



**PETITION TO THE HONOURABLE
Minister
of Forest, Ecology and Environment
Mr. Eshwar B Khandre**

FOREWORD

India's environmental challenges are grounded on the critical interconnection between human activities of resource exploitation, built by the economical promotion of a developmental growth model which, ignoring ecological limitations, amplifies the environmental risks.

Khushi Parisara, deeply involved in the coastal spectrum of moving activities, creating environmental understanding on development edges, catalysing the involvement of various stakeholders, requesting governors to prioritise the needful solutions for the current coastal environmental disastrous issues, **dares to deem that the RULE OF LAW IN ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE should imperatively tackle**

- the responsible functioning of local bodies, authorities, regulators, and officers assigned with environmental duties for the protection and recover of ecology on all its extents
- the current cases of non-compliance – and non-implementation – of laws & rules for environmental protection, keeping them unenforced & vainly effected
- the need of Local and State Bodies (key actors for the protection of environment) to act with knowledge, efficiency, integrity and independence, being clearly exposed to accountability

SUBJECT MATTER

1. *Khushi Parisara* recognizes that the fast-mounting notorious coastal environmental disaster, with its explicit points of erosion, mostly caused by the intense and widespread **environmental illiteracy of governors**, along a blatant inaction to enforce environmental laws (as recurrently noticed by NGT) **needs an urgent stern enforcement of all framed environmental rules.**

Thus, enhancing public awareness, as proclaimed by Government, must be a post move of enhancing Public Servants awareness (through technical knowledge and training) of the current environmental disaster produced by the disregard of their duty.

Actually, the environmental concern is patently absent from governance, in huge opposition to the financial concern. And thus, the patent violation of environmental rules by legally responsible Public Servants in duty to implement them, brings inconceivable and unacceptable consequences – ecological, social and anthropological.

Though in 2016 the various Waste Management Rules were notified, in 2019 the CRZ rules were notified, amendments to the Rules to embed them in the ground context were notified, actually they remain away from daily lives, away from officers and representatives' duties, manifestly displaying their dereliction of rules. The public can see the **institutional violation** of almost all of them.

Exemplar, the MS Buildings at Bangalore, the site where State governance governs, display for several years the flex banners banned by PWM Rules and, in such line, State Government sends to Local Bodies and Local Departments banners on the banned material... flex. The proscribed use of plastic bottles at government events can easily be noticed almost everywhere, well exposed by the press.

The Local Bodies, clearly empowered with the duty to manage all types of waste, are displaying its consistent and persistent mismanagement in a complete dereliction of their duties.

Actually, the awfully poor (or non-existent) enforcement of Environmental Rules (namely the Waste ones) by the governing bodies responsible for it, increases the environmental impacts generally faced by all of us, but more accurately suffered by the rural communities – fully deprived of the basic infrastructures for Wastes Management – but fully ravaged by SUPs. It creates a sanitary exclusion and stable inequity responsible for grave health issues generated by the unavoidable practice of waste burning and dumping, contributing, consistently, for the escalating local and widespread pollution.

At the coast, these rural communities utilise their surroundings – sea, shorelines, estuaries, mangroves, dunes, creeks , salt marshes – as common dumping places for all kinds of waste.

2. After all these years of groundwork, *Khushi Parisara*, observing the noticeable sanction by Public Servants of the violation of all the Environmental Rules, daily displayed at the coastal, riverine and forest areas, ventures to consider that the coastal disasters are rampant moreover **due to the inaction towards the mushroomed development of unlicensed and banned activities** fiercely threatening ecosystems. Not only they must be stopped, as they must be **reversed in systemic manner** – through the dedicated Central and State Government Bodies.

a) For the effective management of coastal resources and implementation of CRZ rules, **the Central Government** operationalized several organizations with explicit duties. The **NCCR** is mandated to provide technological & scientific services/support for sustainable management of coastal areas (coastal water quality, coastal processes, shoreline management, coastal hazards, vulnerability of coastal ecosystems) offering scientific and technical support to coastal states and stakeholders.

The **NCSCM** identifies sources of environmental impacts, namely the coastal industrial expansion, port development, inland & sea-based waste disposal, coastal aquaculture, coastal & marine pollution hotspots, coastal impact of urbanization, plastic pollution, waste dumping in storm water drain and encroachment, etc., to gear the protection, conservation, rehabilitation, and management of the coast. NCSCM is censed to undertake systematic monitoring of environmental, social and economic impacts of development to overcome critical harms.

The **NCZMA** is liable for the implementation of the CRZ Notification (ensuring that developmental activities do not harm the fragile coastal ecosystems), for the approval and clearance of projects within the CRZ areas, for monitoring and enforcing the compliance with CRZ norms, ensuring that violations are dealt with appropriately.

b) At the State level, the **KCZMA** must issue CRZ clearances & recommendations to NCZMA for the projects under its purview, deal with CRZ environmental issues (namely identifying ecologically sensitive areas and formulating specific management plans) and ensure the compliance of all specific conditions of the approved KCZMP.

On the whole, each one is able, by and large, to use satellite data in ecological development planning, monitoring and performing within CRZs, for environmental conservation.

Within this grand operational frame, it's challenging to understand the massive violations damaging our coast as registered at many places, but greatly between Gangavali and Sharavati for example.

However, the **Performance Audit report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India on the Conservation of Coastal Ecosystems** is an outstanding tool for a deep and wide cognizance of the current issues, if attention is given to its assessment and proposals.

FINALE

It's now well known that, based on the high-resolution spatial analysis, coastal infrastructures got an enormous escalation the last decades, along with increased sediment barriers and upstream activities, increasing large erosion through the boosted coastal growing activities – with strong negative impact on homes, scrub lands, estuaries & backwaters, mangroves, mudflats and fish landing milieus.

KSZCMA, the authority liable to take coercive steps for compliance of the environmental rules affecting the coast, did not prevent the mushrooming of unlicensed structures in the CRZ area, nor recovered environmental compensation (based on the Polluter Pays Principle) from the violations damaging the ecosystems —mangroves, sand dunes, mud flats, salt marshes, cliffs, etc.

The extant environmental threats and disasters **could have been prevented** if the liable GOs and their Officers had rightfully performed their duties and if the specified NGOs objections, complaints, requests & proposals would have been considered, accepted and triggered.

Most of the snags do not require a big scheme or financial investment in order to be solved, rather a simple but robust mechanism to enforce laws and bylaws, with consistent monitoring of the situation.

PLEA

We demand the Honourable Minister of Forest, Ecology and Environment, Mr. Eshwar B Khandre, to oversee and ensure good environmental governance as a paramount responsibility of the Government, namely

- Enduring assistance of Environmental Engineers, extremely experienced, knowledgeable, skilled, **deeply ground connoisseurs of the coastal issues**, to trigger the needful emergency and operational changes, crafting remedial actions to establish a good environmental governance
- Urge clear, consistent and coordinated actions endorsed by the liable departments to protect, remediate and reverse the disasters at the coastal environment
- assert the liability of Public Servants answerable for the coastal ECOCIDE, compelling all to restore the violated condition and pay fair compensation for the damages produced by their wrong doings and inaction

To attempt to reverse the environmental disaster we demand to consider the following clear-cut **Local and State routes for CONTRIVANCE OF KEY CHANGES**

A - LOCAL

1. To direct a **ward-wise survey** (mandatorily attended by the respective ward member)

- a) to assess the **waste settings** and scrupulously ascertaining chronic waste hotspots
 - b) to strictly identify the **CRZ violations** and settled CRZ encroachments
2. To direct the outline of a comprehensive, systemic, time-framed **Remedial Action Plan**, for and with the civil stakeholders, reflecting the assessment of the survey
 3. To ensure accurate monitoring of the remediation process, monthly reported.

B – STATE

1. Take zero tolerance towards **CRZ ENCROACHMENTS** ensured by the Forest, Ecology and Environment Ministry, hold by the satellite-based vigilance system developed by KSRSAC, along the technical facility to digitally map the coastal boundaries providing digital evidence of encroachments
2. Instruct the **K-SHORE** execution project, to implement clear and accurate nature-based solutions for the coastal development, through recovery of dunes & bioshields, afforestation of lawns & mangroves (key to fight coastal erosion), feasibly reversing man-made deviations
3. Guide a secured environmental implementation of the new **Karnataka Tourism Policy 2024-29**, which is promoting a growth model that ignores ecological limitations, as Tourism is still one of the most endangerer industries to the coast (noise, wastes spreading, dumping & burning, sewage & chemicals increase, etc.)
4. Instruct the responsible authorities to integrate satellite imagery into periodical monitoring of CRZs for early detection of encroachments and unlicensed activities, ensuring the qualification of local enforcement bodies, effectively trained on satellite imagery data.
5. Make such data full accessible to trigger public awareness and foster involvement of community in coastal management
6. Boost legal frameworks to ensure stringent penalties for the identified encroachments
7. Instruct the settlement of an extraordinary/outstanding Environmental Body of extremely qualified personnel, for monitoring the consistency of undertaken environmental compliances by Tourism deeds and K-Shore Project.
8. Ensure the strict enforcement of Environmental Rules (with a sparking stress on Waste Rules) by the Governing Bodies responsible for it, namely ensuring basic infrastructures for Wastes Management at rural areas to relapse their mounting pollution.

Kumta, January 2025

Ana S

President

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