

DownToEarth

Air, water pollution offences more than triple in 2020: NCRB

16 September 2021

Crimes under The Air and The Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act increased 286 per cent in a year (2020 compared to 2019), according to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)'s latest report.

A total of 589 cases were registered under these two acts in 2020 compared to 160 cases in 2019, according to the data.

This is the highest increase among environmental crimes registered under seven categories in the country, which are:

- The Forest Act and The Forest Conservation Act
- The Wildlife Protection Act
- The Environmental (Protection) Act
- The Air and The Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act
- The Cigarette and Other Tobacco Products Act
- Noise Pollution Acts and National Green Tribunal Act

Offences recorded under this category have risen consistently since 2018. Crimes registered under air and water pollution act rose over 840 per cent in 2019 compared to 2018.

Crimes that violated air and water pollution acts accounted for less than one per cent of the total environment offences in 2019 and 2020, according to the data.

Only eight of the 36 states and Union territories recorded cases for violating air and water pollution laws in 2020. These were: Assam, Haryana, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi. In 2019, too, only eight states recorded crimes where air and water pollution laws were violated.

In 2020, over 89 per cent such crimes were registered in Uttar Pradesh, followed by Rajasthan (5 per cent).

[Experts](#) have often questioned these estimates as well as the efficiency of the Central Pollution Control Boards and State Pollution Control Boards.

A look at the environmental cases on [India environment portal](#) of the Delhi-based non-profit Centre for Science and Environment indicates that the data may project fewer number of cases of violation of air and water laws than the actual.

Environment-related offences under the National Green Tribunal (NGT) Act increased 121 per cent in 2019 compared to 2020: 199 cases were registered in 2020 as compared to 90 in 2019.

What do the numbers say

	Categories under which offences are registered	Total number of environment offences registered in 2020	Total number of environment offences registered in 2020	Percentage increase in number of environment offences between 2019 and 2020	Total number of states where crimes were registered in 2020
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1	The Forest Act & The Forest Conservation Act	2,118	2,287	7.98	20
2	The Wildlife Protection Act	613	672	9.62	27
3	The Environmental (Protection) Act	487	992	103.7	12
4	The Air & The Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act	160	589	268.13	8
5	The Cigarette and Other Tobacco Products Act	22,671	49,710	119.27	24
6	Noise Pollution Acts	8,537	7,318	-14.28	15
7	The National Green Tribunal Act	90	199	121.11	4
	Total number of registered environmental offences	34,676	61,767	78.13	

Offences recorded under this category too have risen consistently since 2018: Crimes registered under NGT Act increased 14 per cent in 2020 compared to 2019.

Crimes under the Environmental (Protection) Act increased 103 per cent during the same period. In 2020, 992 cases were registered under the Act, compared to 487 cases in 2019.

The registration of cases under wildlife and forest laws increased 9.6 per cent and 7.9 per cent in 2020 compared to 2019, respectively.

Source: <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/environment/air-water-pollution-offences-more-than-triple-in-2020-ncrb-79046>