



ECOBUZZ

A BUZZ TO THE GREEN FUTURE!!

FEBRUARY'2025 EDITION

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Greetings from Faculty of Law, GLS University!

After a successful series on Sustainable Development Goals, I am very happy to learn that for the next EcoBuzz series we explore the five basic elements of nature –the *panchamahabhutas* – which inhere the properties of earth (prithvi), water (jala), fire (tejas), wind (vayu) and space (akasha).

Reconnecting to the nature outside of us can help us reconnect to our true, inner nature. When we spend more time outside in the elements, we start to rebalance ourselves physically, mentally and energetically.

The current edition of EcoBuzz shall focus on the element “Prithvi” – the Earth. It’s surprising just how easily we can lose connection to the earth. Spending long periods indoors, driving cars and fixating on screens all creates a disconnection between ourselves and the earth. The longer we’re disconnected from the earth and the outside world, the more we forget our interconnected role within nature. Thus, the more we tend to focus on ‘I, me, my’ – the ego.

Our Mother Earth is currently dealing with a wide range of issues, despite efforts in recent decades to address environmental challenges. Due to the terrifying pace at which the Environment is being exploited the legal framework for addressing environmental issues at the global and domestic levels seems inadequate without the collective effort of the human-kind.

I feel happy that the students have decided the ‘MOTHER EARTH’ as the theme for this month's EcoBuzz and our constant efforts towards a green and clean Earth, will continue to raise awareness on the alarming issues that the mother Earth is facing.

Let’s come together for organised actions with the sole objective of saving mother earth while thriving to keep it alive, green, and clean.

Regards,
Dr. Mayuri H. Pandya
Dean, Faculty of Law, GLS University

ECOBUZZ TEAM

Patron:

Dr. Sudhir Nanavati
President, GLS University

Chief Editor:

Dr. Mayuri Pandya

Concept:

Dr. Parna Mukherjee

Editors:

Dr. Payal Mehta
Dr. Jiya Matharani
Ms. Hiral Shukla
Dr. Foram Pandya
Ms. Aditi Thakar

Student Members:

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Malhar Faldu	Vishwa Ajmera	Diya Patel
Yuvraj Goswami	Mitanshi Singh	Jasleen Kaur Huda
Honey Sojitra	Avantica Nandi	Rishabh Agarwal
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Neelatri Patel	Heer Joshi	Atin Kumar
	Yash Dhakre	Ritika Giri
	Diya Patel	Himanshi Datt

National Updates

India's Ban on Single-Use Plastics: One Year On

The government's ban on single-use plastics (SUPs) has completed a year, showing mixed results. While compliance has improved in urban areas, rural enforcement remains weak. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) reports a 60% reduction in SUP consumption. However, plastic alternatives remain costly, posing challenges for small businesses. Experts emphasize the need for better waste segregation and recycling infrastructure to ensure long-term success.

E-Waste Management Rules 2024: Strengthening Producer Responsibility

India has revised its E-Waste (Management) Rules to strengthen Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR). The new guidelines mandate tech companies to collect and recycle a minimum of 70% of electronic waste generated. The rules also introduce financial penalties for non-compliance. With India ranking as the third-largest e-waste producer globally.

India's First Zero-Waste City Initiative

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has launched a pilot project to develop India's first zero-waste city. Selected urban areas will implement strict waste segregation, composting, and plastic recycling programs. This initiative aligns with the Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0, aiming for 100% waste processing by 2030. If successful, the model will be expanded to other cities, promoting sustainable urban living and reducing landfill dependency.

State Updates

Gujarat's Plastic Waste Reduction Drive

Gujarat has intensified its efforts to curb plastic waste by launching a statewide ban on non-biodegradable plastics. The initiative includes strict enforcement measures, public awareness campaigns, and incentives for businesses adopting eco-friendly packaging. The state government has also partnered with private firms to enhance recycling infrastructure, aiming for a 50% reduction in plastic waste by 2026.

Gujarat's Green Urban Development Plan

Gujarat has introduced a Green Urban Development Plan, emphasizing eco-friendly infrastructure and sustainable waste management in cities. The plan includes extensive tree plantations, rainwater harvesting systems, and policies promoting the use of recycled materials in construction. This initiative aims to make Gujarat's urban areas more resilient to climate change while reducing environmental degradation.

मणिर्नगच्छेत्प्रवृद्धं शनं वायुः पतञ्जलिः।
प्रतिवासोमा पिशाचं ग्रामवृद्धं पुनः शंछि।

One should not pollute nature, its sources, and keep them undisturbed for the well-being of all beings, as nature's power is boundless. Living in harmony with nature brings peace and avoids harm to all beings.

GREEN JUSTICE

- **MC Mehta v. Union of India (1986) – The Taj Trapezium Case**
Issue: Industrial emissions damaging the Taj Mahal's white marble.
Judgment: The Supreme Court directed industries to switch to cleaner fuels and relocate if necessary. This case reinforced the 'Polluter Pays' principle, ensuring industries take responsibility for environmental damage.
- **Vellore Citizens Welfare Forum v. Union of India (1996)**
Issue: Industrial pollution caused by tanneries in Tamil Nadu.
Judgment: The SC introduced the Precautionary Principle and Polluter Pays Principle, emphasizing the need for sustainable industrial practices and holding polluters financially accountable.
- **Indian Council for Enviro-Legal Action v. Union of India (1996)**
Issue: Chemical industries in Rajasthan caused hazardous waste contamination.
Judgment: The SC mandated polluters to bear the cost of remediation, reinforcing environmental accountability and sustainable waste management measures.
- **Almitra Patel v. Union of India (2000)**
Issue: Poor municipal waste management in Indian cities.
Judgment: The SC emphasized scientific waste disposal methods and banned open dumping, directing urban bodies to adopt sustainable solid waste management practices.
- **Goa Foundation v. Union of India (2014) – The Mining Ban Case**
Issue: Unregulated iron ore mining causing environmental degradation in Goa.
Judgment: The SC halted illegal mining, ensuring natural resources are utilized sustainably and directing the government to regulate extraction in an eco-friendly manner.

आत्मनरक्षितं भवेत् किम् आत्मं वासमं स्तुतिम् |
विनाःपरम् आदितिः नार्थमनं हितमात्मनः ॥

One who is free from excessive desire and attachment lives peacefully. Avoiding unnecessary wants allows one to focus on a higher purpose and sustainable living.

GREEN LAWS

1. Environmental Protection Act, 1986:

Provision: Section 3 empowers the central government to take measures for environmental protection, including pollution control. The act provides a broad legal framework to safeguard the environment from industrial and developmental activities. It enables authorities to regulate hazardous substances, enforce environmental standards, and impose penalties on violators. This law plays a crucial role in addressing air, water, and land pollution, ensuring a balance between economic growth and ecological sustainability.

2. Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016(Amended 2022):

Provision: Rule 4 bans the use of certain single-use plastic items while emphasizing Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR).

These rules aim to reduce plastic waste generation through stricter regulations on production, distribution, and recycling. By mandating the collection and processing of plastic waste, it places the onus on producers, importers, and brand owners to adopt sustainable waste disposal methods and minimize environmental impact.

3. E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2022 :

Provision: Rule 6 mandates producers to take responsibility for e-waste collection, recycling, and disposal.

As India generates millions of tons of electronic waste annually, these rules are critical in promoting the circular economy. The framework compels electronic manufacturers to reduce waste, prevent toxic contamination, and improve material recovery through efficient recycling mechanisms.

4. Water (Prevention and control of pollution) Act, 1974:

Provision: Section 24 prohibits the discharge of pollutants into water bodies beyond prescribed limits.

The act establishes Pollution Control Boards to regulate water pollution and ensure industries adopt effluent treatment measures. By setting water quality standards, it aims to protect freshwater resources and prevent ecological degradation caused by industrial and domestic wastewater.

नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्तिप्रत्यवायो न विद्यते |

स्वल्पमप्यस्यधर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ||

No effort in the pursuit of righteousness goes to waste. Even a little effort in this direction protects from great dangers.

Changing Consumption Patterns – Towards a Sustainable Future

Modern consumption patterns have evolved drastically, leading to increased waste generation and environmental degradation. The shift towards convenience-based lifestyles has resulted in excessive use of plastic, e-waste accumulation, and resource depletion. However, awareness about sustainability is growing, and several measures are being adopted to promote eco-friendly consumption.

Governments worldwide are enforcing stricter waste management regulations, encouraging recycling, and promoting circular economies. Businesses are also integrating sustainable production methods, focusing on biodegradable packaging, energy-efficient technologies, and waste reduction strategies. Companies are now adopting the 'reduce, reuse, and recycle' model to minimize their carbon footprint and adhere to environmental policies.

Consumers play a crucial role in driving sustainability by making informed choices. Opting for reusable alternatives, reducing food waste, and supporting ethical brands are simple yet effective ways individuals can contribute to a greener planet. With increasing awareness, movements such as zero-waste living and minimalism are gaining popularity, encouraging consumers to buy less but choose better-quality, long-lasting products.

Another critical aspect of sustainable consumption is promoting circular economies, where products are designed for durability, repairability, and recyclability. In India, initiatives such as the EPR framework for electronic waste and extended producer responsibility for plastic management highlight the importance of ensuring that manufacturers take responsibility for the lifecycle of their products. This shift can lead to significant reductions in environmental impact while fostering innovation in green technology.

Additionally, sustainable agriculture and food consumption patterns are essential in reducing environmental harm. Supporting locally sourced food, adopting plant-based diets, and reducing dependency on single-use plastics in food packaging can collectively make a substantial impact. Awareness campaigns and policy interventions, such as carbon taxes and incentives for sustainable businesses, can accelerate this transition towards environmentally responsible consumption.

Source:<https://www.isric.org/discover/about-soils/why-are-soils-important>

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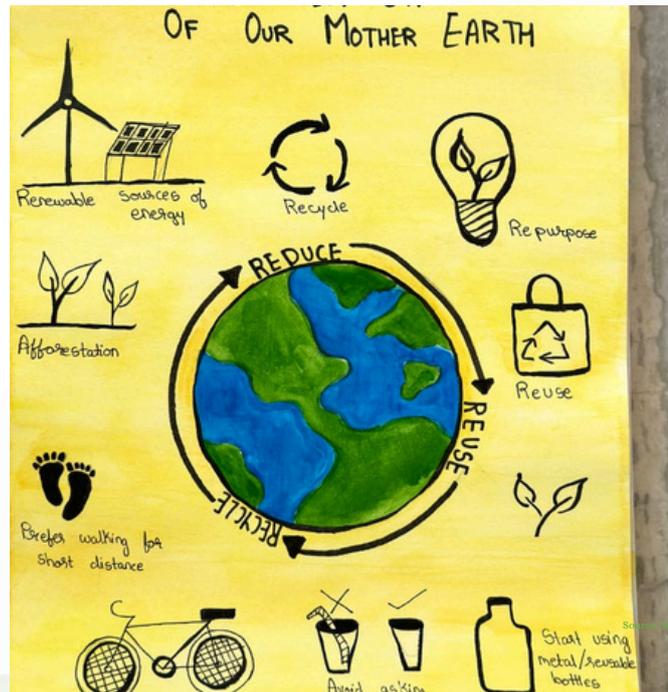
UPCOMING EVENTS

NATIONAL EVENTS

- **India Green Energy Summit 2025 (March 10-12, 2025):** A platform for stakeholders to discuss renewable energy innovations, policy advancements, and investment opportunities in India's green energy sector. The event aims to accelerate sustainable energy adoption and carbon neutrality.
- **National Conference on Circular Economy (April 5, 2025):** Aimed at promoting sustainability in industries, this event will bring together policymakers, researchers, and business leaders to discuss waste reduction, recycling, and resource efficiency strategies.
- **World Water Day Summit India (March 22, 2025):** Organized by the Ministry of Jal Shakti, this event will focus on water conservation techniques, sustainable irrigation, and community-led initiatives to address India's water crisis.

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

- **United Nations Climate Summit (April 22-24, 2025, Geneva):** A high-level global event focused on climate action strategies, emissions reduction policies, and sustainable development goals.
- **Global Recycling Forum 2025 (May 18-20, 2025, Berlin):** An event dedicated to promoting sustainable waste management, recycling technologies, and the circular economy.
- **World Environment Day Conference (June 5, 2025, Nairobi):** A global summit addressing pressing environmental issues, conservation efforts, and sustainable development goals for a greener future.



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