



Standing Committee Report Summary

Steps Taken by Various Sectors of the Indian Economy to Control Pollution

- The Departmentally-Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science and Technology and Environment and Forests submitted its 230th report on Steps Taken by Various Sectors of the Indian Economy to Control Pollution. The Committee was chaired by Dr. T. Subbarami Reddy. This report was tabled in Parliament on August 30, 2012.
- The Committee examined the roadmap drawn by various Ministries such as Mines, Steel, Civil Aviation, Defence, etc to ensure the production of the requisite quantity of natural resources and power without causing damage to the ecological balance.
- The Committee recommended that the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) should speed up the process of the grant of environmental clearances to ensure that infrastructure and industrial development projects are not held up.
- Public Sector Units should earmark a minimum of 1% of their profits towards plantation, health and welfare activities.
- The Committee suggested the exploration of underground mining of coal instead of open cast mining (extraction of coal from an open pit) to protect the environment.
- The State Pollution Control Boards (SPCB) are not performing their duties vigilantly. The Committee recommended that the MoEF should ensure effective coordination between the Central Pollution Control Board and the SPCBs and take steps to make the SPCBs functional.
- The Committee was of the view that the Ministry of Shipping should equip the ports with the latest technology to ensure that damage to the ocean biodiversity due to oil slick is minimal. They should examine the United States Oil Pollution Act, 1990 which has improved the USA's ability to prevent and respond to oil spills.
- The Committee observed that environmental clearances should be provided for the widening of existing roads as this would help in reducing pollution. The dust emission on such widened roads gets significantly reduced. The Committee recommended the widening of roads by using polymer modified bitumen technology.
- Though the aviation sector's contribution to carbon emission was only about two per cent, the Committee was of the view that more measures need to be taken to combat noise pollution. The Committee stated that the imposition of night curfew by some of the European countries has led to an increase in noise pollution at Indian airports at night. This should be resolved by either asking the European countries to lift this curfew or imposing one at Indian airports as well.
- The Railways should introduce bio-degradable toilets on all trains.
- The Ministry of Power should encourage the extensive use of renewable energy resources to put lesser burden on non-renewable sources of energy.
- The Committee suggested that all steel plants achieve 100% recycling of Blast Furnace Slag within the next two years.

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