

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 202
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.07.2026

Special Action Plan for the Hilly States

202. SHRI SURESH KUMAR KASHYAP:

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

- (a) whether the Government has formulated any special action plan for the hilly States, particularly for Himachal Pradesh in order to control pollution, rejuvenate the river and strengthen environmental governance and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the details of the projects sanctioned, and funds allocated and incurred for the conservation of rivers and streams, sewage treatment, solid waste management and pollution control in the hilly States, particularly in Himachal Pradesh during the last three years, State/UT-wise;
- (c) the details of the projects sanctioned for river and stream conservation, pollution control, sewage treatment and environment protection in Shimla Parliamentary Constituency, along with the funds allocated for the purpose and current progress and achievements made thereby;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to implement any special environment protection programme for the hilly States, particularly for Himachal Pradesh including Shimla Parliamentary Constituency in order to address the environmental challenges posed by climate change, natural disasters and increasing tourism; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c) The Central Government has taken various regulatory and management measures to control pollution, rejuvenate the river and strengthen environmental governance in the hilly States.

- For the control of pollution, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has enacted Solid Waste Management Rules, 2026 (SWM Rules, 2026) to ensure environmentally sound management of solid waste across the country, including the hilly States. These rules specifically delineate the criteria and actions to be taken for solid waste management in hilly and island areas and has enlisted the duties and responsibilities of the local authorities therein. Further, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has also prepared an advisory for management of solid waste in hilly areas and has circulated the same to the Member Secretaries of all the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/ Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) and Principal Secretaries of Urban Development Departments (UDDs)/ Rural Development Departments (RDDs) of all States/UTs on 22nd June 2026.

- The Ministry has also launched the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) in January 2019 with an aim to improve air quality in 130 cities (non-attainment cities and Million Plus Cities). City Action Plans (CAPs) have been prepared by all 130 cities, including those in hilly States. Seven (07) Non-Attainment Towns have been identified in Himachal Pradesh by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) namely, Baddi, Damtal, Kala Amb, Nalagarh, Paonta Sahib, Parwanoo and Sundernagar. The Action plan for control of air pollution in all Non-Attainment Towns have been prepared and the implementation is regularly monitored in review meetings under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary to Government of Himachal Pradesh. Air quality performance-based incentive grant of Rs. 25.73 Crore was provided to the 07 non-attainment cities of Himachal Pradesh during FY 2019-20 till 2025-26 for implementing air quality improvement measures through city action plans under NCAP.

- The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) monitors water quality of aquatic resources in the country in association with the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/ Pollution Control Committees (PCCs). Under National Water Quality Monitoring Programme (NWMP), 250 locations [including 156 rivers (and dams)] are monitored in Himachal Pradesh. The State Government of Himachal Pradesh has notified the River Rejuvenation Committee (RRC) for the State and District Level Special Environment Surveillance Task Forces in the year 2018. Based on recommendation of RRC, Action Plans for the then identified seven Polluted River Stretches of Himachal Pradesh have been prepared by the SPCB. The review of the implementation of the action plans is taken by the Chief Secretary/ Additional Chief Secretary (Environment) / Principal Secretary (Urban Development) on regular basis.

- A report titled “Environmental Assessment of Tourism in the Indian Himalayan Region” by the G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment (GBPNIHE), Almora was prepared in pursuance to the directions of the Hon’ble National Green Tribunal (NGT) in Original Application No. 178/2022 dated 09.03.2022 and Hon’ble NGT has directed all States and UTs of IHR to ensure effective, proper and time-bound implementation of the recommendations in the Report to protect the environment from damage in the eco-sensitive Himalayan States. A consolidated compliance report on the same has been submitted to the Hon’ble NGT on 10th April 2026.

- In order to preserve the fragile eco-system including hilly areas, Ministry stipulates various environmental safeguards/ conditions while granting environment clearances to all construction projects. These includes landslide management plan, comprehensive study on vulnerability for the landslide, eco-fragility study of the area, implementing guidelines of Indian Road Congress (IRC), embankments along the slopes to restrict soil erosion, installation of Sewage Treatment Plants, compliance of Energy Conservation Building Code (ECBC), implementation of Catchment Area Treatment (CAT) Plan, Environmental Management Plan (EMP), implementation of Wildlife Conservation Plan, Greenbelt Development and Forest Protection Plan, Stabilization of muck disposal sites, real-time e-flow monitoring, early warning flood system and emergency preparedness plan for dam failure etc. The Ministry has also notified the Environment (Construction and Demolition) Waste Management Rules, 2025 with a view to ensure proper disposal of such wastes.

- Further, any project located in the Forest/ Protected Areas are permitted to the user agency only after obtaining prior clearance from the Competent Authority under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and National Board for Wildlife under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

(d) & (e) The Government is implementing the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC), which provides the overarching framework for climate actions across the country, including hilly States such as Himachal Pradesh. Aligned with NAPCC, 34 States and Union Territories, including Himachal Pradesh, have prepared State Action Plans on Climate Change (SAPCCs) to address State-specific climate vulnerabilities and adaptation priorities. Also, under NAPCC, the Government of India, the Department of Science and Technology (DST) is implementing a National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE).

Further, environmental sustainability is a key pillar in the National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism formulated by the Ministry of Tourism. In line with the strategy, Travel for LiFE (Lifestyle For Environment) programme is implemented to promote sustainable tourism in the country and to encourage tourists and tourism businesses to adopt sustainable tourism practices.
