

# YEAR END REVIEW: MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE.

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Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

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The year 2018 was a testimony to India's leadership and commitment on environmental issues as the Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi was awarded the United Nation's highest environmental honour - **Champions of the Earth Award**. The UN recognised the Prime Minister in the Policy Leadership category for his bold environmental leadership on the global stage. His pioneering work in championing the International Solar Alliance where the country heralded a global coalition of nations to tackle climate change by leveraging the power of solar energy which has been lauded globally. Some of the major highlights of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in the year 2018 are outlined below:-

### World Environment Day:

Considering India's global leadership in environmental protection and climate change sectors, the UNEP had chosen India to be the global host for World Environment Day (WED) on 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2018.

The main event was organized in Delhi and included a series of conferences in Vigyan Bhawan, a mega exhibition in Rajpath Lawns behind Vigyan Bhawan and the concluding event was graced by the Hon'ble Prime Minister and dignitaries from UN also attended the event. This WED, 2018 focused on "**Plastic Pollution**" which is one of the most challenging environmental concerns today.

- i. single-use plastic pollution was being done through Eco-clubs in States/UTs. Some of the major activities undertaken were cleaning of identified beaches, river stretches and Mini-marathon on 3.6.2018. In consultation with State Nodal Agencies implementing the Eco-club programme, 24 beaches and 24 river stretches were identified for intensive cleaning drives which began with a mega inaugural ceremony at Goa on 14.5.2018. Students from various schools and colleges participated in this drive. Various cultural programmes, quiz competition, debate, awareness rallies etc were organized. Besides the above mentioned cleanliness drives, Mini Marathon was held at Vinay Marg, New Delhi on 3.6.2018 to spread awareness on proper utilization of plastic. The marathon was attended by around 10,000 Ecoclub students from Delhi - NCR. Also mini- marathons were also organized in other five cities namely Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Gangtok, Bhopal and Bhubaneswar.

### Green Good Deeds Campaign:

Green Good Deeds, the societal movement launched by the Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Dr Harsh Vardhan to protect environment and promote good living

in the country, has earned worldwide accolades.

**“Green Good Deeds” is an idea to take environmental awareness to the people and get them involved. Formally launched in January 2018, the campaign lauds small positive actions performed by individuals or organisations to strengthen the cause of environmental protection. The Ministry has drawn up a list of over 600 Green Good Deeds and asked people to alter their behaviour to Green Good Behaviour to fulfill their Green Social Responsibility. These small, positive actions, to be performed by individuals or organisation to strengthen the cause of environmental protection have been enlisted on a mobile App called Dr Harsh Vardhan App.**

- t. spread awareness amongst the general public of India about Green Good Deeds, MoEFCC has prepared high quality Audio-visual creatives (2 video spots : GGD plea and GGD montage + 3 audio jingles: No Plastic, Air Pollution and Save Water) in collaboration with Shri Amitabh Bachhan. MoEFCC has released the same on various media platforms viz. TV News Channels, Digital Cinemas, FM Channels, Doordarshan, Lok Sabha and Raj TV etc. .

**Students under Eco-clubs are implementing the Green Good Deeds (GGDs) initiative which seeks to transform the people’s behaviour into Green Good Behaviour and fulfil Green Social Responsibility. *A ten point agenda has been developed to implement the GGDs through Nodal agencies in State/UTs implementing the Ecoclub programme.* Various activities covered under GGDs like cleanliness drives within the school campus, carry out waste segregation into biodegradable and non-biodegradable, paper re-cycling and conducting tree plantation drives etc are being implemented across the country by the students. The green attitude is visible in their actions. Further GREEN GOOD DEEDS event was successfully organised on 6.10.2018 at India International Science Festival (IISF) 2018 held at Indira Gandhi Prathishthan, Lucknow. Event was inaugurated by Dr. A.K. Mehta Additional Secretary, MoEFCC. Exhibition showcasing the success stories under Ecoclub programme. Around 200 Ecoclub students from Uttar Pradesh participated in the Drawing and Essay competitions.**

### **Clean Air Campaign:**

- i. Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Dr. Harsh Vardhan launched a joint campaign, with Delhi Government, NDMC, CPCB and other municipal agencies, for clean air in Delhi from 10-23 Feb 2018. The campaign is aimed to sensitise ground-level functionaries and general public to enforce the habit of environmental protection. 66 teams were formed led jointly by one officer each from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and one officer from the State Government of Delhi. These officers were assisted by officers from Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) and respective municipal corporations. The teams were provided with

check lists focussed on activities on mitigation of pollution, including effective measures for dust mitigation, solid waste management and prevention of garbage burning. Keeping in view of the success of the campaign, second round was also held for 10 days in November 2018.

### **Green Skill Development Programme (GSDP)**

In order to skill youth in environment, forest and wildlife sectors and enable them to be gainfully employed/ self-employed, MoEF&CC launched a Green Skill Development Programme (GSDP) in June, 2017 on a pilot basis. The programme is now being scaled to an all India level. More than 30 skilling programmes are being conducted during 2018-19, covering diverse fields- pollution monitoring (air/ water/ soil), STP/ETP/CETP operation, waste management, forest management, water budgeting & auditing, conservation of river dolphins, wildlife management, para taxonomy, including PBRs, mangroves conservation, bamboo management and livelihood generation.

During 2018-19 from August till date, 944 candidates have successfully completed the different skilling courses. Currently, 568 candidates are enrolled in various ongoing courses. The objective of creating a pool of Master Trainers during 2018-19 is also being met as 283 of the successful trainees have offered to be Master Trainers, who would skill more youth across the country in various skill sets, related to environment, forest and wildlife. A mobile app giving information about the training programme being conducted under GSDP, list of the Institutes offering these programme and other details has been also launched.

### **Green (Harit) Diwali**

- ii. undertook a “Harit Diwali - Swasth Diwali” campaign which was launched on 22.10.2018 in MoEF&CC wherein around 500 students from schools in Delhi/NCR region participated. Advisories were issued to Nodal agencies implementing the Eco-club programme to celebrate environmental-friendly Diwali include cleaning of houses, renovating and decorating homes with diyas, lighting up candles, lamps; donating clothes/books to needy; making colourful rangoli etc.

### **Reclassification of Bamboo & Removal from Category of Tree:**

The Government of India has made concerted efforts to promote bamboo cultivation right from enabling regulatory provision, to supporting the bamboo plantation on a large scale by launching newly restructured National Bamboo Mission with a budget outlay of Rs 1290 crore.

The amendment in Indian Forest Act, 1927, will facilitate the inter-state movement of bamboo, as there will be no requirement of permit during transit from one State to another. It will ultimately result in reducing the gap of availability of resources from bamboo-surplus states to bamboo-deficit states. As a result, both producers and consumers will be benefitted.

### **Climate Change:**

The Climate Change Division of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) looks after the issues related to climate change including the international negotiations and domestic policies and actions. India is a Party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Paris Agreement and Kyoto Protocol. The Division is also responsible for submission of National Communications (NATCOMs) and the Biennial Update Reports (BURs) to UNFCCC. Several domestic programmes/ schemes have been initiated in the recent years for addressing climate change. Some key initiatives include the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC), National Adaptation Fund on Climate Change (NAFCC), Climate Change Action Programme (CCAP) and State Action Plan on Climate Change (SAPCC) among others. In order to create and strengthen the scientific and analytical capacity for assessment of climate change in the country, different studies have also been initiated under CCAP.

During the year 2018, many important bilateral and multilateral meetings and negotiations on climate change were held in the run up to the 24<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC (COP-24), in which Hon'ble Minister, EF&CC and senior officials of the Ministry participated. The Ministry hosted international meetings of the Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDC) on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2018 and BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India and China) countries on 19<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> November 2018. The meeting has helped in strengthening and securing common interest and positions of the developing countries in the run up to COP-24 to the UNFCCC.

Twenty Fourth Conference of Parties (COP-24) in Katowice, Poland was successful in adopting Paris Agreement Work Programme. The conference was significant one which focused on other key issues including the conclusion of 2018 Facilitative Talanoa Dialogue and the stocktake of Pre-2020 actions implementation and ambition. India engaged positively and constructively in all the negotiations while protecting India's key interests including recognition of different starting points of developed and developing countries; flexibilities for developing countries and consideration of principles including equity and Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC). India re-affirmed its commitment to multilateralism and international cooperation and its image has undergone a positive change

An India Pavilion was also setup during Twenty Fourth Conference of Parties (COP 24) of UNFCCC held in Katowice, Poland from December 3<sup>rd</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The theme of pavilion this year was 'One World One Sun One Grid' based on an ambitious target set by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi during the first assembly of the International Solar Alliance on October 2018 that 40 percent of its installed power capacity will be from non-fossil fuels by 2030. Eminent dignitaries from the other participating countries of Japan, Qatar, Austria, Maldives, UK and the host country Poland visited the India Pavilion and gave remarkable feedback. The India Pavilion also became a platform to bring together 43 different stakeholder institutions including Central Ministries, State Governments/ Departments, Think Tanks, Civil Society Organisations, etc. to showcase their climate change action taken in various sectors through 20 side events. A footfall of about 14-15,000 people at India pavilion during the course of COP-24.

In 2018, under National Adaptation Fund on Climate Change (**NAFCC**), a total amount of Rs. **42.16 crore** has been released to seven (07) ongoing projects to support adaptation activities in Rajasthan, Sikkim, H.P., Tamil Nadu, Mizoram, Manipur and Kerala. Till date 27 projects (including one regional project) have been approved at a total cost of Rs. 673.63 crore and Rs. 369 crore have been sanctioned.

Under Climate Change Action Programme (**CCAP**) scheme, a total amount of **Rs. 2.15 crore** has been released for capacity building in Madhya Pradesh, Nagaland, Telangana and two demonstration projects in Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh respectively. Ministry is also implementing two scientific programmes under CCAP namely, National Carbonaceous Aerosols Programme (NCAP) and Long Term Ecological Observatories (LTEO).

India will be submitting its Second Biennial Update Report (**BUR**) to **UNFCCC** in **late December 2018** to comply with the reporting obligations under the convention. The report among others, contains information on the national GHG inventory for the year 2014.

### **Some Other important Initiatives/Policy decisions during - 2018**

- A meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Environment Pollution of Rivers including Spring-fed Rivers and its impact on ecology was held.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> India- Morocco Joint Working Group meeting was held in February, 2018 to serve as a platform for both the countries to explore different areas in the field of Environment for cooperation.
- A new Indo-German Technical Cooperation project on Human-Wildlife conflict mitigation in India was conceptualized. The project is commissioned by Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and is being implemented by MoE&CC.
- OM dated 27.4.2018 regarding exemption from public consultation for the projects/ activities located within the Industrial Estates/ Parks was issued.
- Powers have been delegated to concerned SEIAs and SEACs to appraise and accord Environmental Clearance for Category B violation proposals.  
Vide the notification dated 6<sup>th</sup> April, 2018 a six-month opportunity for all mining project which were granted EC under the EIA Notification 1994 but not obtained EC for expansion/ modernization/amendment given in the light of order passed by Hon'ble Supreme Court.
- Prior Environment Clearance for all minerals (Major and Minor) irrespective of size of mine lease has been made mandatory for Aravali Region.
- Under National River Conservation Plan (NRCP), administrative approval for expenditure of Rs. 94.66 Crores has been granted.
- *Cabinet note for adoption of a strategy for increasing tree cover outside forests under tripartite agreement between land owning agencies, concerned State Govts. And public and private organizations for taking up plantation on non- forest government land has been*



*drafted and circulated for consultation.*

- Cabinet note for guidelines for public participation in an afforestation of degraded forest have been circulated for consultation.
- An MoU between MoEF&CC, GOI and Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment, Govt. Of the Republic of Cyprus on cooperation in the areas of environment was signed.
- The National Action Plan of the Central Asian Flyway, one of the nine flyways in the world, has been launched by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate change which will enable effective management of the migratory birds, connected wetlands and the entire ecosystem associated with it.
- In order to reduce cost, time and for streamlining activities of Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife(SCNBWL), the Wildlife Division has initiated video-conferencing of all issues related to SCNBWL. It has resulted in prompt perusal of issues related to Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife.
- In order to train the Veterinary doctors in wildlife disease management, the Ministry has initiated a training course for the Veterinary doctors of the country in wildlife disease management at the Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Izzatnagar, Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh.
- *To stop burning of crop residue that may lead to higher level of air pollution in Delhi NCR especially during adverse meteorological conditions in early winter in North India, the Central Government has approved a new Central Sector Scheme on 'Promotion of Agricultural Mechanization for in-situ management of Crop Residue in the States of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and NCT of Delhi for the period from 2018-19 and 2019-20 with an outlay of Rs. 1151.80 crore. This year's allocation of Central funds of Rs. 591.65 crore has been released to the concerned States except Delhi.*
- *A web-based portal currently provides real-time AQI, air quality status, information on likely health impacts associated with AQI values for the cities. Air quality bulletins are also issued on daily basis.*
- The Central Government had notified a Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) on 12th January 2017 for Delhi and NCR, which comprises measures such as prohibition on entry of trucks into Delhi; ban on construction activities, introduction of odd and even scheme for private vehicles, shutting of schools, closure of brick kilns, hot mix plants and stone crushers; ban on diesel generator sets, garbage burning in landfills and plying of visibly polluting vehicles etc. The nature, scope and rigor of measures to be taken is linked to levels of pollution viz. severe plus or emergency, severe, very poor, moderate to poor and moderate, after due consideration by authorities concerned. The actions are to be implemented in the entire NCR.
- A comprehensive set of directions have been issued under section 18 (1) (b) of Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1986 for implementation of 42/31 measures to mitigate air pollution in major cities including Delhi and NCR cities comprising of control and mitigation measures related to vehicular emissions, re-suspension of road dust and other

fugitive emissions, bio-mass/municipal solid waste burning, industrial pollution, construction and demolition activities, and other general steps.

- Notification of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Pet Shop) Rules, 2018 to make pet shops accountable and prevent the cruelty incurred to animals there.
- In the financial year 2018-19 funds earmarked under the NPCA scheme for conservation and management of wetlands and lakes is Rs. 66 crore. A total of Rs. 34.22 crore is allotted for conservation and management of 5 lakes in 4 states and Rs. 27.344 crore for 35 wetlands in 12 States & 1 UT during the time-frame of 01.01.18 - 31.12.18. Also, an amount of Rs. 41.086 lakh has been allotted for R&D and other activities related to the conservation and management of wetlands and lakes under NPCA.
- ***WCCB received UNEP Award: Excellent work done in combating trans-boundary environmental crime by WCCB has been recognized by United Nation Environment Programme by awarding Asia Environment Enforcement Awards, 2018. The Asia Environment Enforcement Awards publicly recognize and celebrate excellence in enforcement by government officials and institutions/teams combating trans-boundary environmental crime in Asia. WCCB has been conferred this award in the Innovation category. WCCB has adopted innovative enforcement techniques that have dramatically increased enforcement of trans-boundary environmental crimes in India. Notably it has developed an online Wildlife Crime Database Management System to get real time data in order to help analyze trends in crime and devise effective measures to prevent and detect wildlife crimes across India. In order to involve the public in the fight against wildlife crime, WCCB has also developed a scheme to enroll willing persons as WCCB Volunteers.***

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