**AIR (P&CP) ACT**

In 1955, after many state and local governments had passed legislation dealing with air pollution, the federal government decided that this problem needed to be dealt with on a national level. This was the year Congress passed the [Air Pollution Control Act of 1955](https://www.ametsoc.org/sloan/cleanair/cleanairlegisl.html#caa55), the nation's first piece of federal legislation on this issue. The language of the bill identified air pollution as a national problem and announced that research and additional steps to improve the situation needed to be taken. It was an act to make the nation more aware of this environmental hazard.

Eight years later, Congress passed the nation's [Clean Air Act of 1963](https://www.ametsoc.org/sloan/cleanair/cleanairlegisl.html#caa63). This act dealt with reducing air pollution by setting emissions standards for stationary sources such as power plants and steel mills. It did not take into account mobile sources of air pollution which had become the largest source of many dangerous pollutants. Once these standards were set, the government also needed to determine deadlines for companies to comply with them. Amendments to the Clean Air Act were passed in 1965, 1966, 1967, and 1969. These amendments authorized the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) to set standards for auto emissions, expanded local air pollution control programs, established air quality control regions (AQCR), set air quality standards and compliance deadlines for stationary source emissions, and authorized research on low emissions fuels and automobiles.

By 1970, the issue needed to be addressed again. Although important legislative precedents had been set, the existing laws were deemed inadequate. Although technically an amendment, the [Clean Air Act of 1970](https://www.ametsoc.org/sloan/cleanair/cleanairlegisl.html#caa70) was a major revision and set much more demanding standards. It established new primary and secondary standards for ambient air quality, set new limits on emissions from stationary and mobile sources to be enforced by both state and federal governments, and increased funds for air pollution research. It was soon discovered that the deadlines set were overly ambitious (especially those for auto emissions). To reach these standards in such a short period of time, the auto industry faced serious economic limitations and seemingly insurmountable technological challenges. Over the next decade, the legislation was once again amended to extend these deadlines and to mandate states to revise their implementation plans. Congress did not amend the Clean Air Act during the decade of the 1980s, in part because President Reagan's administration placed economic goals ahead of environmental goals.

In 1990, after a lengthy period of inactivity, the federal government believed that they should again revise the Clean Air Act due to growing environmental concerns. The [Clean Air Act of 1990](https://www.ametsoc.org/sloan/cleanair/cleanairlegisl.html#caa90) addressed five main areas: air-quality standards, motor vehicle emissions and alternative fuels, toxic air pollutants, acid rain, and stratospheric ozone depletion. In many ways, this law set out to strengthen and improve existing regulations.

Here are these 4 acts mentioned above:

### Air Pollution Control Act of 1955

**"An Act to provide research and technical assistance relating to air pollution control"**

### Clean Air Act of 1963

### "An Act to improve, strengthens, and accelerates programs for the prevention and abatement of air pollution"

### Clean Air Act of 1970

**"An Act to amend the Clean Air Act to provide for a more effective program to improve the quality of the Nation's air."**

1. **Clean Air Act of 1990**

**"An Act to amend the Clean Air Act to provide for attainment and maintenance of health protective national ambient air quality standards, and for other purposes."**

**WATER (P & C.P) ACT**

Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 is a comprehensive legislation that regulates agencies responsible for checking on water pollution and ambit of pollution control boards both at the centre and states. The Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 was adopted by the Indian parliament with the aim of prevention and control of Water Pollution in India. Some of the important sections regulating the prevention of water pollution as per the act are as discussed below.

### Functions of the State Board

Section 17 of the [Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974](http://www.commonfloor.com/guide/tag/water-prevention-and-control-of-pollution-act-1974) clearly lists all functions of the respective state boards for countering water pollution. The state board of respective states is empowered to plan a comprehensive program for the prevention, control or abatement of pollution of streams and wells, collect and disseminate information relating to water pollution and encourage, conduct and participate in investigations and research relating to problems of water pollution and prevention.

The state water boards also have the right to inspect sewage or trade effluents, works and plants for the [treatment of sewage](http://www.commonfloor.com/guide/the-ecobiopack-sewage-treatment-system-2-4473.html) and trade effluents and to review all water purification plants. The Board may establish or recognize a laboratory or laboratories to enable the Board to perform its functions under this section efficiently, including the analysis of samples of water from any stream or well or of samples of any sewage or trade effluents.

### Consent of the State Board is necessary to discharge sewage

Section 25 of the Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 states that Prior Consent of the State Board under section 25 is necessary to set up any industry, plant or process which is likely to discharge sewage or trade effluent into a stream or well or sewer or on land or bring into use any new or altered outlets for the discharge of sewage or begin to make any new discharge of sewage. The section further states that every State Board is liable to maintain a register containing particulars or conditions imposed under the section related to any outlet, or to any effluent, from any land or premises which must be open to inspection by the state board.

### Power to take emergency measures

Section 32 of the Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 describes the power to take emergency measures in case of pollution of stream or well. Under the act, State Board may issue orders to re move the matter, which is, or may cause pollution; or remedy or mitigate the pollution, or issue prohibition orders to the concerned persons from discharging any poisonous or noxious or polluting matter.

Section 24 and 43 of the Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 relate to prohibition on use of stream or well for disposal of polluting matter and penalty for contravention thereof Under the scope of the provision, no person shall knowingly cause or permit any poisonous, noxious or polluting mater as determined by the State Board to enter into any stream or sewer or on land.

### Understanding Water Class

Depending on the pollution of the water, water is demarked under various water classes in accordance with the Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974. Drinking water at source found without conventional treatment but after disinfection is designated as Class A while water designated for outdoor bathing comes under Class B. Any drinking water source which has been conventionally treated comes under Class C while water used for propagation of wildlife and fisheries is demarked as Class D. Water under Class E is used for irrigation and industrial cooling along with waste disposal.

### Penalties and fines

Section 42 of the of the Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 states penalties and fines for certain acts including pulling down pillars, Obstructs any person acting under the orders or direction of the Board, Damages any works or property belonging to the Board and Failure to furnish any officer other employee of the Board any information required. The fine and penalty includes Imprisonment for a term which may extend up to three months or with fine to Rs. 10,000/- or both.

### Some Key Points of Water Act 1974

* Water Act 1974 aims to prevent and control water pollution.
* Under Water Act, 1974, pollution control boards were created, who are responsible for implementation of its provisions.
* One of the important provisions of the Water Act, 1974 is to maintain and restore the ‘wholesomeness’ of our aquatic resources.
* Under Water Act 1974, Sewage or pollutants cannot be discharged into water bodies including lakes and it is the duty of the state pollution control board to intervene and stop such activity.
* Anyone failing to abide by the laws of under is liable for imprisonment under Section 24 & Section 43 ranging from not less than one year and six months to six years along with monetary fines.

**ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION ACT (EPA) 1986**

According to the Environmental (Protection) Act 1986, the term environment includes water, air, land and the interrelationship which exist among and between water, air, land and human beings, other living creatures, micro-organism, plant and property.

**FEATURES AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ACT**

* The E.P. Act was enacted under Art.253 of the Constitution of India. The preamble of the Act sets out that the purpose of the Act is to implement the decisions made at the United Nations Conference on Human Environment held at Stockholm in June 1972, in which India had actively participated.
* The Act seeks to supplement the existing laws on control of Pollution by enacting a general legislation for environmental protection and to fill the gaps in regulations relating to major environmental hazards.
* The Act confers wide powers on the Central Government. The Act makes the central government, the repository of wide powers. (Whereas the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and the Air (Prevention and Control) Act, 1981 entrust the task of control of pollution on agencies created by the statute namely state and central pollution control boards.) Rule making power of the Central Govt. is the main feature of this Act.
* The objective of the E.P. Act is much wider in comparison to water Act and Air Act. (While the Air Act and Water Act deal with prevention and control of specific kinds of pollution, the E.P. Act deals with prevention and control of all sorts of pollution. Besides prevention and control, the Act aims at protection and improvement of the Environment.

**GENERAL POWERS OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT**

* To take all necessary measures for prevention, control and abatement of environmental pollution.
* Authorities can be constituted.
* Appointment of Officers.
* To issue Directions and orders.
* To make Rules.

**WILDLIFE PROTECTION ACT**

The Wildlife Act was passed in 1972 to protect the wildlife and their habitats. The habitat destruction due to agriculture, industries, urbanisation and other human activities had led to the erosion of the country’s wildlife.

**The Major Activities and Provisions in the Act Can are Summed up as Follows:**

1. It defines the wildlife related terminology.

2. Enactment of an All India Wildlife Protection Act (1972).

3. It provides for the appointment of wildlife advisory Board, Wildlife warden, their powers, duties etc.

4. Becoming a party to the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora (CITES, 1976).

5. Launching a “national component of UNESCO’s ‘Man and Biosphere Programme’ (1971).

6. Under the Act, comprehensive listing of endangered wildlife species was done for the first time and prohibition of hunting of the endangered species was mentioned.

7. Protection to some endangered plants.

8. The Act provides for setting up of National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries etc.

9. The Act provides for the constitution of Central Zoo Authority.

10. There is provision for trade and commerce in some wildlife species with license for sale, possession, transfer etc.

11. The act imposes a ban on the trade or commerce in scheduled animals.

12. It provides for legal powers to officers and punishment to offenders.

It provides for captive breeding programme for endangered species. Several Conservation Projects for individual endangered species like Lion (1972), Tiger (1973), Crocodile (1974) and Brown antlered Deer (1981) were stated under this Act. The Act is adopted by all states in India except J & K, which has its own Act.

Some of the major drawbacks of the Act include mild penalty to offenders, illegal wildlife trade in J & K, personal ownership certificate for animal articles like tiger and leopard skins, no coverage of foreign endangered wildlife, pitiable condition of wildlife in mobile zoos and little emphasis on protection of plant genetic resources.