BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL

PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI

Original Application No. 525 of 2025

In the matter of:

News item titled "Himalayan rivers glaciers under threat: Experts demand urgent policy shift" appearing in India Today dated 17.09.2025.

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Filed by Adv. Soni Singh
On behalf of Central Pollution Control Board

Place: Delhi
Dated: 16.01.2026

BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL

PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI

Original Application No. 525 of 2025

In the matter of:

News item titled "Himalayan rivers glaciers under threat: Experts demand urgent policy shift" appearing in India Today dated 17.09.2025.

Reply on behalf of Respondent No. 2, CPCB, in compliance of order dated 14.10.2025 passed by the Hon'ble NGT

1. That, Hon'ble National Green Tribunal, Principal Bench (hereinafter referred to as "NGT"), vide Notice dated 29.10.2025, referring to its Order dated 14.10.2025, has sought the response/reply of the Central Pollution Control Board (hereinafter referred to as "**CPCB**") in the instant matter. Thereby, the reply is made in succeeding paragraphs.

2. That, the CPCB is constituted under Section 3 of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 (hereinafter referred to as the "Water Act, 1974"). It performs the functions under the Water Act, 1974; the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 (hereinafter referred to as the "Air Act, 1981"); and the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 (hereinafter referred to as the "E (P) Act, 1986").

3. That, the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) have been constituted in every State/Union Territory under Section 4 of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and under Section 5 & 6 of the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 and are responsible for implementation of the provisions of the Acts in their respective State/Union Territory.

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4. That, the instant case has been taken Suo-Moto by the Hon'ble NGT, Principal Bench, based on the news item titled "*Himalayan rivers' glaciers under threat: Experts demand urgent policy shift*" appearing in India Today dated 17.09.2025. The news item has reported the concerns raised by environmentalists, scientists, and activists about the harmful impact of ongoing development in the Himalayan region. These concerns include ecological damage caused by road expansion projects on the Yamnotri and Gangotri National Highways, dumping of construction debris into the Yamuna and Bhagirathi rivers, cutting of deodar and other tree species without scientific assessment, etc. Consequently, a dedicated "Himalaya Policy" has been demanded in the report.

5. That, in context of requirement of Environmental Clearance (hereinafter referred to as "EC"), it is submitted that, the Clause 2 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Notification, 2006 (hereinafter referred to as EIA Notification, 2006) provides for the requirements of prior EC and as per the above mentioned clause, the projects or activities which are falling under the category 'A' of the Schedule of the EIA Notification, 2006; the project proponent shall obtain the EC from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (hereinafter referred to as 'MoEF&CC') and the projects which are falling under the 'B' category of the Schedule of the EIA Notification, 2006; the project proponent shall obtain EC from the State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (hereinafter referred to as 'SEIAA') before commencement of any construction work, or before start of land preparation, or before start of any expansion and modernization, as stipulated therein.

6. That, in the context of consent required to be obtained by the projects and various units/components of the project, it is humbly submitted that the

SPCBs/PCCs are the concerned authorities to grant consent (consent to establish/consent to operate) under the Water Act, 1974, and the Air Act, 1981, in their respective jurisdictions of state/union territory and to ensure the compliance of conditions of consent and prescribed environmental standards.

7. In the context of prevention of ecological damage from road expansion projects, it is submitted that the Construction and Demolition Waste Management Rules, 2016 (hereinafter referred to as "C&D WM Rules, 2016") were notified in March, 2016 by the Central Government. In the said rules, duties of the various stakeholders are prescribed for effective implementation of the rules.

   i. As per rule 4(1) of the C&D WM Rules, 2016, every waste generator shall prima facie be responsible for collection, segregation of concrete, soil and others and storage of construction and demolition waste generated, as directed or notified by the concerned local authority in consonance with these rules.

   ii. As per rule 4(4) of the C&D WM Rules, 2016, every waste generator shall keep the construction and demolition waste within the premise or get the waste deposited at collection centre so made by the local body or handover it to the authorised processing facilities of construction and demolition waste; and ensure that there is no littering or deposition of construction and demolition waste so as to prevent obstruction to the traffic or the public or drains.

   iii. As per rule 6(1), local authority shall issue detailed directions with regard to proper management of construction and demolition waste within its jurisdiction in accordance with the provisions of these rules and the local authority shall seek detailed plan or undertaking, as applicable, from generator of construction and demolition waste

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iv. In pursuant to the sub-rule 1(a) of Rule 10 of the C&D W M Rules, 2016, the guideline titled "Environmental Management of C & D Wastes" was prepared by CPCB in March, 2017, and the copy was uploaded on the Website of CPCB, available at https://cpcb.nic.in/openpdffile.php?id=UmVwb3J0RmlsZXMvNTUyXzE1MTEyNjQwMTVfbWVkaWFwaG90bzQ2OTAucGRm

8. That, the decline of tree cover and unchecked and indiscriminate felling of trees are governed by the provisions of the Indian Forest Act, 1927, and the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. In furtherance of these central legislations, the Uttar Pradesh Protection of Trees in Rural and Hill Areas Act, 1976, is adapted in the State of Uttarakhand vide Uttaranchal (UPPTAct 1976) Adaption and Modification Order 2002. The felling and pruning of trees not falling under the purview of the Indian Forest Act, 1927, are regulated by the provision of the UP Protection of Trees Act, 1976. The implementation of these enactments is governed by the Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (PCCF) or designated authorities of the Government of Uttarakhand.

9. That, on receiving the matter, the Uttarakhand Pollution Control Board has been requested vide letter dated November 25, 2025, for examining and taking necessary action in the matter (a copy is enclosed at **Annexure-R2-I**). The response to the same is awaited. Accordingly, it is humbly submitted that the response of the Uttarakhand Pollution Control Board may kindly be considered in this regard by this Hon'ble Tribunal for adjudication of the instant matter.

10. The Answering Respondent seeks liberty to file an additional affidavit, as per directions, and if the same is considered necessary at later stage.

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Regd. No. 1513
GOVT. OF INDIA

11. That, in light of the above submissions, it is respectfully submitted that this answering respondent, i.e., CPCB, shall abide by all the order(s) or direction(s) passed by this Hon'ble Tribunal in this original application.

Sharandeep

(Sharandeep Singh)
Scientist 'E'
Central Pollution Control Board
16.01.2026

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R.L. Chaudhary
N.C.T. of Delhi
Regd. No. 1513
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BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL

PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI

Original Application No. 525 of 2025

In the matter of:

News item titled "Himalayan rivers glaciers under threat: Experts demand urgent policy shift" appearing in India Today dated 17.09.2025.

I, **Sharandeep Singh**, aged about 46 years in the capacity of Scientist 'E', having office at the Delhi, Central Pollution Control Board, Parivesh Bhawan, East Arjun Nagar, Delhi, do hereby solemnly affirm and sincerely state on oath as follows:

1. That, I, the deponent herein is well conversant with the facts and circumstances of the present case on the basis of the information derived from the official records, and hence, I am competent to verify, sign and swear this affidavit on behalf of the Respondent CPCB.

2. That, the accompanying reply may be read part and parcel of the present affidavit.

3. That, the accompanying reply has been drafted and filed under my instructions and authority the contents thereof are true and correct on the basis of the records maintained during ordinary course of business of CPCB and available records and documents and the contents of the same are read over and explained to me and are not repeated herein for the sake of brevity.

NOTARY PUBLIC
R.L. Chaudhary
N.C.T. of Delhi
Regd. No. 1513
GOVT. OF INDIA

Sharandeep

DEPONENT

शरणदीप सिंह / Sharandeep Singh
वैज्ञानिक 'ई' / Scientist 'E'
केंद्रीय प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड
Central Pollution Control Board
(पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार)
(M/o Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India)
परिवेश भवन, पूर्वी अर्जुन नगर, दिल्ली-110032
Parivesh Bhawan, East Arjun Nagar, Delhi-110032

VERIFICATION:

Verified at Delhi on this day of _____2026 that the contents above are correct and true on the basis of the records of the case as mentioned in the day-to-day affairs of the CPCB. Nothing has been concealed therefrom or mis-stated.

Sharandeep

DEPONENT

शरणदीप सिंह / Sharandeep Singh
वैज्ञानिक 'ई' / Scientist 'E'
केंद्रीय प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड
Central Pollution Control Board
(पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार)
(M/o Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India)
परिवेश भवन, पूर्वी अर्जुन नगर, दिल्ली–110032
Parivesh Bhawan, East Arjun Nagar, Delhi-110032

NOTARY PUBLIC
R.L. Chaudhary
N.C.T. of Delhi
Regd. No. 1513
GOVT. OF INDIA

ATTESTED
NOTARY PUBLIC
GOVT. OF INDIA

16 JAN 2026

केन्द्रीय प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड
CENTRAL POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD
पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार.
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST & CLIMATE CHANGE, GOVT. OF INDIA.

No.: CM-13011/155/2025-LAW-HO-CPCB-HO 7866

November 25, 2025

To

The Member Secretary
Uttarakhand Environment Protection & Pollution Control Board
29/20, Nemi Road, Dehradun,
Uttarakhand - 248001

Subject: Hon'ble NGT Original Application No. 525/2025 News Item titled "Himalayan rivers glaciers under threat: Experts demand urgent policy shift" appearing in India Today dated 17.09.2025.

Ref.: Hon'ble NGT (PB) order dated October 14.10.2025 in OA No. 525/2025.

Sir/Madam,

This is in reference to the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal (NGT) order dated 14.10.2025 (copy enclosed).

2. The issues raised in the above-mentioned Original Application, based on the news item titled *"Himalayan rivers glaciers under threat: Experts demand urgent policy shift"* published in *India Today* dated 17.09.2025, pertain to the harmful impacts of ongoing development activities in the Himalayan region. These include ecological damage caused by road expansion projects on the Yamunotri and Gangotri National Highways, dumping of construction debris into the Yamuna and Bhagirathi rivers, cutting of deodar and other tree species without scientific assessment, etc. Consequently, a dedicated "Himalaya Policy" has been demanded.

3. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) is Respondent No. 2 in the matter and is required to file its response/reply. In view of this, it is requested that the matter may kindly be examined in consultation with all concerned Departments of the State, and necessary action as deemed appropriate may please be taken. The status of action taken may be communicated to this office at the earliest.

Encl.: As above

Yours faithfully,

Sharandeep

(Sharandeep Singh)
Additional Director & Head-UPC-I

9411/UPC-I/25
25/11/2025
केंद्रीय प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड
दिनांक 25-11-25

o/c