

Submit report on wetlands in south Delhi in a month, NGT tells forest department

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New Delhi: National Green Tribunal has granted the forest department four weeks to submit a report related to the condition of wetlands in south Delhi.

Last year, taking suo motu cognizance of a TOI's report titled "10 wetlands in Asola to conserve rainwater", the tribunal sought details from Central Pollution Control Board, Delhi Wetland Authority, Delhi Pollution Control Committee and the forest department. The report pointed out that over the years, most of the water bodies were either encroached upon, heavily polluted, or filled with silt. The tribunal noted that the report raised substantial issues relating to compliance with environmental

norms. While the other agencies have replied, the forest department is yet to do so, the tribunal bench headed by NGT chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava stated on Aug 4.

Earlier, the tribunal stated that "as per the news item, Delhi has a variety of water bodies. However, over the years, most of the water bodies were either encroached upon, heavily polluted, or filled with silt, making them less functional. This is also true for groundwater recharge. It further states that a total of over 142 relatively small-sized water bodies in Delhi were either completely built up (20%), turned into parks (9%), or filled with contaminated water (12%)."

The matter has been listed for hearing on Sept 29.