



ECOBUZZ

A BUZZ TO THE GREEN FUTURE!!

MARCH'2025
EDITION

RIO SUMMIT 1992
21 KEY AGENDAS

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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

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National Updates

Climate-Resilient Infrastructure:

The "India 2047: Building a Climate-Resilient Future" conference, held from March 19–22, 2025, focused on addressing the effects of extreme climatic events, such as intensifying heatwaves, and their impacts on health, the environment, and the economy. The event aimed to identify key challenges and refine India's policy responses to enhance climate resilience by 2047.

Urban Climate Initiatives:

The Mumbai Climate Action Plan (MCAP) identifies six focus areas for mitigation and adaptation: energy, mobility, waste management, air quality, urban greening, and water resource management. Water resource management is a critical priority, aiming to enhance water-use efficiency, implement sustainable flood management, and safeguard natural water bodies to mitigate climate-related stresses.

National Programme on Climate Change & Human Health (NPCCHH):

The NPCCHH aims to create awareness among the general population, healthcare providers, and policymakers regarding the impacts of climate change on human health. It strengthens the capacity of the healthcare system to reduce illnesses due to climate variability and enhances health preparedness and response through situational analysis at various administrative levels.

Clean Air Action Plan (Proposed in 2024):

To tackle worsening air pollution caused by urban sprawl and industrial emissions, Gujarat unveiled an ambitious ₹3,000 crore Clean Air Action Plan. Targeting key cities—Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara, and Rajkot—the plan includes installing air quality sensors, phasing out dirty fuels, expanding green cover, and regulating construction dust and vehicular emissions. This is a major push toward meeting National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) targets and improving public health outcomes in some of India's most polluted urban centers.

"Cool Roofs" Initiative in Ahmedabad (2025):

As heatwaves intensify under climate change, Ahmedabad's "Cool Roofs" initiative focuses on thermal comfort for low-income communities. In early 2025, the city began applying reflective white coatings to rooftops in slum areas, significantly lowering indoor temperatures. This cost-effective, low-tech solution not only reduces heat stress but also cuts energy consumption by decreasing the need for cooling. The program demonstrates how urban climate adaptation can be affordable and inclusive.

Real-Time Water Quality Monitoring Network:

To prevent waterborne diseases and protect aquatic ecosystems, the Gujarat Pollution Control Board (GPCB) initiated a network of real-time online water quality monitoring systems across major rivers (Sabarmati, Mahi Sagar, Tapi, and Damanganga) and lakes (Kankaria, Thol). This tech-forward system enables 24/7 surveillance, early detection of contamination, and swift enforcement action against polluters. It's a strategic move toward data-driven environmental governance and transparency.

State Updates

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

- **Haryana State Pollution Control Board's Winter Action Plan (2024-25)**
High levels of particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10) in Haryana during winter. Need for comprehensive strategies to mitigate air pollution from various sources (vehicles, industries, construction, agro-residue burning). Inadequate enforcement of pollution control measures. The Haryana State Pollution Control Board developed a Winter Action Plan to reduce air pollution through targeted interventions across sectors. The plan integrates national initiatives like the National Clean Air Programme and state-specific regulations to ensure effective implementations. It emphasizes stakeholder participation and robust governance mechanisms for plan execution.
- **Gene Campaign v Union of India (2024)**
Approval of genetically modified (GM) mustard (DMH-11) without assessing carcinogenic risks or consulting stakeholders. Justice B.V. Nagarathna quashed the approval, citing violations of the precautionary principle and intergenerational equity. The court mandated stakeholder consultation, proof of non-carcinogenic nature, and a national GM crop policy. Health experts must be involved in future approvals.
- **Air Quality Monitoring Committee v States of Punjab & Haryana (2024)**
Inadequate action against stubble burning by the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM). Lack of prosecutions for stubble burning incidents. Ineffective implementation of pollution control measures by state governments and CAQM. The Supreme Court criticized CAQM for not launching prosecutions against stubble burning incidents and for ineffective meetings with only partial attendance. Directed Punjab and Haryana to impose stricter fines and ensure the use of stubble-burning alternative equipment. Emphasized the need for concrete actions beyond meetings to address air pollution in Delhi-NCR.
- **Arvind Kumar Agrawal v Secretary to Govt of TN (2023)**
Environmental damage from illegal construction violating pollution norms. The Supreme Court upheld a \$5.5 crore penalty on a builder, affirming that compensation must address both noncompliance and health impacts of environmental harm. The ruling reinforced the polluter-pays principle.

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. The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981

This Act focuses on preventing, controlling, and abating air pollution. It enables the creation of Central and State Pollution Control Boards that are responsible for monitoring air quality and regulating industrial emissions. Since air pollution has been directly linked to respiratory diseases like asthma, bronchitis, cardiovascular problems, and even early mortality, this Act plays a vital role in reducing the health burden caused by polluted air in urban and industrial areas.

2. The Biomedical Waste Management Rules, 2016

Formulated under the Environment (Protection) Act, these rules regulate the scientific disposal of biomedical waste generated by healthcare institutions. Improper handling of biomedical waste can lead to the spread of infectious diseases such as HIV, Hepatitis B and C, and other harmful infections. These rules mandate segregation, labeling, transportation, and treatment of medical waste, which helps protect both healthcare workers and the general public from health hazards.

3. The Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016

These rules apply to the proper collection, segregation, transportation, and disposal of municipal solid waste. Poorly managed solid waste can attract disease-carrying pests and result in groundwater contamination, foul air, and surface pollution, all of which pose serious health risks. These rules place responsibilities on local bodies, waste generators, and other stakeholders to ensure safe and hygienic waste handling, thereby promoting healthier urban environments.

4. The Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000

Noise pollution is a lesser-known but significant contributor to health issues such as hearing loss, stress, high blood pressure, and sleep disturbances. These rules, enacted under the Environment (Protection) Act, define ambient noise levels for different zones (residential, commercial, industrial, and silence zones) and regulate the use of loudspeakers, construction equipment, and firecrackers. By controlling noise pollution, this law helps reduce the physical and mental stress burden on communities.

5. The Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 and the Disaster Management Act, 2005

While these are not strictly environmental laws, they are activated during public health emergencies, many of which are triggered or exacerbated by environmental degradation (e.g., vector-borne diseases after floods, heatwaves due to climate change). These laws allow for swift governmental intervention to manage outbreaks and disasters that stem from environmental imbalances, thereby protecting public health.

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.

Breathing in Danger: Air Pollution and Respiratory Health

Air pollution is a major global health crisis, causing millions of premature deaths annually. Pollutants such as PM2.5, PM10, nitrogen oxides (NOx), sulphur dioxide (SO₂), and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) severely damage lung function, increasing the risk of asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and lung cancer. Short-term exposure can cause coughing and breathing difficulties, while long-term exposure leads to chronic illnesses and even early death. Children, the elderly, and people with pre-existing conditions are especially vulnerable.

In India, key legal frameworks aim to combat air pollution. The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 regulates emissions and empowers pollution control boards. The Environment Protection Act, 1986 allows the government to take measures to improve air quality. Programs like the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) aim to reduce particulate matter in cities, while Bharat Stage Emission Standards (BS-VI) set strict limits on vehicular pollution.

Despite these efforts, weak enforcement, limited resources, and low public awareness hinder progress. Economic concerns often lead industries to resist regulations, and poor coordination among agencies affects policy implementation.

Globally, measures such as China's industrial reforms and the U.S. Clean Air Act have shown that strong regulation and enforcement can significantly reduce pollution. In India, steps like Delhi's vehicle rationing and bans on firecrackers are positive but need scaling.

To protect public health, stricter laws, better enforcement, renewable energy adoption, sustainable urban planning, and public awareness are essential. Air pollution is a preventable health threat—addressing it requires urgent, collective action.

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

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UPCOMING EVENTS

NATIONAL EVENTS

Sustainability fair 3.0 & HSFEA

Date - 9 & 10 April, 2025

Location- university of petroleum and energy studies (Dehradun, Uttarakhand)

The conference focuses on health, safety, fire, and environmental advances, with goal of fostering innovation and collaboration for resilient future.

International sustainability conference

Date - 24-26 April, 2025

Location- Indian institute of management Bangalore (Bengaluru, Karnataka)

Focuses on the intersection of business, policy and society in sustainability. Eco clubs for mission LIFE Date- 23 April, 2025 Organised by the ministry of education focusing on reducing e-waste and promoting Healthy lifestyle.

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

US climate action summit

Date - 21 - 25 April, 2025

Location- Washington, DC.

Focused on the implementation of climate investments, accelerating the transition to a green economy and building climate resilience.

2025 BRS COPs

Date- 28 April, 2025

Location - Geneva, Switzerland Focuses on the sound management of chemicals and wastes.

Source : <https://stock.adobe.com/search/images?k=%22life+on+land%22>

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CREATIVE CORNER



THIS PICTURE REMINDS US THAT PRESERVING THE ENVIRONMENT IS CRUCIAL TO PRESERVING OUR OWN HEALTH BECAUSE IT SHOWS A SICK EARTH WITH POLLUTED SKIES, DEFORESTATION, AND CLIMATE CHANGE.

संगच्छध्वंसवदध्वंसवोमनांसिजानताम्।
देवाभाग्यथापूर्वसंजानानाउपासते॥

Move together, speak together, let your minds be in harmony — just as the ancient gods shared their portion in harmony.