

Green cover requirement for industrial estates

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Why in news?

The Union Ministry of Environment and Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has reduced the mandatory green cover norms for industrial projects from 33% to 10%.

Feature	Green Cover	Green Belt
Definition	The extent of land covered by any kind of vegetation (trees, parks, gardens, agricultural land, forests, etc.).	A designated land-use zone around or near urban/industrial areas where development is strictly controlled or prohibited by law.
Purpose	To provide general environmental benefits such as shade, cooling, biodiversity conservation, and soil moisture retention across a wide area.	To prevent urban sprawl, preserve natural habitats and farmland, create a buffer zone against pollution, and provide access to countryside for recreation.
Scope	Can refer to any scale, from a small park to global forest area.	Typically refers to a strategically planned, contiguous area or a linear corridor (greenway) with a defined border.

Revised Greencover Norm -

- A *minimum of 10%* of an industrial estate's area must be designated as common green area with dense plantation of 2,500 trees per hectare, to be developed by the estate owner.
- Applicable for industrial estates, parks, complexes, Export Processing Zones, Special Economic Zones, biotech parks and leather complexes.
- This can be at one location or spread across multiple sites within the premises, provided it is clearly demarcated.
- Introduced differentiated norms **based on industries pollution**

potential.

Categories of industries

- The MoEFCC has developed the categorization of industrial sectors based on the *Pollution Index*.
 - **Red Category -** Score of 60 and above (highest pollution potential).
 - **Orange Category -** Score of 41 to 59 (moderately polluting).
 - **Green Category -** Score of 21 to 40 (marginally polluting).
 - White Category Score including and up to 20 (practically non-polluting).
 - Requirement for units within industrial estates
 - **Red category -** Must maintain **15%** green belt within their own premises.
 - Orange category Need 10%.
 - Green & white category No mandatory requirement, making green cover optional for them.
 - For standalone industrial units outside estates -
 - **Red category -** Must maintain 25% green belt (predominantly airpolluting sectors), while other red category units need 20%.
 - Orange category Range from 15-20%, depending on air pollution scores,
 - **Green category -** Need 10% (with high air pollution potential)
 - White category No mandatory requirement.

References

- 1. The Hindu | Government relaxes green cover norms
- 2. <u>Hindustan Times | Reduction of green cover mandate for industries</u>
- 3. PIB | Categorization of industrial sectors

