related to tree plantation under any project approvals granted in accordance with applicable law.

Once exchanged for such specified purposes, the green credits concerned will be considered extinguished to the extent they are used. Green credits generated in lieu of tree plantation under the

GC Rules may be used for reporting under environmental, social and governance (“ESG”) leadership indicators pursuant to provisions of any existing law. *Read more [here](#).*

GSPCB introduces self-certification and simplifies processes for renewal of CTE and CTO certificates

Pursuant to a circular dated July 11, 2025, the Goa SPCB (“GSPCB”) introduced several measures to simplify compliance and improve efficiency in respect of CTE and CTO certificate issuances. Among other things, such GSPCB circular introduces a requirement for self-certification for all project proponents/industries having a capital investment of up to INR 5 million. For industries with capital investments exceeding such amount, third-party inspections/certifications/environmental audits by empaneled agencies are now required.

Further, such GSPCB circular permits auto-renewals of CTO and CTE certificates, subject to the fulfillment of certain conditions. Regardless of capital investment and without the need to pay further fees, project proponents can now apply for an auto-renewal of their existing CTE certificate for an additional three-year period by submitting a requisition letter in the prescribed format, and the CTE certificate previously granted. Auto-renewals of CTO certificates have also been introduced for all industrial sectors regardless of capital investment. Such auto-renewal provisions under the GSPCB circular do not apply in case of closure orders, court cases pending before the NGT or any other judicial or appellate authority, or other compliance issues. *Read more [here](#).*

CPCB issues comprehensive guidelines for incineration-based WtE plants for MSW management

On August 18, 2025, the CPCB released comprehensive guidelines in respect of solid waste management through WtE plants, driven by the need to address persistent operational, environmental, and social challenges, including emissions, non-compliance with environmental norms, and public resistance due to health concerns. Recognizing incineration-based WtE plants as a technically viable solution for the treatment of non-recyclable, high-calorific value MSW in urban areas facing space constraints and landfill issues, such CPCB

guidelines aim to establish a clear and enforceable regulatory framework. Incineration-based WtE plants are designed to thermally process waste to recover energy as electricity or heat while reducing its volume. In addition, such plants help ease landfill burdens and are in alignment with the objectives of the Solid Waste Management Rules – which encourage energy recovery from non-recyclable waste.

Industries such as WtE plants, which fall under the sub-category of “Essential Environmental Services for Domestic Waste”, are classified as ‘Blue’ industries. The CPCB guidelines apply to all existing, under-construction, and proposed, incineration-based WtE plants, urban local bodies responsible for municipal waste management, and regulatory authorities such as the State Board. *Read more [here](#).*

Environment Audit Rules, 2025

Issued and notified by the MoEFCC under the EP Act, the Environment Audit Rules, 2025 (“**Audit Rules**”) came into force on August 29, 2025. Environmental audits undertaken pursuant to the Audit Rules are expected to enable the fulfillment of environmental conservation objectives under the [Lifestyle for Environment \(LiFE\) principles](#) and assist in compliance with [ESG obligations](#) imposed by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

The Audit Rules establish a system for certifying a registered environment auditor (“**REA**”) – an entity authorized to conduct environmental audits. REAs will be responsible for collecting and analyzing environmental samples for scientific assessments, verifying project data submitted through self-reporting mechanisms, assessing conformity with conditions specified in ECs, and supporting the implementation of other regulatory frameworks under Green Credit Registry (under the GC Program of the GC Rules), ecomark certification (*i.e.*, an eco-labeling certification for products that meet specific environmental and quality standards throughout their lifecycle, awarded by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), and implemented and administered in partnership with the CPCB), and CRZ compliance.

Registration mechanisms for REAs include the certification of environmental auditors based on prior

learnings and through a national certification examination. The detailed procedure for these certifications will be issued by the Government through appropriate guidelines. The certification granted to an REA will be valid for five years unless revoked earlier. Such revocation may occur due to professional misconduct, which includes misrepresentation, suppression, concealment, or distortion of facts during the discharge of duties, or a breach of confidentiality obligations. Any REA found guilty of such instances may be debarred from acting as an REA, or their licence may be suspended, or they may be penalized under the EP Act.

The Audit Rules also establish an Environment Audit Designated Agency (EADA) to oversee the entire audit ecosystem, ranging from the registration of qualified professionals and firms, to the monitoring of performance and facilitation of capacity building. *Read more [here](#).*

MoEFCC issues notification for the constitution of the National Designated Authority under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986

On August 22, 2025, the MoEFCC issued a notification constituting the National Designated Authority (“**NDA**,” and such notification, “**NDA Notification**”) for the implementation of Article 6 of the [Paris Agreement](#), in supersession of its earlier notification dated May 30, 2022. Such Article 6 provides a framework for Parties to the Paris Agreement to cooperate towards the implementation of their nationally determined contributions (“**NDCs**”) through carbon markets and non-market modalities in order to achieve and enhance their NDC targets, increase climate ambition, promote sustainable development, and safeguard environmental integrity.

The NDA Notification was issued pursuant to a recent decision at the Conference of Parties (COP), which requires each such Party to the Paris Agreement to establish and notify an authority for participating in mitigation mechanisms under Article 6 of such agreement.

The NDA has been constituted with the Secretary of the MoEFCC as its chairperson, supported by senior officials from the MoEFCC, and representatives from key ministries including those related to External

Affairs, Finance, Industry and Commerce, New and Renewable Energy, Power, Agriculture, Science and Technology, Petroleum and Natural Gas, Civil Aviation, Ports and Shipping, and others, along with NITI Aayog, the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), and the Government's National Communication (NATCOM) project – a unit under the MoEFCC funded by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) for communicating to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) about anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) from various sources.

The functions of the NDA include: (i) issuing directions on matters relating to Article 6 of the Paris Agreement; (ii) recommending eligible activities for the trading of emission reduction units under Articles 6.2 and 6.4 of the Paris Agreement; (iii) evaluation, approval, and authorization of projects to ensure environmental integrity and sustainable development; (iv) authorization of emission reduction units for use towards NDCs and other international mitigation purposes; (v) maintenance of a national registry of approved projects and emission reductions under the Indian carbon market; (vi) transitioning eligible pre-2020 clean development mechanism (CDM) credits; (vii) recommending guidance documents and principles to the Government; and (viii) addressing matters relating to Article 6.8 of the Paris Agreement. *Read more [here](#).*

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