



Environment Protection (Management of Contaminated Sites) Rules, 2025

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Why in News?

The **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** has notified the **Environment Protection (Management of Contaminated Sites) Rules, 2025** under the [Environment Protection Act \(EPA\), 1986](#).

- These rules legally codify the procedure for identifying, assessing, and remediating chemically [contaminated sites](#).

What are the Key Provisions of the Environment Protection (Management of Contaminated Sites) Rules, 2025?

- **Definition of Contaminated Sites:** Contaminated sites refer to locations with **historical hazardous waste dumping, leading to soil, groundwater, and surface water contamination**.
 - Examples include **old landfills, spill sites, and chemical waste dumps**.
- **Identification and Reporting Mechanism:**
 - **District Administration** must submit **half-yearly reports** on suspected contaminated sites to the **State Pollution Control Board** or designated authority.
 - State Pollution Control Boards or designated expert bodies must conduct a preliminary assessment of suspected sites within **90 days**, followed by a **detailed investigation in the next 90 days**.
 - If the site contains any of the **189 hazardous chemicals listed under the [2016 Hazardous Waste Rules](#)** above safe limits, it is officially declared **contaminated**.
 - Names and details of such sites are to be **publicised; access restrictions** imposed.
- **Remediation Planning:** A **reference organisation (expert body)** will draft a **remediation plan** specific to the site.
- **Liability and Cost Recovery:** **Polluters identified as responsible** ([Polluters pay principle](#)) will bear the cost of clean-up.
 - If polluters are untraceable or unable to pay, **cost-sharing between Centre and States** is mandated.
- **Criminal Liability:** Any **loss of life or environmental damage** caused by contamination will attract penalties under the [Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023](#).
- **Exclusions:** These rules exclude contamination from radioactive waste, mining operations, marine oil pollution, and solid waste dumps. As each of these is already covered under separate, specific laws.

Environment (Protection) Act, 1986

- The EPA, 1986 was passed by the Parliament in the wake of the **Bhopal Gas Tragedy**, highlighting the urgent need for a comprehensive law to protect the environment and public health.
- EPA enacted under [Article 253 of the Constitution](#) (empowers the Parliament to enact laws for implementing international agreements) to fulfill international commitments made at the [1972 Stockholm Conference](#).
- The Act empowers the Central Government to **prevent, control, and respond to environmental pollution**. It allows the Centre to set standards, regulate emissions, shut down polluting industries, and control essential services.
- **Article 48A** directs the State to protect the environment, forests, and wildlife, while **Article 51A** makes it the duty of every citizen of India to protect and improve the natural environment.

UPSC Civil Services Exam, Previous Year Questions (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. Consider the following statements: (2019)

The Environment Protection Act, 1986 empowers the Government of India to:

1. State the requirement of public participation in the process of environmental protection, and the procedure and manner in which it is sought.
2. Lay down the standards for emission or discharge of environmental pollutants from various sources.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (b)