



Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas

A DECADE YOUNG, A CENTURY STRONG

ESG, Carbon and Climate Change

Newsletter

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Preface

With this edition, we open a conversation that I believe is among the most consequential in business and law today, the inaugural edition of our quarterly newsletter on ESG, Carbon and Climate Change.

The global business landscape is undergoing a structural shift, where environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and governance integrity are no longer peripheral considerations but central to enterprise value and risk management. The emergence of carbon markets, net-zero commitments, and climate-linked financial regulation has added a new and urgent dimension to this shift, one that cuts across industries, borders, and legal systems. From evolving disclosure regimes and sustainability-linked transactions to the growing body of climate disputes, ESG, carbon, and climate change are collectively reshaping how capital is deployed, businesses are structured, and liabilities are assessed across jurisdictions.

This practice sits at the intersection of four interconnected domains. In policy and regulation, we are witnessing an accelerating convergence of domestic and international frameworks, from India's evolving ESG disclosure architecture and carbon credit mechanisms to the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism and global biodiversity-linked standards. In transactions, ESG and climate diligence, carbon asset structuring, and sustainability representations are becoming integral to deal-making. In sustainable finance, green bonds, sustainability-linked lending, and transition finance instruments are reshaping how capital is raised and deployed. In disputes, climate litigation, greenwashing claims, and carbon market enforcement actions are creating new frontiers of legal exposure for businesses across sectors.

For India Inc., this transition is both an opportunity and an imperative. As domestic regulatory frameworks mature and global standards permeate local markets, companies must navigate ESG, carbon, and climate obligations not merely as compliance requirements, but as core business variables. The implications are particularly pronounced in corporate transactions, where ESG and carbon diligence, representations, and post-closing obligations are becoming integral to deal-making. At the same time, these considerations are permeating every sphere of business operations, from supply chains and financing structures to governance frameworks and dispute resolution, requiring a more integrated and strategic approach.

At Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co., our ESG, Carbon and Climate Change practice is being established to provide integrated, forward-looking legal and strategic advice across policy, transactions, sustainable finance, and disputes. This newsletter is a reflection of that commitment. It seeks to offer a curated perspective on key developments across these domains, with a focus on corporate transactions, regulatory and policy updates, disputes, and global trends, with the objective of equipping our clients and stakeholders with actionable insights.

The legal profession has a defining role to play in this transition, in shaping the frameworks, the standards, and the accountability mechanisms that will determine how this shift unfolds. We hope this publication serves as both a resource and a platform for that engagement.

Dr. Shardul S. Shroff

Executive Chairman

Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co.





How to read this newsletter

This newsletter is designed to provide a structured and practical perspective on the evolving ESG, carbon and climate change landscape. As regulatory frameworks continue to mature, market practices evolve and enforcement actions intensify, ESG considerations are increasingly shaping how businesses operate, transact and manage risk.

Rather than presenting developments in isolation, this publication brings together regulatory updates, market activity and dispute trends to offer a connected view of the legal and commercial environment. The objective is not only to inform, but to help readers understand the direction of change and its implications for strategy, compliance and decision-making.

The publication is organised into three core sections:



[Regulatory and Policy Developments](#) **5**

Covers key legislative, regulatory and policy updates, highlighting emerging frameworks and compliance expectations shaping business and investment decisions.



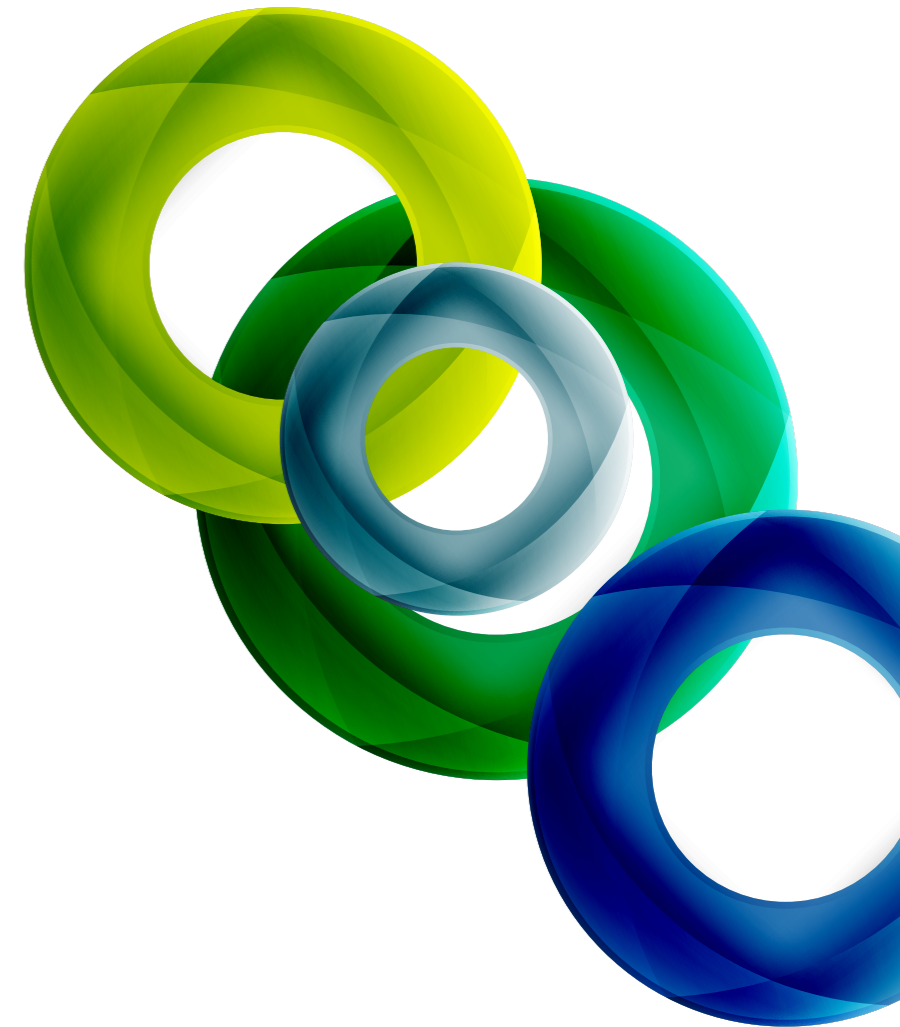
[Transactions and Market Activity](#) **16**

Examines how ESG and climate considerations are influencing corporate transactions, financing structures and market behaviour, with a focus on practical implications for deal-making.



[Dispute Resolution and Enforcement Trends](#) **26**

Tracks significant judicial and enforcement developments, reflecting the expanding landscape of ESG-related liability, litigation and regulatory action.





Introduction

We are pleased to present the inaugural edition of our ESG, Carbon and Climate Change newsletter.

ESG is no longer a parallel conversation to business. It is increasingly the framework within which business decisions are conceived, evaluated, and executed. From capital allocation and deal structuring to regulatory enforcement and dispute exposure, ESG and climate considerations are redefining how risk is priced, how value is created, and how accountability is enforced across jurisdictions. What was once viewed as a disclosure-driven or reputational exercise is now firmly embedded in the core of commercial decision-making.

Regulatory regimes are evolving rapidly, often drawing from and responding to developments across borders. Carbon markets and climate-linked financial instruments are introducing new asset classes and risk variables. Investors and lenders are recalibrating expectations, aligning capital with sustainability outcomes while sharpening their scrutiny of underlying claims. In parallel, climate litigation, greenwashing actions, and enforcement trends are expanding the contours of legal exposure for businesses in ways that are both novel and far-reaching. Taken together, these developments are not simply adding complexity, they are fundamentally altering the risk architecture within which businesses operate.

This newsletter is built on a clear and deliberate premise that ESG, carbon, and climate change cannot be understood in isolation. They operate at the intersection of multiple, interconnected domains. In policy and

regulation, we are witnessing an accelerating convergence of domestic and international frameworks. In corporate transactions, ESG and climate diligence, representations, and risk allocation mechanisms are becoming integral to deal-making. In sustainable finance, green bonds, sustainability-linked instruments, and transition finance are reshaping how capital is raised and deployed. In disputes, a new generation of claims is emerging, testing the boundaries of liability, disclosure, and accountability. The Indian market sits at a particularly important juncture across all of these domains. As domestic frameworks mature and global standards increasingly permeate local markets, businesses must navigate a layered and rapidly shifting set of expectations, one that now touches every aspect of operations, from supply chains and financing structures to governance frameworks and dispute strategy.

Each edition of this publication seeks to bring these strands together. Rather than catalogue developments, our focus is on interpreting them, identifying patterns, and distilling their legal and commercial implications. We aim to provide a structured and practical lens through which businesses, investors, and institutions can better understand not only what is changing, but how and why those changes matter.

As the boundaries between compliance, strategy, and liability continue to blur, the importance of informed, cross-disciplinary insight will only increase. It is in this context that we present this inaugural edition, as the beginning of an ongoing engagement with one of the most dynamic and consequential areas of business and law today.





Regulatory and Policy Developments



Regulatory and Policy Developments

Green Hydrogen Policy 2025; 2 January 2026

The Government of Gujarat has unveiled its Green Hydrogen Policy 2025, targeting 3 million tonnes per annum (“MTPA”) of production capacity by 2035, with 30 GW of electrolyser capacity and 75 GW of dedicated renewable energy capacity. The investment target under the policy is Rs. 5 trillion. The stated goals include reducing natural gas consumption by 2 MTPA and cutting carbon dioxide (“CO₂”) emissions by 5 MTPA. The policy is aimed at positioning Gujarat as a national hub for green hydrogen manufacturing and export.

Guidelines prescribing penal compensatory afforestation in the cases involving violation of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980; 2 January 2026

MoEFCC vide circular dated 2 January 2026, introduced the guidelines prescribing penal compensatory afforestation (“PCA”) in the cases involving violation of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. The Ministry consolidated guidelines issued under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, thereby introducing the compensation for utilizing of the forest land for non-forest purposes like mining, building roads, etc. In 2016, the Compensatory Afforestation Fund (“CAMPA”) was setup for management and collection of the funds collected through compensation. Thereafter, in 2023, the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules were introduced which dealt with the process of application of proposals etc. The illegal usage of forest land without seeking prior approval from the Central Government was on a rise but was dealt by the authorities on a case-to-case basis. Therefore, in 2026, the Guidelines prescribing PCA for violation of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam

Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 were issued. These guidelines classify the usage of forest land without permission into three categories, viz. Category A, B(I) and B(II). Category A comprises of usage of forest land by a User Agency (*which includes companies, persons, entity, departments, organizations, etc.*), wherein only degraded forest land was to be granted as compensation for usage of forest land post prior approval from the Central Government. Category B(I) includes the User Agency which were required by law to compensate the usage of forest land with non-forest land but violated the regulation. Lastly, Category B(II) wherein the User Agency was required to provide for revenue forest land in compensation, whereas was required to provide for non-forest land in compensation. The punishments include providing non-forest land/forest land (*depending on the Category*) or twice the amount of the Net Present Value (“NPV”) of the forest land utilized. Additionally, the user agency is required to provide the entire cost of compensation for the maintenance and afforestation of the land for a period of 10 years.

Simplification of Requirements for Grant of Accreditation to Investors; 9 January 2026

SEBI has issued a regulatory circular, simplifying and expediting the procedural requirements for granting official accreditation to eligible investors under the SEBI (Alternative Investment Funds) Regulations, 2012 (“SEBI AIF Regulations, 2012”). The circular has introduced two changes; viz the commencement of operational procedures without the receiving certification from Accreditation Agency and discarding accreditation based on the net-worth criteria. The first change simplifies the investment by Accredited Investors (“investors”) during the pendency

of issuance of the Accredited Certificate. The circular provides that Investment Managers can now accept funds from investors, even during the pendency of issuance of the certificate, provided that, the funds should not be counted in the corpus of the scheme, and the funds should not be collected/received by the investment manager from the investor, until the certificate is issued. Secondly, the accreditation based on net-worth criteria has been abrogated.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Intensity Target (Amendment) Rules, 2025; 13 January 2026

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (“MoEFCC”), vide notification dated 13 January 2026, had issued the Notification for Greenhouse Gas Emissions Intensity Target (Amendment) Rules, 2025. The principal notification issued as on October 8, 2025, specifies the greenhouse gas emission intensity targets for organizations in the Aluminium Sector (*12 organizations*), Cement Sector (*186 organizations*), Chlor- Alkali Sector (*30 organizations*) and Pulp and Paper Sector (*53 organizations*). The principal notification sets Greenhouse Gas Emission Targets, which every organization has to achieve, their responsibilities and the use of Carbon Credit Certificates. In case the organization fails to comply with the targets, it will be liable to pay Environmental compensation to the Central Pollution Control Board (“CPCB”). The notification of 2026 has extended these rules to four additional sectors, namely, Secondary Aluminium (*3 organizations*), Petroleum Refinery (*21 organizations*), Petrochemicals (*gas/naphtha crackers or both- 11 organizations*) and Textiles (*173 organizations*).



REGULATORY AND POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

Environment (Protection) Fund Rules, 2026; 15 January 2026

MoEFCC, *vide* notification dated 15 January 2026 notified the Environment (Protection) Fund Rules, 2026. These rules elucidate how Environmental Protection Fund (“EPF”) will be utilized for financing environmental protection activities like pollution control, research related to clean technologies, capacity building, development of technology, etc. The rules elaborate on the source of the fund, i.e., penalty imposed under the Air (prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and the Environmental Protection Act, 1986, and any other such amount as approved by the competent authority. The allocation of funds to the State Fund would be 75% of the collected penalties, and the share of the Centre Fund will be 25%. The rules also mention the development of a Project Management Unit for administration of funds and the guidelines for submission of Annual Statement of accounts and annual report by Central and State Government.

Master Circular on Social Stock Exchange Framework; 19 January 2026

Securities and Exchange Board of India (“SEBI”) has issued a comprehensive Master Circular for Framework on Social Stock Exchange (“SSE”). The circular consolidates all the circulars and directions that have been issued by SEBI with respect to SSE, under the relevant provisions of SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 (“SEBI LODR Regulations, 2015”). The circular encompasses framework on SSE, Self-Regulatory Organizations for Social Impact Assessors in the context of SSE and Governing Council for SSE.

Control of Air Pollution (Grant, Refusal or Cancellation of Consent) Amendment Guidelines, 2026; 23 January 2026

MoEFCC, *vide* notification dated 23 January 2026 notified the Control of Air Pollution (Grant, Refusal or Cancellation of Consent) Amendment Guidelines, 2026, thereby amending the Control of Air Pollution (Grant, Refusal or Cancellation of Consent) Guidelines, 2025, issued by MoEFCC *vide* notification dated 29 January 2025. The definition of Registered Environmental Auditor and Online Portal has been added to the principal guidelines. Additionally, the consent to operate was amended, i.e., it will be operational/valid until it has been cancelled as per the new guidelines. Previously, the consent was operational ranging from a period of five years to fifteen years, depending on case-to-case basis. The amended guidelines also mention that only a one-time fee must be paid for operating for a period ranging from 5-25 years, as against a generic mention of payment of fee to the authorities in the principal guidelines. The authorities have also allowed unified/integrated consent for air pollution, water pollution, and hazardous waste management. Additionally, help to Micro and Small units has been granted, i.e., deemed consent for such units in specified industrial areas, upon submission of self-certified applications. The guidelines state about the establishment of a portal for implementation of guidelines within six months.

Control of Water Pollution (Grant, Refusal or Cancellation of Consent) Amendment Guidelines, 2026; 23 January 2026

MoEFCC *vide* notification dated 23 January 2026, notified the Control of Water Pollution (Grant, Refusal or Cancellation of Consent) Amendment Guidelines, 2026, thereby amending the Control of Water Pollution

(Grant, Refusal or Cancellation of Consent) Guidelines, 2025, issued by MoEFCC *vide* notification dated January 30, 2025. The definition of Registered Environment Auditor has been included, aligned with Environment Audit Rules. The permission for Consent to Operate (“CTO”) and Consent to Establish (“CTE”) will be granted only once, for a period of operation ranging from 5 to 25 years, and the fees has to be paid only while requesting an extension of the period of operation. A unified portal will be functional within 6 months of the notification for processing applications and approvals. An integrated process has been introduced to obtain consent under the Waste Management Rules issued under the Environment Protection Act, 1986.

Draft Amendments to Ash Utilization Notification, 2021; 23 January 2026

MoEFCC *vide* notification dated 23 January 2026, notified certain amendments to the Ash Utilization Notification, 2021 issued by MoEFCC *vide* notification dated December 31, 2021. The notification suggests the utilization of fly ash, which is a byproduct of the thermal power plants, in an eco-friendly manner. The notification addresses the issue of using fire ash from plants which poses a significant pollution problem in India, contributing to land, air pollution and water pollution. Furthermore, the notification has also stated that Central Electricity Authority (“CEA”) will be working in collaboration with the Central Pollution Control Board (“CPCB”) for preparing a portal for monitoring the utilization of ash and the concerned State Pollution Control Board (“SPCB”) shall ensure the registration and ash data upload by all the coal or lignite based thermal power plants on the portal. The notification also mandates all the mines,



REGULATORY AND POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

whether it be government, public or private sector mines to undertake the filling of voids, of both abandoned mines and operating mines which lie within a 300-kilometer radius of coal or lignite thermal power plants with fly ash.

Uniform Consent Guidelines notified under the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 and the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974; 27 January 2026

The Central Government has amended the Uniform Consent Guidelines under the Air Act, 1981 and the Water Act, 1974, introducing several significant reforms to streamline the consent mechanism for industries nationwide. A major change is the introduction of Consolidated Consent and Authorization, enabling SPCB and Pollution Control Boards (“PCCs”) to issue integrated permissions covering consents under both Acts alongside waste management authorizations through a single application. Notably, a CTO, once granted, will now remain valid until cancelled, eliminating the need for periodic renewal whilst maintaining compliance through inspections and cancellation provisions. The processing time for Red Category industries has been reduced from 120 days to 90 days. Registered Environmental Auditors may now conduct site visits alongside SPCB officers, and Micro and Small Enterprises in notified industrial estates benefit from deemed CTE upon self-certified application. Rigid minimum-distance sitting criteria have been replaced with site-specific environmental assessments, and States may prescribe a one-time CTO fee for 5 to 25 years. A uniform definition of capital investment has also been introduced for consistent fee assessment. The safeguards for refusal and cancellation of consent have been retained.

Draft Guidelines on Relief Measures in Areas Affected by Natural Calamities; 27 January 2026

Reserve Bank of India (“RBI”) has released seven entity-specific draft guidelines establishing a comprehensive, principle-based resolution framework for borrowers affected by natural calamities including floods, cyclones, droughts, landslides, and similar extreme weather events. The framework is directly relevant to climate adaptation and resilience. Eligible borrowers, being those classified as standard and not overdue by more than 30 days, may receive rescheduled repayments, moratoriums, or additional finance. The guidelines will be effective from 1 April 2026. Resolution must be invoked within 45 days of the declaration of the natural calamity and must be completed within 90 days. Restructured accounts shall remain classified as “standard” but will require an additional 5% specific provision.

Solid Waste Management Rules, 2026; 28 January 2026

MoEFCC has notified the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2026, *vide* notification dated 28 January 2026, superseding the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016. These rules have been issued under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and will be effective from 1 April 2026. The rules suggest a mandatory force stream segregation at source, i.e. segregation of wet waste, dry waste, sanitary waste and special care waste. Dry waste must be sent to Material Recovery Facilities (“MRFs”). The rules elucidate the duty of Local Bodies to work with MRFs for collection, segregation and transportation of waste. The rules have defined what are Bulk Waste Generators, i.e. entities with a floor area of 20,000 square metres or more, or water consumption of 40,000 litres per day or

more, or solid waste generation of 100 kg per day or more. Furthermore, the regulations incorporate Refuse Derived Fuel (“RDF”). This fuel is generated by shredding and dehydrating high-calorific municipal solid waste, which is largely composed of non-recyclable plastics, paper, and textiles. Cement Plants and waste-to-energy plants have been mandated to replace their solid fuel with RDF, which will eventually increase the fuel substitution rate from 5 to 15% over six years.

Exemption of Environmental Clearance for Common Effluent Treatment Plants under the provisions of the EIA Notification, 2006; 28 January 2026

MoEFCC *vide* notification dated 28 January 2026, exempted Common Effluent Treatment Plants (“CETPs”) from the requirement of prior Environmental Clearance under the Environmental Impact Assessment (“EIA”) Notification, 2006, in order to expedite their establishment across industrial clusters. CETPs are collective pollution abatement facilities serving small and medium enterprises, classified by the CPCB as Essential Environmental Services. The Ministry determined that the Environmental Clearance requirement was duplicative, given existing regulation under the Water Act, 1974 and the Air Act, 1981.

LODR Master Circular (No. SEBI/HO/CFD-POD2/I/3762/2026) Consolidating BRSR and ESG Disclosure Obligations for FY 2025-26; 30 January 2026

SEBI issued a Master Circular dated 30 January 2026, consolidating circulars and guidelines issued in compliance with provisions of SEBI (LODR), 2015 by listed companies, under Section 11(1) of the SEBI



REGULATORY AND POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

Act, 1992. The key ESG provisions of the Master Circular include the following; the Business Responsibility and Sustainability Report (“BRSR”), BRSR Core, ESG disclosures for value chain, ESG ratings by ESG Rating Providers etc.

Revised Guidelines for Coal and Lignite Based Thermal Power Plants to Utilise Ash; 30 January 2026

Ministry of Power (“MoP”) issued revised guidelines dated 30 January 2026, which supersede the 15 March 2024 guideline and apply prospectively to all coal and lignite thermal power plants (“TPPs”); Central, State, private, captive, and co-generating to achieve 100% utilization of current and legacy ash. Each TPP must annually declare “issuable ash” (*fly ash, bottom ash, pond ash*) after excluding existing contractual commitments. Disposal follows a mandatory sequence; firstly, transparent sale *via* open auction at a floor price of ₹1/MT; secondly, free-of-cost allocation through Expression of Interest (“EOIs”) on a first-come-first-serve basis with user agencies bearing transport costs; and thirdly, mandatory notices issued to agencies of identified avenues (*roads, dams, mines, low-lying areas*) within 300 km, along with issuing a copy to SPCB for delivering ash free of cost and bearing the transport costs. Beyond 300 km, TPP liability is capped at a notional road-haulage cost equivalent to 300 km regardless of actual mode. A reserved portion of fly ash must be allocated at concessional rates to MSEs (*holding CTO or Udyam registration*) and local users within 100 km, determined by a plant-level committee chaired by the Head of Plant with local administration and MSE association representation. The allocations are on pro-rata basis, based on the EOIs received from eligible MSEs. The untied reserved ash reverts to the issuable fly ash quantity for

‘other user agencies’. The modes of transportation include waterways, rail, pipeline, Rail-cum-Road (“RCR”), Roll-on/ Roll-off (“RoRo”) alongside road. Multi-year tie-ups with bulk consumers such as cement manufacturers and export arrangements are permitted, provided they are concluded through a transparent mechanism.

Determination of Renewable Consumption Obligation Buyout Price; 1 February 2026

Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (“CERC”) passed an order on 1 February 2026 regarding the determination of the Buyout Price as an alternate compliance mechanism towards fulfilment of Renewable Consumption Obligation (“RCO”). It establishes the official buyout price as a statutory alternative compliance mechanism for electricity distribution licensees, open access consumers, and captive consumers to meet their RCO requirements. The buyout price has been set at Rs. 347/MWh for FY 2024-25 and FY 2025-26, escalating annually to Rs. 364/MWh (FY 2026-27), Rs. 382/MWh (FY 2027-28), Rs. 401/MWh (FY 2028-29), and Rs. 421/MWh (FY 2029-30). Funds collected through this mechanism will be credited to the Central Energy Conservation Fund, with 75% of such funds to be transferred to State funds for further renewable deployment.

Union Budget 2026-27 sets aside Rs 20,000 crore to accelerate carbon capture in heavy industry; 1 February 2026

The Union Budget as announced on 1 February 2026, proposed an outlay of Rs. 20,000 crores over the next five years towards Carbon Capture Utilization Scheme (“CCUS”). CCUS technologies aim at heavy industries like steel, refinery, chemicals, power and cement.

Indirect taxes and customs as per Union Budget 2026-27; 1 February 2026

Energy Transition and security: Basic custom duty exemption was granted for all the capital good which are used for production of Lithium-Ion cells for batteries and for Lithium-Ion Cells for battery energy storage systems too.

Nuclear Power Projects: Basic custom duty exemption was granted on imports of goods required for Nuclear Power Projects till the year 2035, irrespective of their capacity was proposed.

Biogas blended CNG: The entire value of biogas was excluded while calculation of the Central Excise duty payable on biogas blended CNG.

Change in Percentage of Custom Duty-Union Budget 2026-27; 1 February 2026

Rate of Basic Customs Duty was reduced from 7.5% to 0% for Renewable Energy, which includes Sodium antimonate for use in manufacture of solar glass and specified capital goods for use in manufacture of lithium-ion cells for batteries of Battery Energy Storage System.

Rate of Basic Customs Duty was reduced from 7.5% to 0% for Nuclear Energy which includes goods for generation of nuclear power falling under tariff item 8401 30 00 and Control and Protector Absorber Rods, Burnable Absorber Rods for generation of nuclear power falling under tariff item 8401 40 00 (*parts of nuclear reactors*).



REGULATORY AND POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

Consultation Paper on Review of Social Impact Fund and Social Stock Exchange Requirements; 9 February 2026

SEBI has issued a consultation paper dated 9 February 2026, proposing three changes to the Social Security Exchange (“SSE”) and Social Impact Fund (“SIF”) framework under the SEBI AIF Regulations, 2012. Firstly, the minimum investment amount for individual investors in SIFs is proposed to be reduced from Rs. 2,00,000 to Rs. 1,000. Secondly, the registration validity period for Not-for-Profit Organisations (“NPOs”) on the SSE is proposed to be extended from 2 years to 3 years. Thirdly, the minimum subscription requirement for Zero Coupon Zero Principal (“ZCZP”) instruments by NPOs is proposed to be lowered from 75% to 50% of the issue size.

MoEFCC uploads draft Eco-Sensitive Zone notifications for Lippa-Asarang Wildlife Sanctuary, Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary and Jaldapara National Park; 13 February 2026

Draft notifications dated 26 November 2015, 18 June 2020 and 11 April 2016 respectively; uploaded on the MoEFCC website on 13 February 2026, declaring Eco-Sensitive Zones (“ESZ”) around the Lippa-Asarang Wildlife Sanctuary (Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh; 31 km), the Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary (Rajsamand, Pali and Udaipur, Rajasthan; 610.528 sq. km) and the Jaldapara National Park (Alipurduar, West Bengal; 234.51 sq. km). The draft notifications prescribe a broadly consistent regulatory framework. All the three notifications define the extent and boundaries of the respective ecosystem, mandates a Zonal Master Plan within two years in consultation with relevant departments, and sets out special measures to be undertaken by State Governments concerning land use,

conservation of natural springs, tourism regulation, protection of natural and man-made heritage, pollution control, waste treatment and vehicular traffic management. All three notifications adopt a tripartite classification of activities within the ESZ, viz. prohibited activities (such as polluting industries and commercial mining, etc.), regulated activities (such as hotels, commercial use of natural resources and small-scale non-polluting industries) and promoted activities (such as organic farming and green technologies).

Green Methanol Standard for India; 27 February 2026

MNRE issued Green Methanol Standards for India vide notification dated 27 February 2026. Under the National Green Hydrogen Mission (“NGHM”), the MNRE has defined “Green Methanol” as methanol (CH_3OH) produced using Green Hydrogen. The standard imposes a quantified emissions cap, whereby total non-biogenic GHG emissions arising from Green Hydrogen production, methanol synthesis, purification, and on-site storage must not exceed 0.44 kilogram of CO_2 equivalent per kilogram of methanol ($kg\ CO_2\ eq/kg\ CH_3OH$), calculated as an average over the preceding 12-month period. For the methanol synthesis process, CO_2 may be sourced from biogenic sources, Direct Air Capture (“DAC”), or existing industrial sources.

Green Ammonia Standard for India; 27 February 2026

MNRE issued Green Ammonia Standards for India vide notification dated 27 February 2026. Under the NGHM, MNRE has defined “Green Ammonia” as ammonia (NH_3) produced using Green Hydrogen. The emissions threshold for Green Ammonia is stricter than that prescribed for methanol. Total non-biogenic GHG emissions arising from Green

Hydrogen production, ammonia synthesis, purification, compression, and on-site storage must not exceed 0.38 kilogram of CO_2 equivalent per kilogram of ammonia ($kg\ CO_2\ eq/kg\ NH_3$), taken as an average over the preceding 12-month period.

Terms and Conditions for Purchase and Sale of Carbon Credit Certificates Regulations, 2026; 27 February 2026

CERC has notified the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (Terms and Conditions for Purchase and Sale of Carbon Credit Certificates) Regulations, 2026, issued vide notification dated 27 February 2026, under Section 178(1) read with Section 66 of the Electricity Act, 2003, and the CCTS, 2023. The objective of these Regulations is to create a framework for the exchange of Carbon Credit Certificates (“CCCs”) between obligated and non-obligated entities on Power Exchanges. The Grid Controller of India has been designated as the Registry for CCC exchange. Two separate market segments have been established; a Compliance Market for obligated entities and an Offset Market for non-obligated entities. The denomination of one CCC equals one tonne of CO_2 equivalent (tCO_2e). Three or more defaults in a quarter shall result in a six-month ban from CCC trading.

Revised Norms for Appointment of Independent Third-Party Reviewer/Certifier for Green Debt Securities; 27 February 2026

SEBI issued circular dated 27 February 2027 modifying Chapter IX of the Master Circular for Issue and Listing of Non-Convertible Securities. The norms discuss about the appointment of an Independent third-party reviewer/certifier, in accordance with the definition under Regulation 2(1)



REGULATORY AND POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

(q) of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Issue and Listing of Non-Convertible Securities) Regulations 2021. The essential conditions for appointment of the reviewer have been notified. Firstly, the reviewer should be independent of the issuer, the directors, senior management and key managerial personnel (“KMP”). Secondly, the reviewer should be remunerated in a manner which prevents any kind of conflict of interest. Thirdly, the reviewer shall have expertise in assessing ESG debt securities. The reviewer may take one or more forms recommended by the International Capital Market Association (“ICMA”), including Second Party Opinion, Verification, Certification, and Scoring/Rating.

Draft Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Amendment Rules, 2026; 12 March 2026

MoP has circulated a draft amendment of Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules for stakeholder comments. These rules will be effective from 1 October 2026. The rules insert a definition of Demand Response as usage shifting via price signals or financial incentives. Rule 4(11) entails connection Service Level Agreements (“SLAs”) capped at 3 days (*metropolitan and municipal corporations*), 7 days (*other municipal*), 15 days (*rural*); 30 days for listed hilly rural areas; 90 days outer limit if mains extension or new substations are needed. Automatic flag where usage >5x or <1/5 of sixcycle average; review/resolve in 30 days; no disconnection if average bill is paid; go live within six months of commencement or earlier. The timeline for effective implementation of Time-of-Day (“ToD”) tariffs has been extended to 1 April 2027 for commercial and industrial (“C&I”) consumers and for all other consumers except agricultural consumers from 1 April 2028. A Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum

(“CGRF”) must be established by each distribution licensee, at two levels: one at the company level, and another at district or municipality level, as specified by the State Commission. The forum shall be headed by an officer of the licensee of appropriate seniority. Each forum shall consist of a chairperson and not more than three members including consumer representatives.

Electricity (Amendment) Rules, 2026 - Captive Generating Plant Requirements; 13 March 2026

MoP *vide* notification dated 13 March 2026, has notified the Electricity (Amendment) Rules, 2026, substituting Rule 3 of the Electricity Rules, 2005. The definition of “captive user” has been expanded to include consumption through an Energy Storage System (“ESS”). Where a captive user is a company, the definition is deemed to include its subsidiaries, holding company, and other subsidiaries of that holding company, all of which are collectively treated as a single captive user. The term “Special Purpose Vehicle” (“SPV”) has been defined as a legal entity established solely for owning, operating, and maintaining a generating station, treated as an Association of Persons (“AoP”). The qualification conditions remain at not less than 26% ownership and 51% consumption for captive use. Sub-rule (2)(d)(ii), (iii) and sub-rule (4) come into force on 1 April 2026; all other provisions are effective from 13 March 2026.

Launch of Indian Carbon Market Portal at Prakriti 2026; 21 March 2026

Shri Manohar Lal the Union Minister for Power & Housing and Urban Affairs, Shri Shripad Naik Minister of State for Power, and other dignitaries

launched the Indian Carbon Market Portal (www.indiancarbonmarket.gov.in) at the International Conference on Carbon Markets-Prakriti 2026 the flagship event of the Government of India, organized by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency under the patronage of the Ministry of Power and Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, commenced today in New Delhi. The portal was launched, which is the central platform for implementing and administering the Indian carbon market.

Guidelines for Storage and Handling of Waste Solar Photo-Voltaic Modules or Panels or Cells under E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2022; March 2026

CPCB has released Version 1.0 of its Guidelines for the Storage and Handling of Waste Solar Photo-Voltaic Modules, Panels or Cells under the E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2022. The guidelines address growing environmental and health concerns arising from the improper management of end-of-life solar waste, which may release toxic chemicals including lead, cadmium, and arsenic into the environment. The guidelines are applicable to producers, manufacturers, and recyclers, and set out requirements for safe transportation, handling, and storage of solar waste. Key provisions mandate the use of covered storage sheds with non-leachable, impervious flooring, fire protection systems, proper labelling, regular monthly inspections, and the provision of appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (“PPE”) for all personnel. Solar waste must not be disposed of in open areas or landfills and may only be handed over to registered recyclers. The guidelines further require producers to establish and publicize take-back and collection mechanisms for consumers.



REGULATORY AND POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

MoEFCC initiatives for general public for technology and environmentally friendly initiatives

MoEFCC has launched initiatives for public participation like the notification for expression of interest from manufacturing enterprises for Pilot projects, aiming at freezing the use of Hydrofluorocarbons (“HFC”) by 2028 and reduce 85% by 2047, implementing the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol, signed by India. Another initiative is the BioPackthon 2026, a competition launched wherein Department of Consumer Affairs has called for biodegradable, functional, plastic-free, scalable sachet packing solutions for pan masala and gutkha as an alternative to non-biodegradable sachets, which contribute to environmental pollution.

Small Hydro Power Development Scheme has been approved for the period FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31; 18 March 2026

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the ‘Small Hydro Power (“SHP”) Development Scheme for the period FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31’ with an outlay of Rs.2584.60 crore for installation of SHP Projects of an approximate capacity of 1500 MW. The scheme will support small hydro projects (*between 1-25 MW capacity*) to come up in different states, and will especially benefit hilly and North Eastern states with high potential for such projects. In North Eastern States and in districts with international borders, central financial assistance to the tune of Rs.3.6 crore per MW or 30% of the project cost, whichever is lower with an upper limit of Rs.30 crore per project will be available. In other states Rs.2.4 crore per MW or 20% of project cost, whichever is lower with a cap of Rs.20 crore per project would be available. This will help in tapping the small hydro potential in remote

and difficult to reach locations. An amount of Rs. 2,532 crore has been earmarked for such projects. This is likely to bring in Rs. 15,000 crore of investment in the small hydro sector giving a boost to the clean energy initiative, investment in remote and rural areas and creating significant employment opportunities.

CERC (First Amendment) Regulations, 2026 – Renewable Energy Certificates; 24 March 2026

The Central Electricity Regulatory Commission issued the First Amendment to its REC Regulations, 2022, effective from publication in the Gazette on 1 April 2026. Key changes include introducing definitions for “Designated Consumer” (under the Energy Conservation Act, 2001), “Renewable Consumption Obligation” (“RCO”), and “Virtual Power Purchase Agreement” (“VPPA”). The amendment revises the REC certificate multiplier framework, differentiating between plants commissioned before and after these regulations take effect. Pre-amendment plants retain a simpler multiplier (e.g., Solar/Wind at 1.0, Hydro at 1.5, Biomass/Biofuel at 2.5), while post-amendment plants follow a revised Appendix-1 based on three weighted factors: Tariff Range (40%), Technology Maturity (30%), and Capacity Credit/Peak Support (30%). Notable updated multipliers include Offshore Wind at 4.0, Pumped Hydro, Large Hydro, Biomass/Biofuel, Cogen, MSW, and BESS at 3.0, SHP at 2.5, and Hybrid RE at 1.5. A new Regulation 14A governs RECs under VPPAs, certificates are automatically transferred to the consumer or designated consumer for RPO/RCO compliance, with surplus certificates carried forward but not tradeable on exchanges. Certificate multiplier validity remains fifteen years from commissioning, after which one certificate equals one MWh.

CBIC announces three-month customs duty exemption on petrochemicals to address supply issues; 2 April 2026

CBIC has announced a three-month custom duty exemption on petrochemical goods in order to address the supply concerns in petrochemical sector. An estimated loss of Rs. 1800 crore is expected.

India Slashes Import Duties on Key Chemicals and Polymers to Nil; 1 April 2026

On 1 April 2026, India’s Ministry of Finance issued Customs Notification No. 12/2026, granting a full exemption from customs duty on 40 categories of chemicals and polymers imported into India. The exempted goods include essential industrial inputs such as methanol, acetic acid, Poly (ethylene terephthalate) (“PET”) chips, polycarbonates, polyurethanes, and various formaldehyde compounds. The notification, effective from 2 April 2026 through 30 June 2026, aims to serve the public interest by reducing raw material costs.

The Tarballs Management Rules, 2026; 3 April 2026

MoEFCC published draft Tar-balls Management Rules, 2026 under Sections 3, 6, and 25 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. These first-of-their-kind rules establish a framework for collection, storage, transport, treatment, and disposal of tar-balls. State governments must ensure shoreline clean-up and declare coastal tar-ball pollution a state disaster. District administrations handle on-ground collection with quarterly reporting to SPCB/PCC. The Indian Coast Guard manages surveillance and implements the National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan. CPCB must prepare model SOPs and develop an online compliance



REGULATORY AND POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

system within one year. The rules introduce Environmental Compensation based on the “polluter pays” principle, a seven-copy colour-coded manifest system, and mandatory SPCB authorisation valid for five years. Co-processing in cement kilns is permitted without EC.

Solar Energy Corporation of India has been designated as sole renewable energy implementing authority (REIA); 6 April 2026

MNRE has directed measures to bridge the gap between renewable energy bidding and actual power offtake. Solar Energy Corporation of India (“SECI”) is now the sole intermediary procurer for future bids, whilst other Renewable Energy Implementing Agencies (“REIAs”) focus on executing already-awarded projects. Agencies must review unsigned Power Sale Agreements (“PSAs”) and Power Purchase Agreements (“PPAs”), with stalled projects facing phased cancellation. Post-tender tariff renegotiations will be discouraged, and future bids must align with assessed state-level power demand, including peak requirements. Greenshoe options in bids are barred without regulatory approval. These reforms mark a decisive shift from capacity-driven growth to demand-backed deployment, ensuring PSAs and PPAs are effectively executed.

MNRE Approves 500 MW CfD Pilot to Transform Renewable Market; 7 April 2026

MNRE has approved the Contract for Difference (“CfD”) scheme, with SECI as the nodal agency, shifting India’s energy procurement from fixed PPAs to a market-driven system. Developers can sell electricity directly in the open market and on power exchanges. A strike price is determined through reverse bidding, and the CfD pool manages the difference

between market and strike prices. If the market price exceeds the strike price, developers deposit the surplus into the pool; if lower, the pool compensates them, ensuring revenue stability with market exposure. Gains and losses are shared 30:70 between developers and the CfD pool. Developers may also sell renewable energy certificates, remitting proceeds to the pool.

Government Notifies Two Key Institutions as Repositories under Biological Diversity Act, 2002; 7 April 2026

The National Biodiversity Authority notified two institutions as designated National Repositories under Section 39 of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, on 7 April 2026: (1) Referral Centre Bhavasagara (CMLRE, Kochi), specialising in deep-sea biodiversity with over 3,500 geo-referenced specimens, and (2) MACS Microorganism & Fungal Collection (ARI, Pune), focusing on anaerobic, extremophilic microorganisms and authenticated fungal cultures. These designations bring the total number of recognised repositories in India to 18, mandating that any person discovering a new tax on deposit voucher specimens with the appropriate repository.

Amendments to Mineral Concession Rules for Haematite Iron Ore ASP Methodology; 10 April 2026

The Ministry of Mines notified the Minerals Concession (Third Amendment) Rules, 2026, establishing a methodology for publishing ASP of Haematite Iron Ore below the 45% Fe threshold value, including BHQ and BHJ. ASP for 35%–below 45% Fe grade is set at 75% of the 45%–below 51% Fe grade ASP, and below 35% Fe at 50%, making beneficiation of low-grade ore economically viable. The amendment also clarifies that royalty on run-

of-mine shall apply on unprocessed lumps and fines if processing reduces economic value, preventing artificial lowering of mineral valuation.

India Raises Excise Duties and Cesses on High-Speed Diesel and Aviation Turbine Fuel; 11 April 2026

On 11 April 2026, the Ministry of Finance issued five Central Excise notifications raising the Special Additional Excise Duty (“SAED”) on High-Speed Diesel (“HSD”) to Rs. 24 per litre, the Road and Infrastructure Cess (“RIC”) on HSD to Rs. 36 per litre, and the SAED on Aviation Turbine Fuel (“ATF”) exports to Rs. 42 per litre, with immediate effect. These increases were triggered by surging global oil prices amid the West Asia conflict, which created price differentials incentivising exports over domestic supply. The measures aim to disincentivise petroleum exports, secure domestic fuel availability, and partially offset the revenue impact of the Rs. 10 per litre excise duty cut on petrol and diesel implemented in March 2026.

BEE Proposes New Energy Audit Regulations for DISCOMs; 15 April 2026

The Bureau of Energy Efficiency published draft regulations on 15 April 2026, superseding the 2021 notification and 2022 amendment, applicable to all distribution companies (“DISCOMs”) designated as consumers under the Energy Conservation Act, 2001. Key amendments include mandatory annual energy audits by accredited firms (submitted within four months to BEE and the State Designated Agency), new quarterly energy accounting by energy managers (submitted within 45 days), and stricter data verification and record-keeping obligations.



REGULATORY AND POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

Three standardised annexures prescribe reporting formats covering voltage-wise and division-wise loss breakdowns, DT details, and billing efficiency. Restructured entities are not treated as “new” DISCOMs. Public consultation is open for 30 days.

SEBI Reviews Social Stock Exchange Framework for NPOs; 15 April 2026

SEBI, in consultation with the Social Stock Exchange Advisory Committee, issued a circular on 15 April 2026 modifying the Social Stock Exchange (“SSE”) framework to promote Non-Profit Organization (“NPO”) participation. Key changes include extending the NPO registration period on the SSE from two years to three years without mandatory fund raising, and reducing the minimum subscription requirement for Zero Coupon Zero Principal Instruments (“ZCZP”) from 75% to 50%, provided the SSE conducts due diligence to ensure funds can be deployed meaningfully based on subscription scenarios in the Fund Raising Document. In cases of under-subscription, NPOs must disclose plans for raising balance capital and the potential impact on social objectives, with mandatory refund if minimum subscription is not met. The circular, issued under Section 11(1) of the SEBI Act, 1992, and Regulations 292F and 292K of the ICDR Regulations, is effective immediately.

Extension of timeline for submission of Renewable Consumption Obligation (“RCO”) compliance details for FY 2024–25 up to 31.05.2026; 16 April 2026

Various representations were received from Designated Consumers (“DC”) through the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (“BEE”) for seeking an

extension of the timeline for submission of RCO compliance for FY 2024-25. The extension was granted till 31 May 2026 by Ministry of Power.

NBA Streamlines ABS Fund Utilisation and Repository Guidelines; 17 April 2026

At its 77th meeting (March 2026), the National Biodiversity Authority (“NBA”) approved reforms under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, refining ABS fund management: when resources are accessed through institutions, 25-40% is allocated for conservation and 60–75% distributed to local communities via State Biodiversity Boards; where resource origin is unclear, a standard 30/70 split applies between institutions and the NBA. Updated repository guidelines emphasise digitisation for specimen identification and traceability, and stricter provenance record adherence.

SAF-Blended Aviation Fuel Under ATF Control Order; 23 April 2026

The Government amended the ATF (Regulation of Marketing) Order, 2001, via notification dated 17 April 2026, expanding the definition of ATF to include Sustainable Aviation Fuel (“SAF”) co-processed per IS 1571 and SAF conforming to IS 17081 blended with ATF. SAF is a renewable aviation-grade fuel derived from alternative feedstocks, compatible with aircraft engines and tested per International Civil Aviation Organization (“ICAO”)-recognised ASTM standards. This enables India’s indicative SAF blending targets for international flights 1% in 2027, 2% in 2028, and 5% in 2030 ahead of ICAO’s mandatory Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (“CORSA”) phase commencing in 2027, aligning India with global green aviation trends.

Insurance for All: Expanding Coverage, Strengthening Social Security; 23 April 2026

India, the 10th largest insurance market globally, is advancing its “Insurance for All by 2047” vision through the Sabka Bima, Sabki Raksha Act, 2025, raising FDI limits to 100%, GST exemption on life and health insurance premiums, and IRDAI regulatory reforms including a reduced moratorium period and guaranteed renewals. Key schemes being Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (“PMJJBY”) (26.88 crore enrolments), PMSBY (57.11 crore enrolments), Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (“AB-PMJAY”) (43.52 crore Ayushman cards), and Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (“PMFBY”) (93.98 crore applications) shall strengthen social security across life, health, accident, and crop insurance.

Small Hydro Power Development Scheme; 26 April 2026

India’s Union Cabinet approved the SHP Development Scheme for FY 2026-27 to FY 2030-31, with Rs.2,584.60 crore outlay targeting approximately 1,500 MW new capacity (1-25 MW projects under MNRE). Financial assistance for North Eastern states and border districts is Rs.3.6 crore per MW or 30% of project cost (whichever is lower), capped at Rs.30 crore per project; other areas receive Rs.2.4 crore per MW or 20%, capped at Rs.20 crore. The scheme is expected to attract Rs.15,000 crore in investment and generate approximately 51 lakh person-days of employment. India’s total SHP potential is 21,133.61 MW across 7,133 sites, with only 5,171 MW harnessed. A separate Rs.30 crore allocation supports Detailed Project Reports for at least 200 projects.



REGULATORY AND POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

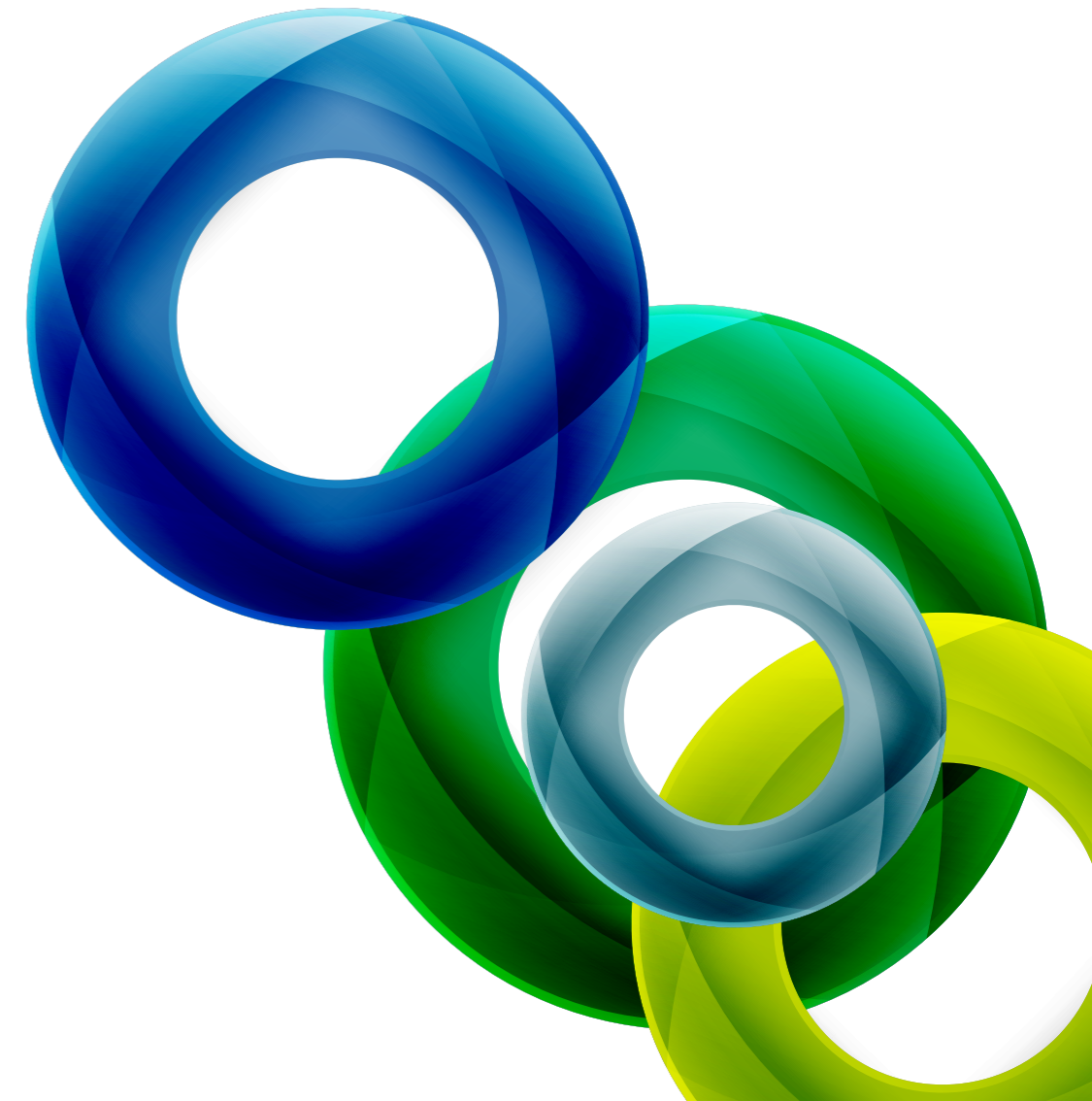
Corporate Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026; 24 March 2026

MCA has introduced certain changes with respect to Corporate Social Responsibility (“CSR”). Firstly, the mandatory spending threshold is proposed to increase from Rs. 5 crore to Rs. 10 crore net profit, which exempts small companies from mandatory CSR. Secondly, the timeline to transfer unspent CSR amounts for ongoing projects to the Unspent CSR Account has been extended from 30 to 90 days. Thirdly, the establishment of a CSR committee is not required up to a higher spend threshold, which has been increased from Rs. 50 lakhs to Rs. 1 crore.

MoEFCC and National Biodiversity Authority Launch Five-Year Biodiversity Governance Project; 26 April 2026

MoEFCC and National Biodiversity Authority launched a five-year project, ‘Strengthening Institutional Capacities for Securing Biodiversity Conservation Commitments’, backed by a USD 4.88 million Global Environment Facility (“GEF”) - United Nations Development Programme (“UNDP”) grant (2025–2030). It targets the Sathyamangalam landscape

in Tamil Nadu (Mudumalai and Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserves) and Garo Hills in Meghalaya (Nokrek Biosphere Reserve, Balpakram National Park, Siju Wildlife Sanctuary). Key objectives include mainstreaming biodiversity into GDPDs, strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions (“PRIs”) and Biodiversity Management Committees (“BMCs”), and promoting innovative financing through Access and Benefit Sharing (“ABS”) arrangements, CSR co-financing, and green micro-enterprises, with dedicated focus on women, Scheduled Castes, and tribal communities. The project advances India’s National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (“NBSAP 2024–2030”), the Kunming-Montreal 30x30 target, NDCs under the Paris Agreement, and Tamil Nadu/Meghalaya Vision 2030.





Transactions and Market Activity





Transactions and Market Activity

INDIA UPDATES

KPI Green Energy: Issuance of Rs. 670 Crore Corporate Green Bonds; 18 February 2026

KPI Green Energy has successfully raised Rs. 670 crore through the issuance of corporate green bonds, with capital exclusively earmarked for the expansion of hybrid solar-wind power generation capacity. The issuance is significant as it demonstrates continued investor appetite for green debt instruments in the Indian renewable energy sector.

Zero duty on nuclear imports to aid power sector expansion: Union Minister Jitendra Singh; 18 March 2026

India's government has exempted customs duty on nuclear fuel and reactor component imports until 2035, Union Minister Jitendra Singh confirmed in a written reply to the Lok Sabha. The measure aims to reduce project costs and per-unit electricity prices, boosting the viability of nuclear power projects, particularly those involving foreign collaboration. Domestically, Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd ("NPCIL") is strengthening the supply chain for ten new 700 MW Pressurized Heavy Water Reactor ("PHWR") units through bulk procurement and MSME focused vendor meets. Enhanced funding at Bhabha Atomic Research Centre ("BARC") supports research and development in Small Modular Reactors ("SMR"), hydrogen production, and isotope facilities for cancer treatment.

Govt extends ALMM rules to cover solar ingots, wafers from 1 June 2028; 18 March 2026

MNRE has expanded its Approved List of Models and Manufacturers ("ALMM") framework to include solar ingots and wafers under a new

ALMM List-III, effective 1 June 2028. The move mandates that all projects, including net-metering and open-access schemes, source wafers from approved domestic manufacturers, reducing reliance on Chinese imports. The list will be issued only once at least three independent manufacturers with a combined 15 GW capacity are operational. The initiative supports India's 500 GW non-fossil fuel target by 2030.

India's nuclear plants generated 56,681 MU of power in 2024-25: Jitendra Singh; 20 March 2026

India's nuclear power generation reached a record 56,681 million units ("MU") in FY 2024-25, up from 47,971 MU in 2023-24, Union Minister Jitendra Singh confirmed in the Rajya Sabha. The Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd ("NPCIL") operates 24 plants with an installed capacity of 8,780 MW, and the achievement helped avoid approximately 49 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions. Eighteen additional reactors totalling a capacity of 13,600 MW are to be implemented. This consists of 10 nuclear reactors that are under construction, which included a 500 MW Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor at Kalpakkam.

PM Surya Ghar Yojana Drives Energy Transition: 9.56 GW Rooftop Solar Capacity Added till March 2026; 25 March 2026

Under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana ("PMSG-MBY"), it has been estimated that Rooftop Solar ("RTS") installation in one crore households will produce renewable electricity of 1,000 billion units, which will result in reduction of 720 million ton of CO₂ emission during the 25 years of lifetime for rooftop solar projects. Since the launch of the PMSG-MBY in February 2024, a total of 9,566.89 MW RTS capacity has been added

across the country, as on 20.03.2026. With the implementation of PMSG-MBY, it has been estimated that around 17 lakh jobs will be created in manufacturing, logistics, supply chain, sales and installations, O&M services, financial services, etc.

Regulatory Reforms Under Biological Diversity (Amendment) Act, 2023 Lead to Surge in IPR Filings; 1 April 2026

National Biodiversity Authority reported a significant rise in IPR applications linked to India's biological resources, driven by the Biological Diversity (Amendment) Act, 2023. The amended law mandates applicants obtain a Certificate of Registration ("CoR") from NBA before seeking patents based on Indian biological resources, enhancing compliance and transparency. IPR applications rose from 857 in 2024-25 to 1,077 in 2025-26, spanning biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, food sciences, and agrochemicals. The streamlined registration-based system fosters responsible innovation, balancing scientific advancement with conservation priorities and ensuring fair and equitable benefit sharing.

India's Multi-Hazard Early Warning Decision Support System; 2 April 2026

India launched the Multi-Hazard Early Warning Decision Support System ("MHEW-DSS"), developed in-house by India Meteorological Department ("IMD") under Mission Mausam, officially in January 2024. The platform integrates satellite, radar, and observational data for real-time, impact-based warnings covering cyclones, floods, heatwaves, and landslides. It cut forecast preparation time by 50%, improved accuracy by 30%, and



TRANSACTIONS AND MARKET ACTIVITY

extended lead times from five to seven days. Over 90% of weather data processing is automated, generating approximately ₹250 crore in savings. Accurate cyclone forecasting enabled zero-casualty evacuations during Cyclones Biparjoy and Dana. Warnings reach nearly 80% of the population across 6.2 lakh villages via SMS, emails, Mausam app, **Common Alerting Protocol (“CAP”)**, and **Application Programming Interface (“APIs”)**. Farmers using its advisories reported 52.5% higher annual income. Accolades include the National Award for e-Governance 2025 and the **UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (“UNDRR”) Sasakawa Award**.

MNRE Updated 31 Wind Turbine Models to ALMM; 4 April 2026

MNRE updated the Approved List of Models and Manufacturers (“**ALMM**”) for wind turbines on 4 April 2026, adding 31 new wind turbine models to the list, formerly known as the Revised List of Models and Manufacturers (“**RLMM**”).

Puri Airport Gets Stage-1 EC from MoEFCC; 5 April 2026

Shree Jagannath International Airport in Puri, Odisha received Stage-1 EC from MoEFCC on 5 April 2026, following in-principle approval in June 2025 when the EAC recommended clearance. The proposed airport, on 471 hectares, will have a capacity of 4.6 million passengers p.a., with 27.88 hectares of forest land diverted under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980. Concerns regarding dolphins, Olive Ridley turtles, and cutting of 13,000 trees prompted the FAC to direct a detailed impact assessment and Conservation and Mitigation plan, requiring approval from the chief wildlife warden.

India’s Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor at Kalpakkam; 7 April 2026

India achieved a sustained nuclear chain reaction on 6 April 2026 at its 500 MW Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor in Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu, officially entering the second stage of its three-stage nuclear power programme. Built by **Bharatiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam Limited (“BHAVINI”)** with technology developed by the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research under the Department of Atomic Energy, this milestone advances India’s long-term nuclear energy vision.

Navi Mumbai Turning Textile Waste to Opportunity for Planet and People; 8 April 2026

Navi Mumbai launched a Textile Recovery Facility (TRF) in Belapur, integrating decentralised collection via 140 branded bins across 8 municipal wards (targeting 250), scientific sorting using the KOSHA handheld scanner for real-time fibre identification, and women-led livelihood generation, with over 300 women trained through ToT modules and 10+ women earning Rs. 9,000-15,000 per month. Over 30 MT of post-consumer textile waste has been collected, processing approximately 500 items daily, repositioning textile waste as a valuable component of the urban circular economy.

Cabinet Approves Hydroelectric Projects in Arunachal Pradesh; 8 April 2026

The Cabinet approved two major hydroelectric projects in Arunachal Pradesh with a combined outlay of Rs. 40,175.33 crore. The 1720 MW Kamala HEP (8 x 210 MW & 1 x 40 MW) in Kamle, Kra Daadi, and Kurung Kumey districts will generate 6,870 MU of energy, with an estimated completion

period of 96 months. The 1200 MW Kalai-II HEP (6 x 190 MW & 1 x 60 MW) in Anjaw district will generate 4,852.95 MU annually. Both projects provide the State with 12% free power and an additional 1% earmarked for the Local Area Development Fund (“**LADF**”), along with significant infrastructure development and socio-economic benefits for the region.

India Surpasses Brazil in Global Renewable Energy Rankings; 8 April 2026

India now ranks third globally in Renewable Energy Installed Capacity per IRENA’s Renewable Energy Statistics 2026, surpassing Brazil. India has achieved a total non-fossil capacity addition of 55.3 GW during FY 2025–26, with renewable energy installed capacity standing at 250.52 GW (as of December 2025) compared to Brazil’s 228.20 GW.

MNRE plans to reduce Rs. 2.4 lakh crore from subsidy to agriculture and households for DRE under PM Kusum and PM Surya Ghar Yojana; 8 April 2026

India’s DRE initiatives added a record 16.3 GW in FY26 under PM Kusum and PM Surya Ghar, with cumulative solar capacity reaching 150 GW and domestic module imports dropping 65% as local capacity hit 172 GW. MNRE plans to redirect funds from near-saturated farmer subsidies towards industry and household subsidies, aiming to reduce the Rs. 2.4 lakh crore subsidy burden.

MNRE and Ministry of Finance discuss the Production Linked Initiative for producing Polysilicon in India; 8 April 2026

MNRE is in discussions with Finance Ministry for designing a Production



TRANSACTIONS AND MARKET ACTIVITY

Linked Initiative (“PLI”) for production of polysilicon domestically. Polysilicon is the foundation raw material utilized in the production of over 95 percent of world’s solar panels. The industry at present is heavily dominated by Chinese manufacturers who control around 93 per cent of the global output.

India–Bhutan Partnership on Clean Energy and Sustainable Development; 9 April 2026

Union Power Minister Shri Manohar Lal undertook a four-day visit to Bhutan, meeting PM Tshering Tobgay and Energy Minister Lyonpo Gem Tshering. Both nations signed the Tariff Protocol for the 1020 MW Punatsangchhu-II Hydroelectric Project (power exports to India commenced September 2025) and a Methodology for Reactive Energy Accounting for enhanced grid stability and cross-border power trade. An enhanced bilateral institutional framework was established covering non-hydro energy, cross-border transmission, project financing, and capacity building, reinforcing India–Bhutan ties in clean energy and sustainable development.

Kandla Port Advances Methanol Bunkering Toward Green Maritime Transition; 9 April 2026

Deendayal Port Authority (Kandla Port) advanced methanol bunkering capabilities, achieving Level 6 on the IAPH Port Readiness Level scale following a DNV Maritime Advisory assessment. On April 2, 2026, a successful trial shore-to-ship methanol bunkering operation was conducted with partners including Stolt Tankers, J M Baxi, Aegis Vopak, and IOCL. The port targets approximately 500 KTPA of RFNBO-compliant e-methanol availability by 2028–29 to support dual-fuel vessels on the

Asia–Europe corridor, with ship-to-ship bunkering planned next, aligning with India’s net-zero maritime emissions goal by 2050.

Community-Led Rainwater Conservation Transforms Villages in Prakasam District, Andhra Pradesh; 9 April 2026

Villages in Prakasam district, namely, Murugummi, Marella, and Thangella, have become models of water resilience under the Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari campaign (Ministry of Jal Shakti), building nearly 195 conservation structures including percolation tanks, farm ponds, and rooftop systems, benefiting approximately 5,900 people. Murugummi received the Second-Best Village Panchayat Award at the 6th National Water Awards, 2024, for improved groundwater levels, enhanced agricultural productivity, increased milk production, and reduced distress migration.

India-Russia Round Table held to strengthen cooperation in steel sector 16 April 2026

On 16 April 2026, India and Russia held a round table discussion to strengthen bilateral cooperation in the steel sector. The meeting explored opportunities for collaboration in steel production, technology, raw material supply chains, and joint research and development.

Kankaria Coaching Depot: India’s First Water-Neutral Railway Depot; 17 April 2026

Ahmedabad’s Kankaria Coaching Depot became India’s first water-neutral railway depot, using phytoremediation, carbon and sand filtration, and UV disinfection to treat and reuse wastewater from coach washing and maintenance. The system saves 1.60 lakh litres of freshwater daily

(approximately 5.84 crore litres annually), significantly reducing water procurement costs and serving as a model for sustainable railway infrastructure.

River Basin Management Scheme (“RBM”); 17 April 2026

The RBM Scheme, continuing from 2026–27 to 2030–31 with a fully government-funded outlay of ₹2,183 crore under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, focuses on integrated planning for critical basins including the Barak, Brahmaputra, Indus, and Teesta. Key initiatives include flood and erosion control, protection of Majuli Island, and preparation of DPRs for irrigation and hydropower projects.

Ministry of Coal Launches 15th Round of Commercial Coal Mine Auctions; 17 April 2026

The Ministry of Coal launched the 15th round of commercial coal mine auctions, offering 11 coal blocks across five states to boost domestic coal availability for the steel and power industries. Key reforms include streamlined mining plan approvals, a “whole-of-government” approach to regulatory clearances, and promotion of surface and underground coal gasification for cleaner energy pathways. The strategy also emphasises scientific mine closure with ecological restoration, alongside enhanced rehabilitation, resettlement, and CSR initiatives for workers and local communities.

Circular Economy: Global Paradigm Shift; 20 April 2026

Dr Jitendra Singh, addressing the 2nd Global Symposium on Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy in New Delhi, stated that the concept



TRANSACTIONS AND MARKET ACTIVITY

of “waste” is disappearing as discarded materials become economic assets citing over ₹4,000 crore earned from scrap and e-waste during the Swachhata campaign and that recycling, biotechnology-driven innovations, and circular production systems will redefine industrial growth, create opportunities across households, MSMEs, and startups, and contribute to India’s net-zero 2070 commitment.

India–Republic of Korea Joint Statements on Energy Security & Sustainability; 20 April 2026

India and the ROK reaffirmed their Special Strategic Partnership, committing to strengthen energy supply chain resilience through the CEPA, with India supplying naphtha and petroleum feedstocks and the ROK supplying petroleum products and lubricant base oils. Key energy commitments include stable resource trade, LNG-consumer collaboration for market stability, and shipbuilding cooperation including setting up shipyards in India. On sustainability, the two sides concluded an MOC under Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement for carbon market and mitigation cooperation, signed an MOU on Climate and Environment, with the ROK joining the International Solar Alliance and India joining the Global Green Growth Institute, and agreed to expand cooperation in marine science, blue economy, and joint Arctic research programmes.

MoES Celebrates Earth Day 2026; 22 April 2026

Ministry of Earth Sciences (“MoES”) observed Earth Day 2026 under the theme “Our Power, Our Planet,” with Dr Shailesh Nayak highlighting risks such as shifting agricultural yields and projected water scarcity in the Ganga and Brahmaputra basins, and Secretary Dr M. Ravichandran

warning that global resource consumption exceeds regeneration by 1.8 times. MoES continues addressing these challenges through flagship initiatives including the Deep Ocean Mission and Mission Mausam, prioritising resilience and climate justice.

India Records Historic Growth in Wind Energy with 6.1 GW Addition in 2025–26; 22 April 2026

On 22 April 2026, Union Minister Shri Pralhad Joshi, at Wind Independent Power Producers Association’s (“WIPPA”) Foundation Day, highlighted India’s record 6.1 GW wind energy capacity addition in 2025–26. India now ranks fourth globally with over 56.1 GW installed capacity and 28 GW under implementation. The Minister expressed confidence in achieving 100 GW by 2030 and 156 GW by 2036, noting India’s estimated wind potential of 1,164 GW at 150-metre hub height. He emphasised wind energy as a vital complement to solar power, with nearly 45% of generation occurring during peak demand hours, reinforcing its critical role in India’s renewable energy strategy. India ranks third globally in renewable energy installed capacity per IRENA’s 2025 statistics, with 55.3 GW non-fossil capacity added in FY 2025–26, 29.2% non-fossil share in total generation (538.97 BU of 1,845.921 BU), peak non-fossil generation of 203 GW (51.5% of demand) in July 2025, and achieved 50% non-fossil installed capacity in June 2025 i.e. five years ahead of its 2030 NDC target under the Paris Agreement.

Clean Campus, Zero Waste: Smart Sanitation for Healthcare; 22 April 2026

NITRD in Delhi achieved Zero Waste to Landfill status through the

Swachh Sankalp program, managing over 1 ton of daily waste using 40 Gaia composting units, a Dry Waste Resource Centre, and comprehensive waste audits compliant with 2026 Solid Waste Management Guidelines.

NHRC Suo Motu Cognizance of Boiler Tube Explosion, Sakti, Chhattisgarh; 24 April 2026

NHRC took suo motu cognizance of a boiler tube explosion on April 14, 2026, at a thermal power plant in Sakti district, Chhattisgarh, which killed 13 workers and injured 20, issuing notices to the Chief Secretary and DGP of Chhattisgarh.

NHRC Suo Motu Cognizance of Sanitation Worker Deaths, Nuh, Haryana; 24 April 2026

NHRC took suo motu cognizance of the deaths of two Public Health Engineering Department (“PHED”)-engaged sanitation workers who inhaled toxic gases while cleaning a sewer without safety gear in Nuh, Haryana, noting violations of Supreme Court guidelines and issuing notices demanding compensation and investigation reports.

NHRC Suo Motu Cognizance of Firecracker Factory Explosion, Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu; 24 April 2026

NHRC took suo motu cognizance of a firecracker factory explosion on April 19, 2026, in Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu, which killed 18 workers and injured six, with over 100 workers including women present at the site.



TRANSACTIONS AND MARKET ACTIVITY

GLOBAL UPDATES**EU CBAM Definitive Compliance Phase Enters into Force; 1 January 2026**

India's past FTAs with ASEAN, Singapore, Japan and Thailand widened trade deficits because market access preceded domestic capacity building. This lesson is critical as India negotiates an EU FTA, given the EU's sustainability-linked trade framework, particularly CBAM, whose definitive phase began on 1 January 2026. Indian exporters in emissions-intensive sectors face immediate carbon accounting and verification obligations. Whilst Budget 2026's CCU allocation is positive, technology alone is insufficient. Exporter education, regulatory alignment and capacity building must accompany infrastructure investment to avoid repeating past mistakes and ensure the EU-India FTA serves as a template for developing economies adapting to sustainability-linked trade regimes.¹

CVM issues Resolutions 217, 218 and 219; 1 January 2026

The Brazilian Securities and Exchange Commission ("CVM") has finalized resolutions mandating that publicly traded companies disclose sustainability-related financial information in alignment with international IFRS S1 and S2 standards, effective 1 January 2026. The mandate reporting aligned with the ISSB standards. Through Resolutions 217 and 218, the voluntary period ends on 1 January 2026, making rigorous ESG disclosures mandatory for all listed entities. This regulatory shift requires companies to integrate climate-related risks and sustainability

metrics directly into their financial reporting cycles, subject to mandatory independent audits. By adopting the Brazilian Committee for Sustainability Pronouncements ("CBPS") Standards, based on IFRS S1 and S2, Brazil sets a "global baseline" that enhances investor confidence and reduces reporting fragmentation.

EU Taxonomy Simplification Delegated Regulation Published; 8 January 2026

Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2026/73 was published in the Official Journal on 8 January 2026. It aims to reduce the administrative burden on companies while maintaining the core objectives of the EU's green classification system. It has introduced key amendments like the Materiality Threshold, which states that companies can now exclude economic activities from detailed assessment if they represent less than 10% of turnover, CapEx, or OpEx. Secondly, Streamlined Templates, i.e. reporting templates for non-financial firms, were cut by approximately 64%, and by 89% for financial institutions. Thirdly, the "Do No Significant Harm" ("DNSH") criteria has been simplified, i.e. criteria for pollution prevention have been clarified that makes compliance more practical.

Financial Services Agency Finalises Phased Mandatory Sustainability Disclosure Roadmap; 8 January 2026

Japan's Financial Services Agency ("FSA") has published a final report establishing a phased roadmap for mandatory sustainability disclosure

and third-party assurance for Tokyo Stock Exchange ("TSE") Prime Market-listed companies, based on the Sustainability Standards Board of Japan ("SSBJ") Standards. These standards are aligned with the ISSB's IFRS S1 and S2. Companies with a market capitalisation of JPY 3 trillion or more must disclose from FY ending March 2027 and with capitalisation of at least JPY 1 trillion but less than JPY 3 trillion must disclose from FY ending March 2028.

Standard Chartered Issues Inaugural EUR 1 Billion Green Bond; 8 January 2026

Standard Chartered PLC has issued its first green-only bond, raising EUR 1 billion to finance renewable energy, sustainable water and natural resources, green buildings, circular economy solutions, energy efficiency and climate-resilient infrastructure across Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

UK ETS Extension to Maritime Activities Legislation Laid; 13 January 2026

The Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trading Scheme (Amendment) (Extension to Maritime Activities) Order 2026 was laid before Parliament on 13 January 2026, extending the United Kingdom Emissions Trading Scheme ("UK ETS") to cover domestic maritime emissions from 1 July 2026. The Order applies to vessels of 5,000 gross tonnage and above undertaking domestic voyages between UK ports.

¹ Reference: "How FTA with EU Can Deliver Real Value for India" by Dr. Shardul S. Shroff and Komal Karnik, published in The Hindu BusinessLine, February 24, 2026



TRANSACTIONS AND MARKET ACTIVITY

House of Representatives Passes ERISA ESG Investment Restriction Bill; 15 January 2026

The U.S. House of Representatives has passed H.R. 2988, amending the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (“ERISA”) to restrict how retirement plan managers consider ESG factors in investment decisions. The bill requires strict focus on pecuniary factors, bars non-pecuniary goals except in narrow tie-break situations, such as when fiduciaries are not able to differentiate between otherwise equivalent investment alternatives. The bill reflects the ongoing political aspect in the United States regarding the incorporation of ESG considerations in fiduciary investment decisions.

CMA Publishes Supply Chain Green Claims Guidance; 15 January 2026

The Competition and Markets Authority (“CMA”) of the UK has published the first comprehensive cross-sector guidance, ‘Making green claims: Getting it right, across the supply chain’. It serves as a reminder that how UK consumer protection law applies to environmental claims at every stage of the supply chain. The guidance clarifies that Retailers may be held liable for false or misleading labels, which have been used by manufacturers originally, but have been communicated by the retailer. Additionally, the responsibility which is shared by the actors in the supply chain has been emphasized, i.e. while evaluating as to whether law has been complied with or not, it will be checked that what information was held by which party and what steps could have been taken by each party to ensure accuracy. It also emphasises on the fact of accuracy of the claims. The guidance is backed by the Digital Markets, Competition

and Consumers Act 2024 (“DMCCA”), which allow fines of up to 10% of global turnover directly.

South Korea: Financial Services Commission Releases Draft Mandatory Sustainability Disclosure Roadmap; Early 2026

South Korea’s Financial Services Commission (“FSAC”) has released a draft roadmap for mandatory sustainability disclosures based on the Korean Sustainability Disclosure Standards (“KSSB”). The rules encompass KSSB1 i.e. General Requirements for Sustainability-related Financial Disclosures and KSSB 2 i.e. Climate-related Disclosures aligned with the ISSB’s IFRS S1 and S2, with a consultation period open until 31 March 2026. Korea Composite Stock Price Index (“KOSPI”)-listed companies with consolidated assets exceeding KRW 30 trillion (*approximately USD 20.4 billion*) would begin reporting from FY 2027.

IEEFA Report on Corporate Transition Planning Gaps in India; 30 January 2026

The Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (“IEEFA”) has published an analysis assessing 33 high-emitting companies across six sectors in India, finding that while net-zero ambitions are frequently announced, they lack quantified, financially integrated execution pathways. Only 7 of the 33 companies assessed established a clear link between emissions targets and transition levers. Only 11 conduct climate scenario analysis, only 10 have dedicated senior sustainability leadership, and only 9 link climate or ESG performance to executive incentives. The report underscores the gap between corporate climate commitments and their operational implementation in India’s high-emitting sectors.

Deutsche Bank Issues Inaugural EUR 500 Million European Green Bond; 10 February 2026

In January 2026, Deutsche Bank successfully issued its inaugural European Green Bond (“EuGB”), raising €500 million. This marks a significant milestone as the first issuance aligned with the rigorous new EU Green Bond Standard. The bond, featuring a 4-year tenor and 2.875% coupon, specifically targets the refinancing of EU Taxonomy-compliant residential real estate. Capital raised from this bond will be used solely to refinance residential real estate loans within the “Green Buildings” sector of Deutsche Bank’s Sustainable Instruments Framework.

LSEG Launches New ESG Scoring Framework to Improve Transparency Across Global Markets; 9 March 2026

The London Stock Exchange Group (“LSEG”) has launched a new suite of ESG scores and sustainability analytics. It is aimed at improving transparency, comparability, and analytical depth for financial institutions operating in rapidly evolving regulatory environments. The framework is aligned with International Sustainability Standards Board (“ISSB”), Global Reporting Initiative (“GRI”), Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (“SASB”) and the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (“ESRS”) frameworks. The framework covers more than 16,000 companies and represents more than 90% of the global market capitalization. The framework is also aimed at direct integration of finances into ESG decision making by investors. The companies will be evaluated across 12 themes related to ESG, which are aggregated into three broad categories, and finally an overall ESG score is given. The scoring is from a 0 to 5 scale, ranging from limited awareness to industry leader.



TRANSACTIONS AND MARKET ACTIVITY

Africa's tyre waste crisis: Technology exists, scale doesn't; 12 March 2026

Africa faces a mounting tyre waste crisis, with countries such as Nigeria, South Africa, and Tanzania generating millions of end-of-life tyres annually. Discarded tyres pose serious health and environmental hazards, serving as breeding grounds for disease-carrying mosquitoes and releasing toxic fumes when burned. While recycling technologies, including mechanical crumbing, pyrolysis, and devulcanisation exist globally, Africa has only a handful of industrial-scale facilities, leaving most waste tyres unprocessed. Small-scale retreading and upcycling efforts help but cannot match the volume. Experts stress that stronger regulations, extended producer responsibility ("EPR"), and market-building measures for recycled rubber are essential to bridge the gap.

AI Washing Becomes the New Greenwashing: The \$1.5 Billion Collapse of Builder.ai; 16 March 2026

Artificial Intelligence ("AI") Washing is the practice of companies overstating AI capabilities to attract investment, which draws a parallel to greenwashing in ESG. London-based startup Builder.ai, once valued at \$1.5 billion, has entered liquidation following a \$37 million creditor seizure, amid allegations of inflated revenues and overstated AI capabilities. The company marketed itself as an AI-driven "no-code" platform but reportedly relied heavily on human engineers to perform work it described as automated. The case highlights the growing risk of "AI washing", exaggerating a system's autonomy or mislabeling conventional software as AI to attract premium valuations. For investors, the episode raises serious questions around governance, financial reporting controls, board oversight, and the rigour

of technical due diligence. As regulators across the UK, the EU, and the US tighten AI transparency requirements, firms and investors should expect heightened scrutiny of AI claims. Much as greenwashing prompted stricter ESG disclosure standards, AI washing may drive a new wave of governance and accountability frameworks across capital markets.

Apple Wins US Greenwashing Case as EU Rulings Tighten Scrutiny on Carbon Neutral Claims; 17 March 2026

A US federal court dismissed a class-action greenwashing suit against Apple, ruling that plaintiffs failed to plausibly allege its "carbon neutral" claims were false or misleading. The decision offers legal reassurance for corporates using carbon offsets backed by credible verification. However, Apple lost a similar case in Germany, where courts applied stricter standards around durability and consumer interpretation of climate claims. With greenwashing litigation doubling globally since 2020 and US-EU regulatory approaches diverging, multinationals face jurisdiction-specific risks. Firms should advise clients to ensure climate communications are substantiated, transparent, and tailored to the regulatory expectations of each relevant market.

EU Platform Pushes ESRS Overhaul to Align Taxonomy, Cut Duplication in Corporate Reporting 19 March 2026

Brussels is entering a critical reform phase for corporate sustainability reporting. The platform on Sustainable Finance has delivered targeted recommendations to overhaul European Sustainability Reporting Standards ("ESRS") with a focus of aligning them with EU taxonomy and eliminating duplicative reporting obligations across multiple directives. The technical concern is that the current ESRS framework overlaps with

Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation ("SFDR"), EU Taxonomy and Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive ("CSRD") requirements, resulting in compliance burden for companies. This overall signal a rationalization effort at the heart of Europe's ESG regulatory architecture.

EnerVenue Raises \$300M for Lithium-Free Energy Storage; 1 April 2026

EnerVenue raised \$300 million to scale its lithium-free energy storage solutions.

Nestlé Launches Project to Improve Human Rights in the Coffee Supply Chain; 1 April 2026

Nestlé and the International Labor Organization ("ILO") have launched a two-year project to improve labor rights and protections in coffee supply chains across Brazil, Colombia, and Mexico. Supported by the Nescafé Plan 2030, this initiative focuses on promoting fair recruitment and strengthening worker safety for vulnerable families in the sector. Read the full story at Nestlé.

Mombak Issues Carbon Removal Credits with Isometric; 2 April 2026

Mombak issued carbon removal credits and expanded its reforestation efforts in partnership with Isometric.

EU Commission Launches ETS Carbon Market Reform; 2 April 2026

The European Commission proposed an emergency EU ETS adjustment to



TRANSACTIONS AND MARKET ACTIVITY

halt automatic invalidation of allowances in the Market Stability Reserve, maintaining a larger buffer against price volatility. A comprehensive ETS review is planned for July 2026.

EU CBAM Impact on Indian Exports; 4 April 2026

The EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, effective 1 January 2026, is pressuring India's steel, aluminium, cement, and fertiliser exports by linking market access to verified emissions. Indian steel shipments to Europe have already declined, and aluminium exports have softened. Industries are responding by piloting hydrogen-ready DRI plants, expanding EAF capacity, increasing renewable energy use, and lowering clinker ratios.

EU Parliament Sets Stricter Water Pollution Standards; 5 April 2026

The EU Parliament approved updated water pollution standards amending Directives 2000/60/EC, 2006/118/EC, and 2008/105/EC to include PFAS, microplastics, and pharmaceuticals like ibuprofen. Member states must transpose the rules by December 2027, though full compliance is not required until 2039, with potential extensions to 2045.

"What a Waste 3.0" Report; 7 April 2026

The World Bank's report reveals global waste reached 2.56 billion tonnes in 2022, projected to hit 3.86 billion tonnes by 2050, with Sub-Saharan Africa expecting a 124% rise. With 30% of waste uncollected or openly dumped and the sector being the third-largest anthropogenic methane source (~20% of global emissions), the report calls for a systemic shift

to resource recovery, universal collection, and stronger producer accountability.

Apave Launches Sustainability Platform; 7 April 2026

Apave launched Apave Impact, a sustainability and ESG consulting subsidiary formed through acquisitions of Dutch firm DDA and Aktio, with over 100 experts offering carbon measurement, environmental assessments, and Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive ("CSDR") compliance services across France and Europe.

Microsoft Signs 15-Year BECCS Carbon Removal Deal; 7 April 2026

Microsoft signed a 15-year agreement with Svante and Meadow Lake Tribal Council for 626,000 tonnes of CDR credits from the North Star bioenergy with carbon capture and storage ("BECCS") Project in Canada, utilising forestry waste with permanent geologic storage to support its carbon-negative-by-2030 goal.

AWS Carbon Footprint Tracking; 7 April 2026

AWS launched its Sustainability Console, building on the 2022 Customer Carbon Footprint Tool ("CCFT"), enabling sustainability and reporting teams to measure estimated carbon emissions by Scope 1, 2, and 3, broken down by region and service. The console features downloadable monthly and annual reports using market-based and location-based methods, configurable reporting periods, and API/SDK access for integration into existing workflows.

Switzerland Proposes Sustainability Reporting Law; 7 April 2026

Switzerland introduced the Federal Act on Sustainable Corporate Governance, aligning with EU CSRD and CSDDD frameworks. It mandates sustainability reporting (ESRS-compliant) for firms with 1,000+ employees and CHF 450 million revenue, and stricter supply chain due diligence for firms with 5,000+ employees and CHF 1.5 billion revenue.

Indonesia Sets B50 Biofuel Mandate by 2028; 8 April 2026

Indonesia mandated a 50% palm oil biodiesel blend ("B50") for all diesel users by 2028, with phased implementation starting B40, then B50 from 1 July 2026, alongside planned ethanol blending (5–10%) and a sustainable aviation fuel mandate from 2027. The policy aims to reduce fuel imports and strengthen energy security, though expansion of palm-based biofuels raises deforestation, biodiversity, and ESG compliance concerns.

Ara Partners Invests \$500M in Sedron; 9 April 2026

Ara Partners invested \$500 million in Sedron Technologies to scale its Varcor technology, which converts municipal biosolids and agricultural manure into clean water, fertiliser, and renewable energy. Deployment will expand across North America, including projects in Florida and Wisconsin targeting methane reduction.

JP Morgan Signs 10-Year Carbon Removal Deal; 9 April 2026

JPMorgan Chase signed a 10-year agreement with Graphyte for 60,000 tons of durable CDR credits using "Carbon Casting" technology to permanently sequester biomass from projects in Arkansas and Arizona.



TRANSACTIONS AND MARKET ACTIVITY

Sora Fuel Raises \$14.6M; 9 April 2026

Sora Fuel raised \$14.6 million to develop synthetic jet fuel produced from air, water, and clean energy.

Turkey outlines 'COP of the Future' vision with new partnership model and action-driven agenda; 15 April 2026

Turkey has unveiled its "COP of the Future" vision for 2026, featuring a unique partnership with Australia where Turkey holds the presidency and Australia acts as the President of Negotiations. This collaborative model aims to enhance diplomatic efficacy, featuring a "Troika" approach with Azerbaijan and Brazil to ensure policy continuity.

ISSB to Develop Non-Mandatory Nature-Related Reporting Requirements; 23 April 2026

The International Sustainability Standards Board ("ISSB") confirmed it will develop nature-related reporting requirements as a non-mandatory IFRS Practice Statement rather than a standalone standard, to avoid disrupting implementation of IFRS S1 and S2. Chair Emmanuel Faber noted that material nature-related disclosures are already required under IFRS S1, with the Practice Statement providing compliance guidance. The Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures ("TNFD") has paused its own technical programme in response. The ISSB may elevate the content to a formal standard in future, and individual jurisdictions can make the Practice Statement compulsory.

Amazon Signs 685,000 Ton Carbon Credit Deal for Rice Farming in India; 23 April 2026

Amazon signed a long-term carbon credit offtake agreement with Bayer-owned The Good Rice Alliance ("TGRA") to purchase over 685,000 metric tons of CO₂-equivalent credits from methane reduction in Indian rice farming. TGRA works with over 13,000 smallholder farmers across 35,000 hectares, using Alternate Wetting and Drying ("AWD") and Direct Seeded Rice ("DSR") techniques, with reductions verified under Verra's VM0051 methodology in partnership with IRRI.

UAE Exits OPEC and OPEC+; 29 April 2026

The UAE declared its departure from OPEC on 29 April 2026, citing its "longer-term economic vision," with potential implications for global oil supply and pricing dynamics. The World Bank has also warned that the West Asia conflict may trigger energy price surges, impacting base metals like aluminium, copper, and tin, as well as the fertiliser industry.





Dispute Resolution and Enforcement Trends





Dispute Resolution and Enforcement Trends

SUPREME COURT OF INDIA

A polluting company's turnover or project cost can be treated as a relevant factor in determining the quantum of environmental damage compensation

*M/s Rhythm County vs. Satish Sanjay Hegde & Ors*²

The Supreme Court, in a Division Bench of Dipankar Datta and Vijay Bishnoi, JJ., dismissed appeals by Pune-based developers M/s. Rhythm County and M/s. Key Stone Properties against environmental compensation imposed by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) on 30 January 2026. Joint Committees found both developers had violated environmental norms, including constructing without valid statutory consents and continuing activities despite stop-work and closure directions. The NGT imposed compensation of Rs. 5 crores and Rs. 4,47,42,188 respectively. The central issues were whether the NGT can impose environmental compensation absent a legislatively prescribed quantification framework, and whether it may adopt project cost or turnover as a yardstick under Sections 15, 17, and 20 of the NGT Act, 2010. The Court held that Parliament deliberately conferred wide, flexible, and principle-oriented powers on the NGT. Section 15 empowers the Tribunal to grant relief and compensation "as the Tribunal may think fit," while Section 20 guides this discretion through sustainable development, the precautionary principle, and the polluter pays principle. Rejecting the argument that a fixed statutory

formula was necessary, the Court held that environmental compensation jurisprudence does not admit of a uniform or straitjacket formula. On the use of project cost or turnover, the Court observed that the scale of operations bears a direct nexus to environmental footprint, and where a proponent profits from scale, it must bear proportionate responsibility. Relying on *Goel Ganga Developers India (P) Ltd. vs. Union of India* (2018) 18 SCC 257³, the Court reiterated that 5% of project cost serves as a general guiding benchmark, though not an inflexible ceiling. Both compensations were upheld as rational, proportionate, and within permissible judicial discretion.

Supreme Court quashes change of land use from 'Orange' to 'Red', emphasizing primacy of statutory environmental protection rather than administrative convenience

*Harbinder Singh Sekhon & Ors. vs. State of Punjab & Ors.*⁴

The Supreme Court bench of Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta, JJ., allowed civil appeals and writ petitions challenging a Change of Land Use ("CLU") granted to Shree Cement North Private Limited for a cement grinding unit in Sangrur, Punjab, and the CPCB's reclassification of stand-alone grinding units from "Red" to "Orange" category. The appellants, comprising agriculturists and a school, argued the site fell in a rural agricultural zone where red-category industries were impermissible under the Master Plan. The Court held that a CLU cannot authorise a use prohibited under the

operative Master Plan, as it is merely a regulatory permission subordinate to the Plan's zoning prescriptions. It further ruled that a subsequent administrative approval cannot retrospectively cure an unlawful CLU or operate as a Master Plan amendment, which requires the statutory procedure under the PRTPD Act. The Court also found non-compliance with siting norms and the requirement for prior environmental clearance under the EIA Notification, 2006. The CPCB's reclassification was quashed as violative of the precautionary principle and Articles 14 and 21. The Court emphasised that sustainable development is "a principle of prioritisation" and that no financial investment justifies continuation of an illegal project.

Supreme Court Issues Sweeping Nationwide Directions on Solid Waste Management

*Bhopal Municipal Corporation vs. Dr Subhash C Pandey & Ors.*⁵

In two appeals arising from National Green Tribunal orders concerning Bhopal Municipal Corporation's environmental compliance, the Division Bench of the Supreme Court of India comprising Justice Pankaj Mithal and Justice S.V.N. Bhatti, on 19 February 2026, issued sweeping nationwide directions for implementing the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016 (and the subsequent 2026 digital-first circular economy framework). Noting that CPCB data for 2021-2022 revealed roughly 170,000 tonnes per day of municipal solid waste generated against only 91,000 tonnes treated, the Court anchored its intervention in Article 21, holding

² M/s Rhythm County vs. Satish Sanjay Hegde & Ors 2026 INSC 102

³ Goel Ganga Developers India (P) Ltd. vs. Union of India (2018) 18 SCC 257

⁴ Harbinder Singh Sekhon & Ors. vs. State of Punjab & Ors. 2026 INSC 159

⁵ Bhopal Municipal Corporation vs. Dr Subhash C Pandey & Ors. Civil Appeal No. 6174 of 2023 and Civil Appeal No. 7728 of 2023



DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

that the right to a clean environment is inseparable from the Right to Life and observing that the 2026 Rules embody “the will expressed by the parliament.” The Court designated elected ward representatives as lead facilitators for source-segregation education, directed MoEFCC to issue implementation directions to all Chief Secretaries under Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, empowered District Collectors to conduct infrastructure audits and oversee local bodies, mandated four-stream segregation infrastructure (Wet, Dry, Sanitary, Special Care), required Bulk Waste Generators to achieve full compliance by 31 March 2026, prescribed a three-tier enforcement mechanism of fines, criminal prosecution, and personal liability of negligent officials, ordered inclusion of solid waste management in school curricula, and required a joint sworn affidavit certifying digital and physical infrastructure readiness remarking pointedly that “the present generation cannot afford to wait for further legislative refinement while existing implementation gaps persist.”

Supreme Court dismisses PIL alleging wildlife trade violations by Vantara

***Karanartham Viramah Foundation vs. Union of India*⁶**

The Supreme Court of India, on 9 March 2026, dismissed Writ Petition (Civil) No. 1113/2025 filed by Karanartham Viramah Foundation against the Union of India and others. The petition, filed under Article 32, alleged violations of CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) by Greens Zoological Rescue and Rehabilitation

Centre (Respondent No. 5) and Radha Krishna Temple Elephant Welfare Trust (Respondent No. 6), seeking disclosure of records, constitution of an independent monitoring committee, proceedings under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, a comprehensive SOP for CITES permit verification, and a moratorium on imports of Appendix I animals by private zoos. The Bench, comprising Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra and Justice N.V. Anjaria, held that the subject matter had already been examined in W.P.(C) No. 783/2025, where an SIT report, accepted by the Court on 15 September 2025, found no violation of domestic or international law. The CITES Secretariat document relied upon by the petitioner itself confirmed no evidence of improper imports or commercial purposes. The Court further noted that lawfully completed imports cannot be retrospectively treated as prohibited, and disturbing settled custody of living animals could itself constitute cruelty.

Supreme Court Declines to Intervene in Bhopal Gas Tragedy Waste Disposal Matter, Directs Petitioner to Approach High Court

***Bhopal Gas Peedith Sangharsh Sahyog Samiti vs Union of India*⁷**

The Supreme Court of India, on 16 March 2026, disposed of Special Leave Petition filed by Bhopal Gas Peedith Sangharsh Sahyog Samiti. The petition concerned the remediation and final disposal of hazardous waste and residual ash generated after the incineration of toxic material at the former Union Carbide India Ltd. (“UCIL”) site in Bhopal, linked to the Bhopal Gas

Tragedy. The petitioner, relying on a report by Dr Asif Qureshi, Professor at IIT Hyderabad, raised apprehensions about mercury contamination and potential groundwater leakage from the ash dumped at TSDF Pithampur. The Bench, comprising the Chief Justice and Justice Joymalya Bagchi, declined to interfere with the High Court’s order, noting that the disposal had been carried out following precautionary methods recommended by subject experts. The Court observed that the appropriate recourse for the petitioner was to file an application before the High Court with supporting material to flag its concerns regarding potential future leakage. Given that the High Court had been monitoring the matter for over two decades, the Court requested it to consider such an application on merits and pass appropriate orders in the larger public interest

HIGH COURTS OF INDIA

Kerala High Court Halts New Construction in Kottuli Wetlands, Directs Ramsar Site Designation Within Three Months

Sarvoaram Prakrithi Samrakshana Samiti vs. Ministry of Environment and Forests and Climate Change & Ors. 8 ; dated 19 February 2026

In WP(C) No. 9445 of 2025 and connected cases, the bench of Hon’ble Chief Justice Mr. Soumen Sen and Hon’ble Mr. Justice Syam Kumar V.M. at the High Court of Kerala at Ernakulam, by its order dated 19 February 2026, addressed a petition by Sarovaram Prakrithi Samrakshana Samiti and others against the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate

⁶ Karanartham Viramah Foundation vs. Union of India & Ors. Writ Petition (Civil) No. 1113 of 2025

⁷ Bhopal Gas Peedith Sangharsh Sahyog Samiti vs Union of India , SLP (Civil) Diary No. 8813/ 2026

⁸ Sarvoaram Prakrithi Samrakshana Samiti vs. Ministry of Environment and Forests and Climate Change & Ors. Writ Petition (Civil) No. 9445 of 2025



DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

Change, the State of Kerala, Kerala State Wetland Authority, Kozhikode Municipal Corporation, and others including private developers (Respondents 1-22). The petitioners, an environmental conservation society, sought directions to restrain ongoing construction, reclamation, and public functions in the Kottuli wetlands, Kozhikode. The Court, finding merit in the petitioners' submission that new construction would defeat the purpose of the Ramsar designation process, directed the District Collector and Kozhikode Corporation to ensure no new constructions are carried out within the prohibited area under the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017. The legality of existing buildings was reserved for later consideration. The Court further directed the concerned authorities to complete the Ramsar designation process within three months and requested the Union of India to coordinate accordingly. The order effectively imposes an interim ban on all new construction activity within the Kottuli wetlands, reinforcing wetland protection under the 2017 Rules whilst the Ramsar Site designation process is expedited. The matter is now posted for 21 May 2026.

Madras High Court Issues 34 Directions for Complete Eradication of *Prosopis Juliflora* Across Tamil Nadu

***Vaiko, General Secretary, Marumalarchi Dravida Munetra Kalagam (MDMK) & Ors. vs. Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu*⁹ ; 18 March 2026**

In an order dated 18 March 2026, a Division Bench of the Madras High Court

comprising Justice N. Sathish Kumar and Justice D. Bharatha Chakravarthy issued 34 sweeping directions for the complete eradication of *Prosopis juliflora* (Seemai Karuvelam), a highly invasive South American species, from all lands across Tamil Nadu. The PIL, filed in 2014 by MDMK leader Vaiko and others, highlighted the species' devastating ecological impact, including groundwater depletion, destruction of native flora, and worsening man-animal conflict, with elephants alone spreading 200 to 300 seeds per dropping and rendering piecemeal removal futile. The 34 directions include mechanical uprooting through public auction at a minimum price of Rs 4,000 per ton, a 30-day deadline for private landowners, appointment of two retired High Court judges as a Special Committee to supervise implementation, mandatory replanting of native species within 30 days of removal, progressive "combing operations" to declare areas invasive-free, creation of a dedicated project webpage and social media channels, involvement of corporates through CSR funds, student volunteers, and the general public, and a novel ban on all plastic and paper use during project activities, requiring only digital or natural materials.

Kerala HC directs ECI to probe PVC flex violations in poll ads under Model Code

***Human Rights Foundations vs. State of Kerala*¹⁰**

Kerala High Court comprising of Chief Justice Soumen Sen and Justice Syam Kumar V.M., on 1 April 2026 directed the Election Commission of India and the Chief Electoral Officer, Kerala to look into the petitioner's

grievances concerning the use of PVC flex banners in election advertisements. The petitioner, a human rights NGO, alleged that political parties were deploying PVC flex hoardings across major cities in violation of State Government Orders from 2018 onwards banning non-recyclable plastics for advertisements, reinforced by Kerala SPCB circulars and the Election Commission's "Green Protocol" guidelines. The petition was supported by photographic evidence, municipal complaints, studies from Suchitwa Mission, and Government Orders, highlighting PVC's environmental harm including bioaccumulation and dioxin release. Counsel for the Election Commission submitted that steps had already been taken regarding Model Code of Conduct violations relating to PVC flex and similar materials. The Bench recorded this assurance

NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL

Varanasi Ganga Tent City Violations

***Tushar Goswami vs. Union of India & Ors.; National Green Tribunal, Principal Bench, New Delhi*¹¹**

The Principal Bench of the National Green Tribunal, New Delhi, comprising Justice Prakash Shrivastava (Chairperson) and Dr. A. Senthil Vel (Expert Member), adjudicated a challenge against two private Tent Cities erected on the Ganga riverbed opposite Assi Ghat, Varanasi, alleging river pollution, sewage discharge, harm to biodiversity, and violation of the 2016 River Ganga Authorities Order. A seven-member Joint Committee found that

⁹ Vaiko, General Secretary, Marumalarchi Dravida Munetra Kalagam (MDMK) & Ors. vs. Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu W.P.(MD)Nos.16485 of 2015 & 14699 of 2015 & W.P.No.3075 of 2017

¹⁰ Human Rights Foundations vs. State of Kerala, WP(PIL) No. 80 of 2026 - 2026:KER:29807 (Neutral Citation)

¹¹ Tushar Goswami vs. Union of India & Ors., Original Application No. 203/2023, National Green Tribunal, Principal Bench, New Delhi



DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

both Tent Cities operated without Consent to Operate from the UPPCB, were built within the High Flood Level using permanent brick sewage chambers as soak pits without impervious liners, and lacked mandatory NMCG permission. The Tribunal held that clear environmental violations occurred between 15 January and 31 May 2023, imposed compensation of Rs. 17,12,500 on each proponent, and directed its recovery within three months. On the de-notification of the Kachhua Turtle Sanctuary, the Tribunal declined jurisdiction as the matter was sub judice before the Supreme Court, relying on *Rimjhim Ispat Limited vs. Union of India*¹². Notably, the Tribunal proactively prohibited any future Tent City on the Ganga or its tributaries in violation of environmental norms, signalling a firm stance against commercial exploitation of ecologically sensitive riverbeds.

Hindon Floodplain Encroachment and Demolition of Illegal Real Estate

*Shri Krishan Kashyap vs. UP PCB & Ors.*¹³

Heard alongside a suo motu case arising from a Times of India report on farmhouses on the Hindon floodplain, the Principal Bench of the National Green Tribunal comprising Justice Prakash Shrivastava (Chairperson) and Dr. A. Senthil Vel (Expert Member) examined illegal encroachments on the floodplain of River Hindon at Shivam Enclave Colony, Greater Noida,

and the discharge of untreated sewage into the river. GNIDA reported that of approximately 1,00,000 sq. m. of encroached floodplain land, 70,000 sq. m. had been freed through demolition drives, illegal sewer lines disconnected, and electricity connections were being severed, while categorically denying any allotment of floodplain land between the embankment and the river, clarifying that its farmhouse schemes were on acquired land outside the floodplain and the Krishi Farmhouse Scheme stood cancelled with refunds issued. The Tribunal directed the State of UP to extend full police and administrative cooperation for removal of the remaining 30,000 sq. m. of encroachment, ordered GNIDA to file a fresh action-taken report, and directed the Irrigation Department to disclose the status of demarcation of the Hindon floodplain zone.

NGT takes suo moto cognizance of Meghalaya coal mine blast, issues notice to state govt, Centre

*News Item titled "18 Killed in blast at illegal coal mine in Meghalaya" appearing in The Hindu*¹⁴

In OA No. 94/2026, the Principal Bench of the National Green Tribunal, New Delhi, comprising Justice Prakash Shrivastava (Chairperson) and Dr. A. Senthil Vel (Expert Member), took suo motu cognizance on 6 February 2026 of a news report in The Hindu about 18 miners killed in a dynamite explosion at an illegal rat-hole coal mine in East Jaintia Hills, Meghalaya.

The Tribunal observed that illegal mining continued unabated despite its blanket ban imposed in April 2014 (upheld by the Supreme Court) and despite the Justice (Retd.) B.P. Katakey Committee's monitoring, noting violations of the Air Act 1981, Indian Forest Act 1927, and Environment Protection Act 1986. Invoking its suo motu power recognised in *Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai vs. Ankita Sinha*¹⁵, the Tribunal impleaded the Chief Secretary of Meghalaya, CPCB, MoEF&CC's Shillong office, and the Deputy Commissioner as respondents, directing responses by affidavit, with the next hearing listed for 19 May 2026.

NGT Directs MIDC and MPCB to Act Against Illegal Industrial Encroachments in Dombivali MIDC Area

*Nandakumar Waman Pawar & Anr. vs. MIDC & Ors.*¹⁶

In *Nandakumar Waman Pawar & Anr. vs. Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation & Ors.* (OA No. 108/2022 (WZ)), decided on 11 February 2026 by the NGT Western Zone Bench, Pune (Justice Dinesh Kumar Singh and Dr. Sujit Kumar Bajpayee), a fisherman and a public-spirited citizen challenged illegal encroachments by industrial units in the Dombivali MIDC area, Thane, where industries had erected unregulated boilers, chemical plants, and hazardous storage in open marginal spaces, breaching MIDC DCR 2009, the Boilers Act, 1923, and environmental statutes, causing repeated fatal accidents. A Joint Committee survey

¹² *Rimjhim Ispat Limited vs. Union of India* (2025 SCC OnLine SC 1517)

¹³ *Shri Krishan Kashyap vs. UP PCB & Ors.*, OA No. 649/2023 with OA No. 437/2025, National Green Tribunal, Principal Bench, New Delhi, Order dated 19 January 2026.

¹⁴ News Item titled "18 Killed in blast at illegal coal mine in Meghalaya" appearing in The Hindu; Original Application No. 94/2026, NGT, Principal Bench, New Delhi

¹⁵ *Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai vs. Ankita Sinha* (2021 SCC OnLine SC 897)

¹⁶ *Nandakumar Waman Pawar & Anr. vs. MIDC & Ors.*, OA No. 108/2022 (WZ)



DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

of 733 units confirmed widespread encroachment. On jurisdiction, the Tribunal, relying on the three-Judge Bench ruling in *Himachal Pradesh Bus-Stand Management vs. Central Empowered Committee*¹⁷ over the two-Judge decision in *Auroville Foundation vs. Navroz Kersasp Mody*¹⁸, held it could examine violations of any statutory environmental obligation affecting a community, provided the matter arose from Schedule I enactments. It accepted continuous cause of action on limitation but clarified that demolition fell within MIDC's domain, directing MIDC to conclude show cause proceedings and MPCB to act against violators under the Air, Water, and Environment Protection Acts within three months, underscoring the urgent need for regulatory vigilance in densely populated industrial zones.

NGT directs status quo on aluminium unit closure, asks CAQM to review compliance within a week

M/s Sumridhi Aluminum Pvt. Ltd. vs. Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas & Ors.¹⁹

The Principal Bench of the National Green Tribunal, New Delhi, comprising Justice Prakash Shrivastava (Chairperson) and Dr. Afroz Ahmad (Expert Member), heard an appeal against a closure order dated 16 March 2026 issued by the CAQM under Section 12(2)(xi) of the CAQM Act, 2021, after a flying squad inspection on 4 February 2026 revealed that no stack was attached

to the Air Pollution Control Device in the pulverised unit, visible leakage was observed, and the Consent to Operate needed amendment for emission limits per Direction No. 64. The appellant argued these were housekeeping deficiencies already rectified, including a fresh CTO dated 15 February 2026 incorporating the requisite emission limits, and raised a natural justice objection that no show cause notice was actually served despite the closure order referencing one. The CAQM's counsel fairly conceded that compliance details, if submitted with supporting material, would be duly examined. Relying on the precedent of *Mother Dairy*²⁰, the Tribunal directed the appellant to file a compliance report before the CAQM, ordered verification within one week, permitted simultaneous resumption proceedings through the Haryana SPCB, maintained status quo allowing continued operations subject to environmental compliance, and disposed of the appeal accordingly.

NGT Adopts Balanced Approach on Great Nicobar Island Port Project, Upholds Clearance Subject to Coral Protection and Coastal Regulation Compliance

Ashish Kothari vs. MoEFCC & Ors²¹

In *Ashish Kothari vs. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change & Ors.* (OA No. 93/2024/EZ), decided on 16 February 2026, a full bench of the National Green Tribunal, Eastern Zone, Kolkata, comprising Justice

Prakash Shrivastava (Chairperson), Justice Dinesh Kumar Singh, Justice Arun Kumar Tyagi, Dr. A. Senthil Vel, Dr. Afroz Ahmad, and Mr. Ishwar Singh, adjudicated a challenge to the proposed International Container Transshipment Terminal, township, and power plant on Great Nicobar Island. The applicant contended that these activities were prohibited in ICRZ-IA areas under the ICRZ Notification, 2019, that the environmental clearance of 11.11.2022 required revisiting, and that the High-Powered Committee operated on truncated terms of reference. On corals, the Tribunal accepted ZSI's finding that no major reef existed at the Galathea Bay port site, upholding translocation of scattered colonies without violation of Clause 3(i). On baseline data, it held one season's data sufficient, endorsing the EIA Guidance Manual. On zoning, NCSCM's ground truthing confirmed no project area fell within ICRZ-IA. Interestingly, the Tribunal struck a deliberate balance between ecological safeguards and the project's strategic importance near the Malacca Strait, drawing on the Supreme Court's holistic approach in *M.K. Ranjitsinh vs. Union of India*²², and directed strict compliance with all EC conditions, including coral protection, shoreline integrity, and turtle and bird nesting site conservation.

¹⁷ *Himachal Pradesh Bus-Stand Management vs. Central Empowered Committee* [(2021) 4 SCC 309]

¹⁸ *Auroville Foundation vs. Navroz Kersasp Mody* [2025 INSC 347]

¹⁹ *M/s Sumridhi Aluminum Pvt. Ltd. vs. Commission for Air Quality Management in National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas & Ors.* (Appeal No. 23/2026), (National Green Tribunal, Principal Bench, 19 March 2026)

²⁰ *M/s Mother Dairy Fruit and Vegetable Pvt. Ltd. vs. CAQM*, Appeal No. 66/2025

²¹ *Ashish Kothari vs. MoEFCC & Ors.*, OA No. 93/2024/EZ, OA No. 95/2024/EZ, and MA No. 23/2024/EZ in Appeal No. 32/2022/EZ

²² *M.K. Ranjitsinh & Ors. vs. Union of India* (2024 SCC OnLine SC 570).



DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

NGT Examines Environmental Harm from Loose Plastic Bottle Caps, Highlights Need for Tethered Cap Regulation***Aakash Ranison vs. Central Pollution Control Board*²³**

The Principal Bench of the National Green Tribunal, New Delhi, comprising Hon'ble Mr. Justice Prakash Shrivastava (Chairperson) and Hon'ble Dr. Afroz Ahmad (Expert Member) adjudicated a grievance on 20 February 2026, concerning plastic pollution caused by detachable plastic bottle caps used extensively in packaged drinking water and beverage bottles, contending that while plastic bottles are generally collected for recycling, their detachable caps are not, thereby causing environmental pollution, and advocating the adoption of "tethered caps" a system already in use in other countries whereby the cap remains attached to the bottle and is collected alongside it. The key issue was whether regulatory intervention was required to address the environmental harm caused by loose plastic bottle caps. The Tribunal issued notice to the respondents to file their response by way of affidavit and notably observed that the larger issue concerning plastic waste collection and regulation of the Extended Producer Responsibility ("EPR") regime was already pending before the Tribunal in OA No. 993/2024 and OA No. 926/2024²⁴.

NGT Directs Sugar and Distillery Unit to Pay Over ₹1 Crore in Environmental Damages for Ghod River Pollution and Molasses Spillage***Sachin S Pachpute vs. M/s. Sahakar Maharshi Shivajirao Narayanrao & Ors.*²⁵ ; dated 24 February 2026**

In *Sachin Sudamrao Pachpute vs. M/s Sahakar Maharshi Shivajirao Narayanrao Nagawade SSK Ltd. & Ors.* (OA No. 85/2022 (WZ)), reserved on 11 February 2026 and pronounced on 24 February 2026 by the Western Zone Bench of the National Green Tribunal, Pune, comprising Hon'ble Mr. Justice Dinesh Kumar Singh (Judicial Member) and Hon'ble Dr. Sujit Kumar Bajpayee (Expert Member), the applicant, a farmer from Village Kashti, District Ahmednagar, challenged the persistent pollution of the Ghod River caused by the sugar and distillery unit of respondent no. 1, including discharge of untreated effluents, a molasses tank explosion on 10 February 2022 that spread molasses into nearby farmlands and nallahs, illegal dumping of spent wash across villages, and operation beyond the consented 3,500 TCD crushing capacity. The key issues were the quantum of Environmental Damage Cost ("EDC") and remedial measures warranted. A Joint Committee of CPCB, MPCB, and the District Collector found multiple consent violations, and the Vasantdada Sugar Institute ("VSI"), Pune, assessed environmental damage at Rs. 1,06,07,090 covering water, soil, and flora. Notably, the Tribunal held that the VSI's comprehensive assessment subsumed all pollution during the violation period (03.02.2021 to 09.02.2022), making separate EDC calculation unnecessary. The Tribunal directed deposit of Rs. 1,06,07,090 with MPCB within two months, expenditure of Rs. 1,26,00,000 on preventive and

remediation measures per VSI recommendations, and directed MPCB to prepare an SOP within three months for recording crop damage in future industrial accidents.

NGT Directs District Authorities to Halt Unauthorised Construction of Health Centre on Forest Land in Nabarangpur***Ram Nayak vs. State of Odisha & Ors.*²⁶**

In *Ram Nayak vs. State of Odisha* (O.A. No. 206/2025/EZ), heard on 20 February 2026 before the National Green Tribunal, Eastern Zone Bench, Kolkata, comprising Hon'ble Mr. Justice Arun Kumar Tyagi (Judicial Member) and Hon'ble Dr. Prashant Gargava (Expert Member), the applicant filed an application under Section 18 read with Sections 14 and 15 of the NGT Act, 2010, alleging that a community health centre was being constructed on forest land in violation of environmental norms. The Tribunal took on record the applicant's supplementary affidavit containing an RTI reply and the reply affidavit of the Odisha State Pollution Control Board, whilst clarifying that supplementary documents ought to be filed through a proper Interlocutory Application under the NGT Rules, 2011. Notably, the Tribunal directed respondents to cease all further construction until Consent to Establish (CTE) is obtained from OSPCB, and ordered the District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police, Nabarangpur, to ensure compliance, listing the matter for further hearing on 28 April 2026.

²³ Aakash Ranison vs. Central Pollution Control Board & Ors. (OA No. 137/2026), NGT Principal Bench

²⁴ News Item titled "PACKAGE Where has the plastic waste disappeared" appearing in The Times of India dated 30.07.2024, oa No. 993/2024 and OA 926/2024

²⁵ Sachin S Pachpute vs. M/s. Sahakar Maharshi Shivajirao Narayanrao & Ors. OA No. 85/2022 (WZ), Caveat 12/2022, NGT Western Zone

²⁶ Ram Nayak vs. State of Odisha & Ors Original Application No.206/2025/EZ, NGT, Eastern Zone



DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

NGT Issues Notice on Challenge to Uttarakhand Government's Amendment Permitting Petrol Pumps in Residential Areas of Dehradun***Roshan Joshi vs. State of Uttarakhand & Anr***²⁷

The National Green Tribunal, Principal Bench, comprising of Justice Prakash Shrivastava (Chairperson) and Dr. Afroz Ahmad (Expert Member) issued notice in an original application on 17 March 2026, wherein, the Applicant has questioned the part of the Notification dated 28.11.2013 issued by the Uttarakhand Government amending the Dehradun Master Plan, 2025 and providing setting up the petrol diesel filling station in the residential area. It was submitted that in terms of the CPCB guidelines issued by O.M. dated 07.01.2020 setting up of the petrol pumps in the residential area is not permissible, but the concerned authorities in Dehradun by following the Master Plan of 2025 are permitting the setting up of the petrol pump in the residential area. The Bench noted that the OA raises substantial issue relating to compliance of the environmental norms and thus, issued notice.

NGT directs BPCL to pay ₹1 crore environmental compensation for delayed installation of Vapour Recovery Systems at storage locations***Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited Vs Central Pollution Control Board***²⁸

A fine has been imposed on Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited ("BPCL"), a state-run oil marketing company of Rs. 1 crore in environmental compensation following a National Green Tribunal ("NGT") order received on 25 March 2026, upholding a CPCB direction. The CPCB had directed the compensation under Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 for BPCL's failure to install Vapour Recovery Systems ("VRS") at its storage locations within the prescribed deadline of March 2024. BPCL had filed an appeal before the NGT seeking to quash the CPCB directive; however, the Tribunal instructed the company to comply with the regulator's order and did not interfere with the order passed.

NGT takes suo motu cognizance over Himalayan Glacier Hazards News Item Titled "Study Flags Overlooked Danger Posed by Hanging Glaciers on Mountain Slopes in Central Himalaya" Appearing in the Hindu, Original Application No. 258 of 2026²⁹

The National Green Tribunal, Principal Bench, New Delhi, *coram* Justice Prakash Shrivastava, Chairperson, and Dr. Afroz Ahmad, Expert Member, on 20 April 2026, exercised its suo motu jurisdiction, reaffirming the authority established in *Municipal Corpn., Greater Mumbai vs. Ankita Sinha*³⁰, to take cognizance of the imminent peril posed by hanging glaciers in the Central Himalaya, holding *prima facie* violations of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. Relying on institutional research, the Tribunal noted that vulnerable zones in the Alaknanda basin had

expanded exponentially, imperiling settlements including Badrinath. MoEFCC, CPCB, and allied respondents were impleaded and directed to file responses. The matter is next listed on 6 August 2026.

NGT rejects deemed EC plea, directs action against developer for illegal tree felling and construction at Dwarka sports arena project***Renu Bala vs. MoEF&CC & Ors.***³¹

The National Green Tribunal, Principal Bench, New Delhi, *coram* Justice Prakash Shrivastava, Chairperson, and Dr. A. Senthil Vel, Expert Member, on 22 April 2026, disposed of O.A. No. 137/2025 (*Renu Bala*), concerning the "Omase State" integrated multi-sports arena project in Dwarka, New Delhi, undertaken without prior Environmental Clearance under Item 8(b) of the EIA Notification, 2006. Rejecting the project proponent's plea of deemed EC under Clause 8(iii), and relying on *S.P. Muthuraman vs. Union of India*, the Tribunal held that the EAC's recommendation was conditional upon obtaining tree-felling permission, which condition stood violated through illegal felling and premature construction. The Tribunal directed the DFO to conduct a spot inspection and initiate punitive action, MoEFCC to determine the EC application in light of the violations, and DPCC to inspect for environmental norm breaches, with compliance reports due within three months.

²⁷ Roshan Joshi vs. State of Uttarakhand & Anr Original Application No. 165/2026, NGT Principal Bench

²⁸ Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited Vs Central Pollution Control Board, NGT, Appeal No 53/2025/Delhi, order dated 25 March 2026

²⁹ News Item Titled "Study Flags Overlooked Danger Posed by Hanging Glaciers on Mountain Slopes in Central Himalaya" Appearing in the Hindu, Original Application No. 258 of 2026; order dated 20.04.2026

³⁰ (2022) 13 SCC 401

³¹ Renu Bala vs. MoEF&CC & Ors., Original Application No. 137/2025 (I.A. Nos. 567/2025, 613/2025 & 716/2025), National Green Tribunal, Principal Bench, New Delhi; order dated 22.04.2026



DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

NATIONAL RIGHTS HUMAN COMMISSION

NHRC takes suo motu cognizance of reported death and injuries in explosion at private steel plant in Ramgarh, Jharkhand; notices issued to state authorities***National Human Rights Commission takes Suo Motu Cognizance of Ramgarh Steel Plant Explosion***³²

The National Human Rights Commission (“NHRC”) took suo motu cognizance on 9 April 2026 of an explosion at a private steel plant in Ramgarh district, Jharkhand, on 6 April 2026, which killed one worker and seriously injured seven others. The blast reportedly occurred during the morning shift due to excessive furnace temperature caused by a technical fault or safety negligence. The Commission observed that the incident raised serious human rights concerns and issued notices to Jharkhand’s Chief Secretary and Director General of Police, seeking a detailed report within two weeks on the injured persons’ health, investigation progress, and compensation provided.

DISTRICT COURTS

Shahtoosh trader convicted in landmark wildlife crime case after 17-year prosecution***CBI (Wild Life) vs. M/s Indian Art Gallery***³³

The Chief Judicial Magistrate, Rouse Avenue District Courts, New Delhi (T. Priyadarshini, CJM), on 19 March 2026, sentenced Syed Shahid Ahmed Kashani, proprietor of M/s Indian Art Gallery, Jaipur, for offences under Sections 40, 49, and 49B(1) of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, punishable under Sections 51(1) and 51(1A). The case arose from the seizure in December 2008 of 1,290 Shahtoosh shawls, derived from the endangered Tibetan Antelope (*Pantholops hodgsonii*), a Schedule I species-at Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi, with the Wildlife Institute of India confirming Tibetan Antelope hair in 41 shawls. WCCB filed a complaint with the CBI in February 2009, marking the first wildlife offence prosecuted through the CBI. Balancing deterrent and reformatory principles, the Court sentenced him to five years of simple imprisonment with a fine of Rs. 50,000/- under Section 49B(1), and two years each under Sections 40 and 49 with fines of Rs. 50,000/- apiece, all sentences running concurrently.

CENTRAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

CPCB orders immediate closure of Shyam Metalics plant in Sambalpur for serious environmental violations under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986***Closure Directions under section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 to M/s Shyam Metalics & Energy Limited, Pandloi, Rengali,******Sambalpur, Odisha***³⁴

The Central Pollution Control Board (“CPCB”), exercising powers under Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, ordered the immediate closure of Shyam Metalics & Energy Limited’s plant at Rengali, Sambalpur, Odisha, for serious and repeated environmental violations. A March 2026 inspection revealed widespread non-compliance, including particulate emissions of up to 268 mg/Nm³ against the 50 mg/Nm³ standard, non-functional pollution control equipment, and uncontrolled fugitive dust. Despite a mandated zero liquid discharge system, wastewater was found flowing outside the plant boundary. Additional violations included improper hazardous waste storage, operation of an unauthorised slag crushing plant, and failure to submit mandatory environmental reports. The CPCB directed that the plant shall not resume operations without prior approval and full compliance, requiring a compliance report within 30 days.

GLOBAL DISPUTES

Washington Voluntarily Dismisses Challenge to Climate Resilience Funding Termination***Washington vs. U.S. Department of Commerce***³⁵

Before the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington, the issue was whether the termination of two NOAA climate

³² National Human Rights Commission, Suo Motu Cognizance- Ramgarh Steel Plant Explosion, posted on 9 April 2026 by PIB Delhi

³³ CBI (Wild Life) vs. M/s Indian Art Gallery, Case No. CBI/292/2019

³⁴ Closure Directions under section 5 of the Environment (protection) Act, 1986 to M/s Shyam Metalics & Energy Limited, Pandloi, Rengali, Sambalpur, Odisha CP-14/1/2025-IPC-II-HO-CPCB-HO/23

³⁵ Washington vs. U.S. Department of Commerce, No. 2:25-cv-01507



DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

resilience funding awards to Washington State was lawful. Washington voluntarily dismissed the case on 20 January 2026, despite having obtained a preliminary injunction in October 2025 barring the funding termination, and the Ninth Circuit subsequently vacated the district court's injunction at the parties' joint request. A spokesperson stated Washington decided to "reevaluate this case in light of the ever-changing legal landscape surrounding funding terminations" but continued to believe the termination was unlawful, with the voluntary dismissal and vacatur of a favourable injunction suggesting strategic recalculation amid evolving federal funding litigation.

California Court Again Dismisses Avocado Growers' Sustainability Misrepresentation Claims

*Kachuck Enterprises vs. Mission Produce, Inc.*³⁶

Before the United States District Court for the Central District of California, the issue was whether U.S. avocado growers stated viable claims that Mexican avocado suppliers misrepresented the sustainability of their products, which were allegedly sourced from deforested land contributing to climate change. The court again dismissed the claims, finding plaintiffs failed to allege personal reliance on the sustainability misrepresentations and made only generalised assertions of third-party consumer reliance, with claims of unlawful and unfair business practices also failing as plaintiffs showed "only injury to themselves as competitors,

but not injury to competition"; limited leave to amend was granted. The case raises novel questions about competitor standing in sustainability-related false advertising claims, and the court's repeated dismissals suggest significant hurdles for competitor-plaintiffs seeking to challenge rivals' environmental marketing claims.

D.C. Court Declines to Compel New Environmental Review for Offshore Decommissioning

*Center for Biological Diversity vs. Burgum*³⁷

Before the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, the issue was whether the Secretary of the Interior could be compelled to update environmental assessments for the decommissioning of offshore oil and gas infrastructure posing risks including methane leaks. The court dismissed the case, finding that although CBD had standing, it failed to identify a discrete and mandatory duty the court could order defendants to perform, and that the suit constituted an impermissible programmatic challenge under the Administrative Procedure Act. CBD alleged the Interior Department had "under-studied" environmental concerns including oil spills, methane leaks, and toxic chemical leaching from decommissioned infrastructure, and the ruling underscores the difficulty of challenging broad agency inaction under the APA's prohibition on programmatic challenges.

California Court Closes Desert Tortoise Habitat to Off-Highway Vehicles

*Center for Biological Diversity vs. Culver*³⁸

Before the United States District Court for the Northern District of California, the issue was the appropriate remedy for BLM's violations of FLPMA, NEPA, the Clean Air Act, and the ESA in designating an off-highway vehicle route network in the West Mojave Desert, including failure to analyse greenhouse gas impacts. The court granted partial vacatur of the route network, closing desert tortoise critical habitat to off-highway vehicle use, and remanded and vacated or partially vacated the record of decision, biological opinion, and incidental take statement for further proceedings. This remedy decision follows the court's October 2024 liability ruling which identified BLM's failure to analyse greenhouse gas impacts among the violations, and the closure of critical habitat to OHV use represents a significant conservation outcome.

Massachusetts Court Declares Energy Secretary's Climate Working Group Subject to FACA

*Environmental Defense Fund, Inc. vs. Wright*³⁹

Before the United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts, the issue was whether the Climate Working Group convened by the Secretary of Energy was subject to Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) requirements and whether withheld records must be disclosed. The court

³⁶ Kachuck Enterprises vs. Mission Produce, Inc., No. 2:25-cv-01523

³⁷ Center for Biological Diversity vs. Burgum, No. 1:24-cv-02014

³⁸ Center for Biological Diversity vs. Culver, No. 21-cv-07171

³⁹ Environmental Defense Fund, Inc. vs. Wright, No. 1:25-cv-12249



DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

declared the Climate Working Group which was convened to “provide clarity and balance” regarding climate science was not exempt from FACA requirements, compelled disclosure of names of federal employees who reviewed the group’s report, and granted in part disclosure of records withheld under the deliberative process privilege, whilst dismissing the EPA as a defendant for lack of evidence of FACA violations outside the Department of Energy. The court found the government had remedied the informational injury through disclosure, a notable outcome for transparency in federal climate science advisory processes.

Endangered Species Lawsuit Withdrawn After Fish and Wildlife Service Acts on Rare Flower Petition

Center for Biological Diversity vs. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service⁴⁰

Before the United States District Court for the District of Arizona, the issue was whether FWS could be compelled to act on a petition to list the gray cat’s eye, a rare flower found only on Columbia River dunes in Washington, as threatened or endangered under the ESA. The lawsuit was voluntarily withdrawn after FWS published its 90-day finding on 26 January 2026, concluding that the petition presented substantial information indicating listing may be warranted. The gray cat’s eye faces threats including climate change-related disruption to groundwater regimes, and the case illustrates how litigation can prompt timely agency action on listing petitions for climate-vulnerable species.

⁴⁰ Center for Biological Diversity vs. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, No. 4:25-cv-00620

⁴¹ Gordon-Darby Holdings, Inc. vs. NH Department of Safety, Commissioner, No. 1:25-cv-00508

⁴² Center for Biological Diversity vs. National Marine Fisheries Service, No. 8:25-cv-00661

⁴³ American Sustainable Business Council vs. Hegar, No. 1:24-cv-01010

New Hampshire Court Blocks Termination of Vehicle Inspection Programme

Gordon-Darby Holdings, Inc. vs. NH Department of Safety, Commissioner⁴¹

Before the United States District Court for the District of New Hampshire, the issue was whether New Hampshire could lawfully abolish its vehicle inspection and maintenance programme, enacted in June 2025 with wind-down by January 2026, without EPA approval of a revised Clean Air Act state implementation plan. The court granted a preliminary injunction, finding the inspection programme vendor’s parent company showed a substantial likelihood of standing and was likely to succeed on the merits of its Clean Air Act claim, and also denied the Commissioners’ motion to stay pending appeal on 25 February 2026. The case demonstrates that SIP obligations cannot be unilaterally abandoned by states without EPA approval, even following legislative repeal.

Federal Government Agrees to Determine Endangered Status of Smalltail Shark

Center for Biological Diversity vs. National Marine Fisheries Service⁴²

Before the United States District Court for the District of Maryland, the issue was whether NMFS could be compelled to make a 12-month finding on whether listing the smalltail shark under the Endangered Species Act is warranted, following a delay of nearly two years after a positive 90-day

finding. The parties settled, with NMFS agreeing to submit a 12-month finding to the Federal Register by 12 August 2026 as to whether listing is not warranted, warranted, or warranted but precluded by other pending proposals. The Center for Biological Diversity alleged the smalltail shark is threatened by climate change, overfishing, and other factors, and the settlement addresses agency delay in the listing process, a recurring issue in ESA litigation.

Texas Anti-Fossil Fuel Boycott Law Struck Down as Unconstitutional

American Sustainable Business Council vs. Hegar⁴³

Before the United States District Court for the Western District of Texas, the issue was whether Texas Senate Bill 13, which prohibited state entities from investing in or contracting with companies that “boycott” fossil fuel-based energy companies, violated the First and Fourteenth Amendments. The court enjoined enforcement of SB 13, ruling it was facially overbroad under the First Amendment because it affected a broad range of protected activities, including speaking about fossil fuel risks and associating with like-minded organisations, and further holding it unconstitutionally vague under the Fourteenth Amendment for failing to provide ordinary persons reasonable notice of prohibited conduct. The court found ASBC had associational standing based on two blacklisted members, and the defendants have filed a notice of appeal and a motion to stay pending appeal.



DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

Texas Court Awards \$4.6 Million in Attorney's Fees in ESG-Influenced Retirement Plan Case***Spence vs. American Airlines, Inc.***⁴⁴

Before the United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas, the issue was whether the plaintiff was entitled to attorney's fees after prevailing on an ERISA claim that American Airlines breached its fiduciary duty of loyalty by allowing ESG objectives to influence employee retirement plan management. The court awarded approximately \$4.6 million in attorney's fees, finding American had "sufficient culpability" despite no damages being awarded, and denied American's motion for reconsideration whilst clarifying multiple points of the injunction. The court emphasised this case "grappled with a significant and novel issue of whether ERISA permits asset managers to invest Plan assets with ESG-related goals rather than the exclusive financial interests of the Plan participants," and that the fee award would incentivise better adherence to the duty of loyalty.

North Carolina Court Dismisses Carrboro's Climate Suit on Political Question Grounds***Town of Carrboro vs. Duke Energy Corp.***⁴⁵

Before the North Carolina Superior Court, the issue was whether the Town of Carrboro's claims that Duke Energy misled the public about fossil fuel impacts on climate, thereby delaying the energy transition were

justiciable or barred by the political question doctrine. The court found Carrboro had standing but dismissed the case as nonjusticiable under North Carolina's three-factor political question test, holding that energy policy was textually committed to other branches, that courts lacked capacity to resolve the claims through traditional adjudication, and that attributing specific emissions to specific climate impacts was a "futile endeavour." The court remarked that Carrboro "ignores the impacts of fossil fuel-related emissions by billions of persons in other countries," and although disposing of the case on political question grounds, it also indicated that "some portion" of the claims were likely preempted by federal law.

Pennsylvania Gas Producer and News Outlet Settle Defamation Suit Over Climate Reporting***CNX Resources Corp. vs. Capital & Main.***⁴⁶

Before the United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania, the issue was whether Capital & Main's article about CNX's "Radical Transparency" environmental monitoring programme constituted actionable defamation by alleging data fabrication and market manipulation. The parties stipulated to dismissal with prejudice following settlement; the terms were not disclosed in the stipulation, but CNX announced that Capital & Main added an editor's note clarifying it did not state or imply that CNX fabricated data or engaged in market

manipulation. This case highlights the intersection of defamation law and environmental journalism, with CNX characterising Capital & Main as funded by "renewable energy interests," framing the dispute as part of broader tensions between fossil fuel companies and environmental media organisations.

Maine Court Upholds Project Charge on Community Solar Developers***Gray Yarmouth Road Solar LLC vs. Maine Public Utilities Commission***⁴⁷

Before the United States District Court for the District of Maine, the issue was whether a Maine law imposing a charge on community solar developers participating in the Net Energy Billing Programme constituted an unconstitutional per se taking of private property. The court denied the preliminary injunction, finding plaintiffs could not demonstrate likelihood of success on their takings claim because the charge was neither an impermissible monetary exaction nor a governmental directive of payments from a specific fund, and participation in the NEB Programme was voluntary, defeating the per se takings claim. The plaintiffs argued the charge would "upend Maine's progress toward achieving its sustainability goals," but the court also found no irreparable harm since monetary damages could be recovered, and that the balance of equities and public interest weighed against injunctive relief.

⁴⁴ Spence vs. American Airlines, Inc., No. 4:23-cv-00552

⁴⁵ Town of Carrboro vs. Duke Energy Corp, No. 24CV003385-670, North Carolina Superior Court

⁴⁶ CNX Resources Corp. vs. Capital & Main, No. 2:25-cv-01471

⁴⁷ Gray Yarmouth Road Solar LLC vs. Maine Public Utilities Commission, No. 1:25-cv-00952



DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

California Court Dismisses Carbon Neutrality Claims Against Apple and Vape Companies***Dib vs. Apple Inc.*⁴⁸ and *Bell vs. R.J. Reynolds Vapor Co.*⁴⁹**

Before the United States District Court for the Northern District of California, the issue was whether claims that Apple's carbon neutrality representations and Vuse vaping products' "carbon neutral" marketing were false and misleading could survive motions to dismiss. Both cases were dismissed: in *Dib*, the court found plaintiffs offered only "conclusory allegations" that Apple retired insufficient carbon credits, whilst in *Bell*, the court found plaintiffs failed to plausibly allege a reasonable consumer would adopt their specific interpretation of carbon neutrality; in both cases, plaintiffs were granted leave to amend but elected not to do so. These rulings set a high bar for climate washing claims, requiring plaintiffs to go beyond challenging carbon offset methodology and plausibly allege consumer deception, and in *Bell*, the court also found it lacked personal jurisdiction over a UK-based parent company.

Supreme Court to Hear Landmark Federal Preemption Question in Boulder Climate Case***Suncor Energy (U.S.A.) Inc. vs. County Commissioners of Boulder County*⁵⁰**

Before the United States Supreme Court, the central issue is whether federal law precludes state-law tort claims seeking relief for injuries allegedly caused by the effects of interstate and international greenhouse

gas emissions on the global climate, and whether the Court has statutory and Article III jurisdiction to hear the case. The Supreme Court granted certiorari on 23 February 2026, agreeing to review the Colorado Supreme Court's decision permitting Boulder's state-law claims (public nuisance, private nuisance, trespass, and unjust enrichment) against Suncor Energy and Exxon Mobil to proceed, directing the parties to brief both the preemption question and the jurisdictional issue. The grant of certiorari has prompted significant ripple effects across pending climate litigation nationwide, with defendants in Hawai'i, New Jersey, Washington, and Maryland seeking stays or abeyance pending the Supreme Court's potentially dispositive ruling.

USDA Agrees to Provide Climate Data to Resolve Website Removal Challenge***Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York vs. U.S. Department of Agriculture*⁵¹**

Before the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, the issue was whether USDA's removal of climate change-related information from its website after President Trump's inauguration was lawful. The court so-ordered a stipulation of settlement and dismissal, with USDA agreeing to provide plaintiffs with data sets underlying the Forest Service Climate Risk Viewer and records related to the mature and old-growth forests inventory under Executive Order 14072, and to

maintain public access to the Climate Risk Viewer until record release is complete. This case arose from the post-inauguration removal of climate data from government websites; USDA had notified the court in May 2025 that it would restore the content, and the settlement formalised data disclosure commitments.

Oregon Court Orders Increased Spill Levels at Columbia River Dams to Protect Salmon***National Wildlife Federation vs. National Marine Fisheries Service*⁵²**

Before the United States District Court for the District of Oregon, the issue was whether federal defendants' operation of the Columbia River System adequately protected ESA-listed salmon and steelhead, particularly after the Trump administration withdrew from a 2023 memorandum of understanding on system operations. The court granted preliminary injunctions requiring increased spill levels, finding plaintiffs were likely to succeed on the merits because the 2020 biological opinion failed for at least four reasons, including its failure to properly account for climate change in assessing whether operations would jeopardise salmonid survival, and denied the government's request for a stay pending appeal. The court stated that if operations "kill more salmonids because they are weakened by the effects of climate change," that is "the reality in which [NMFS] must assess the effects of the Proposed Action" a significant articulation of how climate change must inform ESA jeopardy analysis.

⁴⁸ *Dib vs. Apple Inc.*, No. 25-cv-02043

⁴⁹ *Bell vs. R.J. Reynolds Vapor Co.*, No. 3:25-cv-04521

⁵⁰ *Suncor Energy (U.S.A.) Inc. vs. County Commissioners of Boulder County*, (2025 CO 21)

⁵¹ *Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York vs. U.S. Department of Agriculture*, No. 1:25-cv-01529

⁵² *National Wildlife Federation vs. National Marine Fisheries Service*, No. 3:01-cv-640



DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND ENFORCEMENT TRENDS

Vanguard Settles Antitrust Coal Case for \$29.5 Million with Extensive Passivity Commitments***Texas vs. BlackRock, Inc.*⁵³**

Before the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas, the issue was whether Vanguard and other institutional investors violated antitrust laws by collectively using their shareholdings in domestic coal producers to reduce coal output. Vanguard settled with the state plaintiffs, paying \$29.5 million whilst expressly denying unlawful conduct, with BlackRock and State Street remaining as defendants. Vanguard agreed to five-year “Passivity Commitments” including not advocating to portfolio companies to reduce carbon emissions, withdrawing from the Principles for Responsible Investment, and not joining organisations that advocate specific emissions targets; Vanguard also committed to offering proxy voting choice to investors, marking a significant development in anti-ESG litigation that may influence how asset managers approach climate-related stewardship activities.

D.C. Court Vacates Wyoming Oil and Gas Project EIS for Inadequate Alternatives Analysis***Powder River Basin Resource Council vs. U.S. Department of the Interior*⁵⁴**

Before the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, the issue was whether the Bureau of Land Management’s 2020 EIS and record of decision for the Converse County Oil and Gas Project complied with NEPA’s

requirement to rigorously evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives. The court vacated the EIS and ROD, finding BLM violated NEPA by eliminating a greenhouse gas reduction alternative and a reduced-pace development alternative, holding that vacatur was warranted because BLM’s errors prompted “substantial doubt” it chose correctly and defendants failed to show vacatur would be unduly disruptive. The court noted the project was “already emitting and will continue to emit significant levels of greenhouse gases that will contribute to climate change,” and denied plaintiffs’ motion to add claims related to 2025 environmental assessments, finding they constituted new, final agency actions.

North Dakota Court Enters \$345 Million Judgment Against Greenpeace in Dakota Access Pipeline Case***Energy Transfer LP vs. Greenpeace International*⁵⁵**

Before the North Dakota District Court, the issue was whether the Greenpeace organisations were liable for defamation, trespass, nuisance, conspiracy, tortious interference with business, and aiding and abetting in connection with protests against the Dakota Access Pipeline. The court entered final judgment ordering Greenpeace International, Greenpeace, Inc., and Greenpeace Fund, Inc. to pay over \$345 million in compensatory and exemplary damages, with 11% interest from the date of the jury verdict (19 March 2025). Greenpeace announced it would seek a new trial and, if necessary, appeal; a related petition is pending before the

North Dakota Supreme Court concerning GPI’s attempt to invoke the EU’s anti-SLAPP directive in the Netherlands, and the judgment is one of the largest ever against an environmental organisation.

ISS files federal lawsuit challenging Indiana law targeting proxy advisers for recommendations against management***Institutional Shareholder Services Inc. vs. State of Indiana*⁵⁶**

Institutional Shareholder Services (ISS) has filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Indiana challenging Indiana’s H.B. 1273, which would require proxy advisers to issue state-mandated warnings whenever they recommend voting against company management. ISS contends the statute is unconstitutional on multiple grounds: it constitutes viewpoint discrimination by burdening only counter-management speech, it is unconstitutionally vague, and it violates the dormant Commerce Clause by extending its mandates to recommendations made to any client about any company worldwide. ISS also argues the law’s requirement of a “written financial analysis” fundamentally misunderstands the proxy process, as many shareholder voting issues are qualitative rather than quantitative. The bill, which tracks model legislation introduced in roughly 12 US states, is seen as an attempt to curtail ESG-related proxy advisory services relied upon by sophisticated institutional investors globally. ISS has requested a ruling on its preliminary injunction motion before the law’s effective date of 1 July 2026.

⁵³ Texas vs. BlackRock, Inc., No. 6:24-cv-00437

⁵⁴ Powder River Basin Resource Council vs. U.S. Department of the Interior, No. 1:22-cv-02696

⁵⁵ Energy Transfer LP vs. Greenpeace International, No. 30-2019-OV-00180

⁵⁶ Institutional Shareholder Services Inc. vs. State of Indiana, Case No. 1:26-cv-00717



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