

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 376
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.02.2026

Environment Audit Rules, 2025

376. ADV GOWAAL KAGADA PADAVI:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has begun implementation of the newly notified Environment Audit Rules, 2025, aimed at increasing transparency and accountability in environmental impact assessments;
- (b) if so, the timeline and mechanism proposed for their rollout across Maharashtra;
- (c) whether any pilot audits have been conducted in industrial or mining zones such as Chandrapur, Nashik or Nandurbar Districts;
- (d) the manner in which third-party environmental auditors will be empanelled to prevent conflict of interest;
- (e) whether the State Pollution Control Board have been instructed to align compliance monitoring under the new Rules; and
- (f) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to strengthen real-time data monitoring of air, water and soil parameters in Maharashtra's eco-sensitive and tribal regions?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) to (f) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has notified the Environment Audit Rules, 2025 dated 29 August 2025 with the objective of strengthening transparency and accountability in environmental compliance. For the implementation and operationalisation of the said Rules, across the country, including Maharashtra, the engagement of the Environment Audit Designated Agency (EADA) has been completed.

As per the aforesaid rules, the roles and responsibilities of Environment Audit Designated Agency, inter alia, include certification of Environment Auditors through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) & National Certification Examination (NCE), registration & renewal of Registered Environment Auditors (REAs), issuance of guidelines relating to certification, registration and audit fees. A Steering Committee has been constituted in accordance with the

provisions of the Rules to oversee the implementation, monitoring and supervision of the Environment Audit Scheme. The Environment Audit Rules, 2025 also contain explicit provisions to address conflict of interest.

The Ministry has notified Control of Air Pollution (Grant, Refusal or Cancellation of Consent) Amendment Guidelines, 2026 on 23.01.2026, which, inter alia, provide that the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) may engage Registered Environment Auditors in accordance with the Environment Audit Rules, 2025, for the purpose of enabling a State Board to perform any of its functions including the functions conferred on it by or under the said guidelines.

Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has mandated the installation of Online Continuous Effluent/Emission Monitoring Systems (OCEMS) for 17 categories of highly polluting industries, enabling 24×7 real-time transmission of environmental data to CPCB and concerned SPCBs/PCCs, with automated alerts for exceedances to facilitate timely corrective and regulatory action. Ambient air quality monitoring in Maharashtra is carried out through a network of manual and continuous stations, which has expanded from 41 Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (CAAQMS) across 11 cities in 2002 to 97 CAAQMS covering 31 cities in 2025, in accordance with population-based criteria prescribed by CPCB, including coverage of eco-sensitive and tribal regions.

In addition, based on the recommendations of the Expert Appraisal Committees (EACs) / State Expert Appraisal Committees (SEACs), the Ministry / State Environment Impact Assessment Authorities (SEIAAs), while granting Environmental Clearances (ECs), stipulate conditions for continuous effluent/emission monitoring for certain projects/activities, the compliance of which is enforced by the concerned SPCBs and PCCs.
