

Action Plan Improving Air Quality

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About Action Plan Improving Air Quality

- The Central **Government has launched the National Clean Air Programme** as a long-term, time-bound, national-level strategy to tackle air pollution across the country in a comprehensive manner with **targets to achieve 20–30 per cent reduction in PM10 and PM2.5 concentrations by 2024 with 2017 as the base year**
- **102 non-attainment cities, mostly in Indo-Gangetic Plains**, have been identified on the basis of ambient air quality data for the period of 2011– 2015 and WHO report 2014/2018.
 - The city-specific action plans have been approved for all these cities for implementation on ground
- The Central Government had notified a **Comprehensive Action Plan in 2018** identifying timelines and the implementing agencies for actions identified for prevention, control and mitigation of air pollution in the NCR.
- **Graded Response Action Plan** was notified on January 12, 2017, for prevention, control and abatement of air pollution in the NCR.
 - It identifies graded measures and the implementing agencies for response to four AQI categories, namely, moderate to poor, very poor, severe and severe+ or emergency.

Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP)

- In 2014, when a study by the WHO found that Delhi was the most polluted city in the world, panic spread in the

Centre and the state government.

- Approved by the Supreme Court in 2016, the plan was formulated after several meetings that the Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA) held with state government and experts.
- The result was a plan that institutionalized measures to be taken when air quality deteriorates.
- GRAP works only as an emergency measure.

Measures taken under GRAP

Severe+ or Emergency

(PM 2.5 over 300 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cubic metre}$ or PM10 over 500 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cu. m.}$ for 48+ hours)

- Stop entry of trucks into Delhi (except essential commodities)
- Stop construction work
- Introduce odd/even scheme for private vehicles and minimise exemptions
- Task Force to decide any additional steps including shutting of schools

Severe

(PM 2.5 over 250 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cu. m.}$ or PM10 over 430 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cu. m.}$)

- Close brick kilns, hot mix plants, stone crushers
- Maximise power generation from natural gas to reduce generation from coal
- Encourage public transport, with differential rates
- More frequent mechanized cleaning of road and sprinkling of water

Very Poor

(PM2.5 121-250 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cu. m.}$ or PM10 351-430 $\mu\text{g}/\text{cu. m.}$)

- Stop use of diesel generator sets

- Enhance parking fee by 3-4 times
- Increase bus and Metro services
- Apartment owners to discourage burning fires in winter by providing electric heaters during winter
- Advisories to people with respiratory and cardiac conditions to restrict outdoor movement

Moderate to poor

(PM_{2.5} 61-120 µg/cu. m. or PM₁₀ 101-350 µg/cu. m.)

- Heavy fines for garbage burning
- Close/enforce pollution control regulations in brick kilns and industries
- Mechanized sweeping on roads with heavy traffic and water sprinkling
- Strictly enforce a ban on firecrackers

National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)

- It is a pollution control initiative to cut the concentration of particles (PM₁₀ & PM_{2.5}) by 20-30% by 2024.
- It will have 2017 as the base year for comparison and 2019 as the first year.
- It is to be implemented in 102 non-attainment cities. These cities are chosen on the basis of Ambient Air Quality India (2011-2015) and WHO report 2014/2018.
- The National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) was recently launched by – Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).

Key features NCAP

- **Achieve a national-level target of 20-30% reduction of PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ concentration by between 2017 and 2024.**
- **Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)** will execute this nation-wide programme in consonance with the section 162 (b) of the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution)

Act, 1986.

- The plan includes 102 non-attainment cities, across 23 states and Union territories, which were identified by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) on the basis of their ambient air quality data between 2011 and 2015.
- **The plan proposes a three-tier system**, including real-time physical data collection, data archiving, and an action trigger system in all 102 cities, besides extensive plantation plans, research on clean-technologies, landscaping of major arterial roads, and stringent industrial standards.
- **It also proposes state-level plans of e-mobility** in the two-wheeler sector, rapid augmentation of charging infrastructure, stringent implementation of BS-VI norms, boosting public transportation system, and adoption of third-party audits for polluting industries.

Various committees: The national plan has proposed setting up an apex committee under environment minister, a steering committee under-secretary (environment) and a monitoring committee under a joint secretary. There would be project monitoring committees at the state-level with scientists and trained personnel.