



# Gross Environment Product Index

## Why in News?

**Uttarakhand** has become the first Indian state to launch a **Gross Environment Product Index**.

## Key Points

- The **Himalayan Environmental Studies and Conservation Organisation** is the creator of the Gross Environment Product Index.
- There are **four pillars of the Gross Environment Product Index**: air, soil, tree and water.
  - The formula is, **GEP index = (Air-GEP index + Water-GEP index + Soil-GEP index + Forest-GEP index)**.
- **Significance:**
  - It helps in assessing the **impact of anthropological pressure** on our ecosystem and natural resources.
  - It provides a **robust and integrated method for assessing a state's ecological growth**, capturing various facets of environmental well-being as a result of human actions.
- **Recommendation:**
  - Activities should be **prohibited; regulated and promoted**.
  - Regulated activities should be allowed only as per carrying capacity and **environmental impact assessment**.

## Himalayan Environmental Studies and Conservation Organisation

- It is a **Non-governmental Organisations**, formed in 1979.
- Its **aims** are:
  - Resource based **ecological and economical development of Himalayan community**.
  - Building and empowering community organisation for **socio economical independence**.

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# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

EIA is a study conducted in the early stages of development project planning to predict and address potential environmental impacts



- Statutory Status:** Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986 (Made EIA mandatory)
- Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC)
- Project Categorisation:** EIA Notification of 2006 categorised the developmental projects in:
  - Category A Project:** Needed prior Environmental Clearance (EC) from MoEF&CC
  - Category B Project:** Needed prior EC from State/UT Govt.
    - Category B1 projects** (Mandatorily requires EIA)
    - Category B2 projects** (Do not require EIA)

*There are 39 categories of projects that require an EC process and are subject to EIA*

## EIA Process as per EIA Notification, 2006

Step	Objective	Carried Out By
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Screening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need of EIA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State Expert Appraisal Committee (SEAC) (Category B)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scoping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies important issues for EIA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standard Term of Reference (ToR) prepared by MoEF&amp;CC with EAC/SEAC for Category B Projects*</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Consultation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addresses concerns of affected people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State Pollution Control Board (SPCB)/ UT Pollution Control Board (UTPCB)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Appraisal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutiny of Final EIA Report/ Environmental Management Plan (EMP)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EAC for category A Projects and SEAC for category B1 Projects</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decision Making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Granting EC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Category A: MoEF&amp;CC</li> <li>Category B: State EIA Authority (SEIAA)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring (Post EC)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compliance of general and specific conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SPCB / UTPCB and Regional Offices</li> </ul>

## Government Initiatives For EC

- PARIVESH (Proactive and Responsive facilitation by Interactive, Virtuous, and Environmental Single Window Hub):** Single Window System for EC
  - Developed by MoEF&CC and National Information Centre (NIC)
- Environmental Information System (ENVIS):** Collect, Collate, Storing, Retrieving and Disseminating Information Related to the Environment Sector
- Draft Environmental Impact Assessment Notification 2020:** Published by MoEF&CC to replace existing EIA Notification, 2006

