

National air quality index (NAQI)

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Why in news?

- The Union Environment Ministry has proposed to extend the measurement of air quality to 22 state capitals and 44 other cities with a population exceeding one million.

About the Index:

- NAQI was launched in 2014 with outline '**One Number – One Color -One Description**' for the common man to judge the air quality within his vicinity.
- It has been **launched for monitoring the quality of air in major urban centers** across the country on a **real-time basis** and enhancing public awareness for taking mitigative action.
- The measurement of air quality is based on **eight pollutants**, namely,

Particulate Matter (PM10), Particulate Matter (PM2.5), Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2), Sulphur Dioxide (SO2), Carbon Monoxide (CO), Ozone (O3), Ammonia (NH3), and Lead (Pb).

- The ambient air quality standards are specified separately in India for around 12 pollutants including the 8 that constitute the Air Quality Index.
- AQI has **six categories of air quality**. These are: Good, Satisfactory, Moderately Polluted, Poor, Very Poor and Severe.
- It **has been launched for 10 cities at present** – Delhi, Agra, Kanpur, Lucknow, Varanasi, Faridabad, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Bangalore and Hyderabad.
- It has been **developed by the CPCB in consultation with IIT-Kanpur** and an expert group comprising medical and

air-quality professionals.

- Thus, India has joined the global league of countries like the US, China, Mexico and France that have implemented smog alert systems.