



Untreated Waste in Landfills of Kedarnath | Uttarakhand | 16 Nov 2024

Why in News?

Environmentalists are raising concerns as authorities continue to dump **tonnes of untreated waste at landfill sites** around the [eco-sensitive Himalayan temple of Kedarnath](#).

Key Points

- **Garbage Dumping in Kedarnath:**
 - It was revealed that **49.18 tonnes of unprocessed garbage** were **dumped at two landfill sites** near Kedarnath between 2022 and 2024.
 - Untreated waste generation showed an upward trend, 13.2 tonnes in 2022, 18.48 tonnes in 2023, and 17.5 tonnes so far in 2024.
- **Environmental Concerns:**
 - Activists criticized the **inadequate [garbage management system](#)**, emphasizing that the **eco-sensitive Kedarnath region** lacks proper waste treatment facilities.
 - The temple, located at 12,000 feet amid [glaciers](#), requires immediate waste management reforms to preserve the fragile ecosystem.
 - The two landfill sites near Kedarnath are nearing capacity and continued negligence could lead to another tragedy similar to the 2013 disaster in the region.
- **Government and Legal Oversight:**
 - The [National Green Tribunal \(NGT\)](#) and [National Mission for Clean Ganga \(NMCG\)](#) responded to complaints, directing authorities to establish sewage treatment plants in Kedarnath.
 - The NMCG noted that untreated waste from **Kedarnath is polluting the [Mandakini River](#)**, a [Ganga](#) tributary, and instructed the Rudraprayag district administration to act.

Eco-Sensitive Zones

- Eco-Sensitive Zones or **Ecologically Fragile Areas** are areas **within 10 kms around Protected Areas, National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries**.
- ESZs are **notified by MoEFCC**, Government of India under [Environment Protection Act 1986](#).
 - In case of places with sensitive corridors, connectivity and ecologically important patches, **crucial for landscape linkage**, even areas beyond 10 km width can also be included in the eco-sensitive zone.
- The basic aim is to regulate certain activities around **National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries** so as to minimise the negative impacts of such activities on the fragile ecosystem encompassing the protected areas.