



To
The Hon'ble Chief Secretary
Government of Karnataka, Bengaluru

Subject: Strengthening Police Training & Enforcement Framework on Environmental Offences as a Public Order and Public Health Imperative

Respected Madam,

The Karnataka Police have undertaken commendable initiatives in recent years to address emerging threats to public safety such as cybercrime, gaming offences, helmet compliance and traffic regulation. These initiatives have positively enhanced public trust.

However, **environmental offences—despite their direct impact on public health, public order, and social stability—remain inadequately addressed within the policing framework**, largely due to the absence of structured training, legal orientation, and institutional accountability mechanisms.

1. Constitutional & Judicial Mandate

The Hon'ble **Supreme Court of India** has consistently held that:

- **The right to a clean and pollution-free environment is an intrinsic part of Article 21 of the Constitution of India.**
- In its **2024 reaffirmation**, the Court categorically observed that environmental protection is **not a policy choice but a constitutional obligation**, and weak enforcement defeats this mandate.

Environmental degradation directly causes:

- Public health crises
- Forced displacement and livelihood loss
- Social unrest and law-and-order challenges

Thus, **environmental crimes are not merely regulatory violations but threats to public order**, falling squarely within police responsibility.

2. Statutory Duties of Police

Under existing legal frameworks, the police are duty-bound to act on environmental offences:

- **Section 133, CrPC** – Removal of public nuisance (including pollution, waste dumping, burning)

- **Indian Penal Code (Sections 268, 269, 270)** – Public nuisance and acts endangering public health
- **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986**
- **Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016 (amended)**
- **Noise Pollution (Regulation & Control) Rules, 2000**
- **Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016**

Despite this, enforcement remains weak **due to lack of operational knowledge and specialised training** among field-level police officers.

3. Training & Capacity-Building Gap

The **Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D)** and the **Standing Committee on Home Affairs (2022)** have already recommended:

- Continuous professional training
- Collaboration with universities and subject-matter experts
- Modernised curricula addressing emerging and cross-sectoral crimes

Yet, **environmental law and enforcement remain absent as a core training module**.

4. Need for Immediate Institutional Intervention

Environmental violations today occur **openly and repeatedly** due to:

- Inadequate legal awareness among enforcement officers
- Lack of coordination with Pollution Control Boards and local bodies
- Absence of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for police-led action

This institutional gap effectively **sanctions environmental degradation**, weakening deterrence.

Specific Directions Requested

In light of the above, we respectfully request the Hon'ble Chief Secretary to issue directions for:

A. Training & Curriculum Reform

1. Inclusion of **environmental offences as a mandatory subject** in police induction and in-service training.
2. Engagement of **Environmental Officers, Environmental Engineers, and Environmental Law experts** as resource persons.
3. Collaboration with universities & research institutions for structured capacity building.

B. Enforcement & Vigilance Measures

4. Treating environmental nuisances as **public order issues** requiring routine police intervention.
5. Issuance of clear instructions to District SPs for:
 - Regular drives against **illegal waste dumping and burning**
 - Vigilance over **water-body pollution**, including marine pollution
 - Enforcement of **Single-Use Plastic bans**, especially at inter-district and inter-state borders
 - Monitoring transport of plastic waste at police checkpoints
6. Conduct of **periodic raids and inspections** for violations of environmental laws.

C. Awareness-Linked Enforcement

Once trained, police units must effectively undertake **awareness-cum-action drives** relating to:

- **noise pollution** – warning all the sound providers on Noise pollution rules (religious events, processions, dramas, parties, tourism, public events, etc.)
- **air pollution** – clearly instructing about all the rules, regulations and orders preventing burning of waste, crackers, etc.
- **water pollution** – conveying proper information on all banned activities polluting water bodies, particularly on marine pollution (sewage discharge, fishing waste, oil spills, etc.)
- **plastic pollution** – providing comprehensive knowledge on Central and State PWM Rules (all SUPs, plus micro- & nano-plastic hazards)

Environmental protection today is inseparable from **public safety, public health, and social stability**. Strengthening police capacity in this domain will significantly enhance rule of law, deterrence, and constitutional compliance.

We respectfully seek your kind intervention to issue necessary directions to the concerned departments and request a response on the action taken.

With regards,

Ana S.
President

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