



CII-ITC Centre of Excellence  
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Confederation of Indian Industry

# REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR WETLAND CONSERVATION



PIROJSHA  
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## The Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017

The Government of India accords high significance to wetland conservation and seeks to mainstream its full range of values at all levels of developmental planning and decision-making.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has notified [Wetlands \(Conservation and Management\) Rules, 2017](#) under the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 as the regulatory framework for conservation and management of wetlands in India. [Guidelines have also been released by MoEFCC for implementing these rules](#). These rules empower states to identify, delineate wetlands and wetland complexes and notify them. The comprehensive list of notified wetlands in States/UTs can be obtained through specific State Wetland Authority (SWA) and their websites.

The provisions of Wetlands Rules apply to:

- a) Wetlands designated by the Government of India to the List of Wetlands of International Importance under the provisions of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention).
- b) Wetlands notified under the rules by the Central Government, State Government and UT Administration.

<b>The Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017</b> Activities prohibited within the wetlands	Conversion for non-wetland uses including encroachment of any kind
	Setting up of any industry and expansion of existing industries
	Manufacture or handling or storage or disposal of construction and demolition waste; hazardous substances; electronic waste
	Solid waste dumping
	Discharge of untreated wastes and effluents from industries, cities, towns, villages and other human settlements
	Any construction of a permanent nature except for boat jetties within fifty metres from the mean high flood level observed in the past ten years calculated from the date of commencement of these rules
	Poaching

Permission for carrying out any activity included within the list of prohibited activities within a notified wetland can only be given by the MoEFCC. A specific request needs to be made by the State Government based on the recommendation of Wetlands Authority

### Some recent significant judgements related to wetland conservation:

1. [National Green Tribunal \(NGT\): All Wetlands Above 2.25 Ha to Receive Protection Under Rule 4 of Wetlands Rules, March 2022](#)
2. ["Get bulldozers ready": Tamil Nadu High Court on waterbodies encroachments, March 2021](#)
3. [Rajasthan High Court stays work on mega solar project in Sambhar, November 2021](#)
4. [Gujarat High Court: 'Cannot allot water body land even if it is dry', July 2021](#)
5. ['Water bodies cannot be diverted for industries': Supreme Court, November 2019](#)

## Coastal Regulation Zone

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change **notified the 2019 Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) norms** (<https://czmp.ncscm.res.in/2019-notification.pdf>) to conserve and protect the unique environment of coastal stretches and marine areas, to provide livelihood security to local communities and to promote sustainable development based on scientific principles taking into account the dangers of natural hazards, sea level rise due to global warming.

### Categories under CRZ

CRZ-IA - Ecologically Sensitive Areas

CRZ-IB - Intertidal Zone

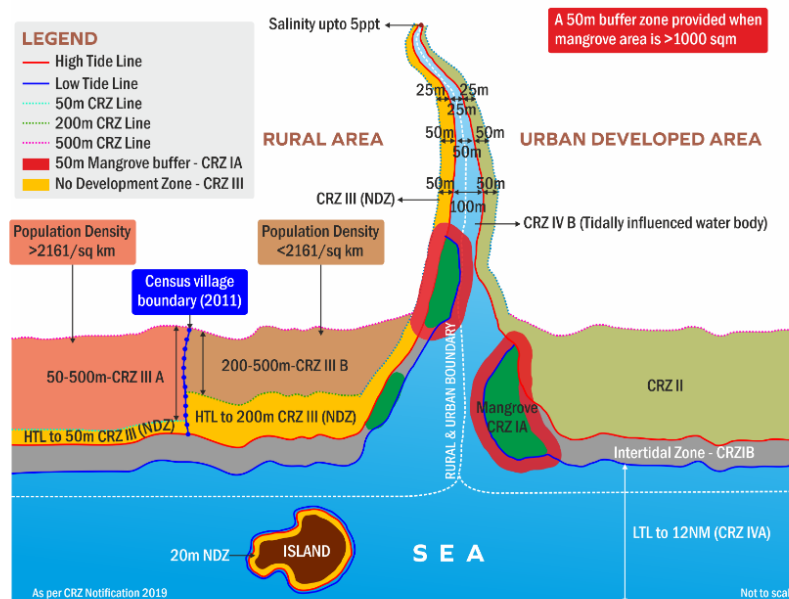
CRZ-II - Developed Land Areas (Municipal Limits / Urban Areas)

CRZ-IIIA - Undeveloped rural areas where the population density is more than 2161 per square kilometre as per 2011 census base, is designated as CRZ-III A and area up to 50 meters from the HTL on the landward side shall be earmarked as the 'No Development Zone (NDZ)'

CRZ-IIIB - Undeveloped rural areas where the population density of less than 2161 per square kilometre, as per 2011 census base, is designated as CRZ-III B and the area up to 200 meters from the HTL on the landward side shall be earmarked as the 'No Development Zone (NDZ)'

CRZ-IVA - The water area and the seabed area between the Low Tide Line up to twelve nautical miles on the seaward side shall constitute CRZ-IV A

CRZ-IVB - areas shall include the water area and the bed area between LTL at the bank of the tidal influenced water body to the LTL on the opposite side of the bank, extending from the mouth of the water body at the sea up to the influence of tide, i.e., salinity of five parts per thousand (ppt) during the driest season of the year.



Conceptual Diagram of Coastal Zone Management Plan

Source: <https://czmp.ncscm.res.in/>

## Salient Features of CRZ

**Floor Space Index Norms eased:** As per CRZ, 2011 Notification, the Floor Space Index (FSI) or the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) had been frozen. As per the latest notification, the government has decided to de-freeze the Floor Space Index and permit FSI for construction projects.

**Tourism infrastructure permitted in coastal areas:** The new norms permit temporary tourism facilities such as shacks, toilet blocks, change rooms, drinking water facilities, etc. in Beaches.

**Streamlining of CRZ Clearances:** The procedure for CRZ clearances has been streamlined. Now, the only such projects which are located in the CRZ-I (Ecologically Sensitive Areas) and CRZ IV (area covered between Low Tide Line and 12 Nautical Miles seaward) will be dealt with for CRZ clearance by the Ministry. The powers for clearances with respect to CRZ-II and III have been delegated at the State level.

**No Development Zone of 20 meters for all Islands:** For islands close to the main land coast and for all Backwater Islands in the mainland, No Development Zone of 20 meters has been stipulated in wake of space limitations and unique geography of such regions.

**Pollution abatement:** To address pollution in Coastal areas, the treatment facilities have been made permissible in CRZ-I B area subject to necessary safeguards.

**Critically Vulnerable Coastal Areas (CVCA):** Sundarban region of West Bengal and other ecologically sensitive areas identified as under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 such as Gulf of Khambat and Gulf of Kutchh in Gujarat, Achra-Ratnagiri in Maharashtra, Karwar and Coondapur in Karnataka, Vembanad in Kerala, Gulf of Mannar in Tamil Nadu, Bhitarkanika in Odisha and Krishna in Andhra Pradesh are treated as Critical Vulnerable Coastal Areas. These Critical Vulnerable Coastal Areas will be managed with the involvement of coastal communities including fisher folk.

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