

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 air-polluting 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. [Hindustan Times | Reduction of green cover mandate for industries](#)
3. [PIB | Categorization of industrial sectors](#)