



Advancing Sustainable Urban Development in India: Role of the National Green Tribunal

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Abstract. Sustainable urban development is a crucial aspect of environmental governance in India, given the challenges posed by rapid urbanization, pollution, and resource depletion. The National Green Tribunal (NGT) plays a vital role in ensuring compliance with environmental laws, regulating land use, and adjudicating disputes related to urban sustainability. This paper examines the legal frameworks governing sustainable urban development, focusing on the NGT's interventions, challenges, and necessary reforms. The study adopts a doctrinal legal research approach to analyze key statutes such as the Environmental Protection Act, 1986; the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981; the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974; and the Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016. Through major case law analysis, the paper highlights NGT's role in urban land regulation, air and water pollution control, and waste management, referencing landmark cases such as *MC Mehta v. Union of India* (2020), *Vardhaman Kaushik v. Union of India* (2016) etc which are major contributor to the sustainable urban development. Despite its proactive stance, the NGT faces limitations such as weak enforcement mechanisms, jurisdictional conflicts, and lack of coordination with municipal and state authorities. The paper argues that expanding NGT's jurisdiction, strengthening its punitive powers, and integrating climate resilience into urban planning are essential for enhancing its effectiveness. The findings suggest that while the NGT has strengthened environmental compliance and judicial oversight, its impact is constrained by systemic inefficiencies. Addressing these issues through legal and policy reforms is necessary to align India's urban development with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11; ensuring cities are

inclusive, safe, resilient, and environmentally sustainable.

Keywords: Sustainable Urban Development, National Green Tribunal (NGT), Environmental Governance, Pollution, SDG 11

1 Introduction

India has become the most populated country surpassing China in 2023 with 1.45 billion on 26 February. [1] In 2018, UNDESA, in its report, mentioned that based on India's population, it accounts for 11% of the total global urban population, housing 461 million people in cities and towns. [2]

In an article in World Bank Group, it is said that 'By 2036, India's towns and cities will be home to 600 million people, or 40 percent of the population, up from 31 percent in 2011, with urban areas contributing almost 70 percent to GDP.' These figures are significant both because of their demographic weight and the dynamics of urbanisation. [3]

Indian cities have major problem of pollution, climate changes, food security, waste management which are result of haphazard urbanisation. Because of unregulated urban expansion, India lost 1.6 million hectares of tree cover Between 2001 and 2019 (Driver of Permanent deforestation i.e. urbanisation increased from 358 ha in 2001 to 843 ha in 2023). [4] Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai are featured in the top 20 cities having the worst air quality with ranking 1, 2 and 14 respectively. [5]

India is one of the top 10 countries in the world for the generation of municipal solid waste because of its fast urbanization, economic expansion, and higher rates of urban consumption. The Energy and Resources Institute said that India produces more than 62 million tons (MT) of trash annually. [6] Of the whole amount of garbage produced, only 43 MT are collected; 12 MT are treated before being disposed of, and the remaining 31 MT are just dumped in wasteyards. [7] The majority of the garbage produced is left unprocessed and

even unrecorded. The nation's environmental and public health issues are mostly caused by inadequate trash collection, transportation, treatment, and disposal. According to a recent prediction by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), India's yearly trash production is expected to reach 165 MT by 2030. Hazardous, plastic, e-waste, and bio-medical waste generated is expected to increase proportionately, as well.

This rapid urbanization and the further need to escalate it brings to light the need to manage urban transformation while keeping in mind the SDG goals of making cities safe, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable. This is at the forefront of the national development policy discourse. In order to achieve SDG 11, we need to localise the efforts from center to state to public. Despite being an early achiever in several Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), India is still struggling to achieve progress in provisioning of water and sanitation particularly in small and medium size cities and towns.[8] To achieve this we need to have sustainable urban development, social, financial and environmental.

In this paper we will be looking at the environmental angle only. All the issues mentioned above are covered under the Environmental (protection) act 1986[9], The Forest Conservation Act 1980[10], The Water (prevention and Control of pollution) Act, 1974[11], The water (prevention and Control of pollution) Cess Act, 1977[12], The Air (prevention and control of pollution) Act 1981[13], The Public Liability Insurance Act 1991[14], the Biodiversity Act 2002[15] etc. These acts provide protection and the right to a clean environment for everybody. With this formation of the National Green Tribunal has provided everybody with access to

environmental justice regarding any of the issues mentioned before. Hence, we can say NGT acts as a watchdog to expedite environmental justice and ensure compliance with environmental laws related to sustainable urban development. This legal and regulatory framework helps in environmental protection and sustainable urban planning. Various cases like *MC Mehta v union of India* [16], *Vardhaman Kaushik v. Union of India* [17] which led to enforcement of Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) reflects how NGT shapes a sustainable urban development. This paper will look at how NGT contributes to the sustainable development, enforcement of laws, and regulating environmental violations in a step towards Sustainable Urban Development and how effective it is. Further looking at what are the challenges faced and the gap in implementation.

In the past two decades, the importance of sustainable urbanization has been globally recognized. Various global agendas like the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [18] in 2015 have acknowledged the need for sustainable growth. Drawing lessons from the shortcomings and limited success of the MDGs in addressing urban challenges, the United Nations adopted a specific Goal (SDG 11) to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable,” which includes 11 targets.

2. Sustainable Urban Development and Environmental Governance

2.1. Sustainable Urban Development

Sustainable urban development refers to the creation of cities that prioritize long-term durability, human development, and efficient use of resources while minimizing the environmental impact. [19] Sustainable urban development is the way forward for cities to mitigate climate change. [20] It is a multifaceted approach that integrates environmental preservation, economic growth, and social equity to create livable, resilient, and inclusive cities. As urban populations continue to rise, challenges such as air and water pollution, inefficient waste management, deforestation, and carbon emissions threaten the long-term viability of urban centers. According to the OECD (2023), cities must prioritize resource efficiency, climate resilience, and sustainable infrastructure to achieve long-term urban sustainability. [21]

At the heart of sustainable urban development is Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities, which calls for urban areas to be inclusive, safe, resilient, and environmentally sustainable. The rapid urbanization witnessed in countries like India presents a paradox—while cities drive economic progress, they also contribute significantly to environmental degradation.[22] Without effective urban planning and legal enforcement, unchecked urban growth can lead to unregulated land use, loss of biodiversity, and increased carbon footprints, undermining sustainability efforts.[23]

2.2. Fundamental Principles

A fundamental principle of sustainable urban planning is the creation of compact, connected, and environmentally friendly cities. There are several core principles that guide sustainable urban planning, including [24]:

- Integrated Land Use and Smart Infrastructure – Cities should promote mixed land-use development to reduce urban sprawl and enhance public transport efficiency.
- Environmental Conservation and Climate Resilience – The protection of urban forests, wetlands, and open green spaces is critical in ensuring cities remain climate-adaptive. [25]
- Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy Models – Encouraging sustainable waste management, energy-efficient housing, and the use of renewable energy sources.
- Equitable and Inclusive Urban Growth – Ensuring affordable housing and essential services for all socio-economic groups. [26]

Despite widespread awareness of sustainability principles, policy implementation gaps remain a major concern. It is argued that most cities struggle with inadequate enforcement mechanisms, weak regulatory oversight, and conflicts between economic expansion and environmental preservation.[27] In the Indian context, these challenges are particularly acute in rapidly expanding metropolitan areas like Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru, where urban expansion often comes at the cost of wetland destruction, deforestation, and excessive energy consumption. [28]

Legal frameworks play a pivotal role in shaping sustainable urban development. Strong legal and policy interventions are needed to ensure compliance with sustainability goals.[29] In India, policies such as the Smart Cities Mission (2015) and the Environmental Protection Act (1986) provide the necessary legal backing for sustainability initiatives. However, bureaucratic inefficiencies and lack of enforcement often undermine their effectiveness. [30]

To address these challenges, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) plays a vital role in ensuring adherence to environmental laws and urban sustainability regulations. Through its legal rulings and enforcement mechanisms, the NGT has influenced policies on land-use planning, pollution control, and waste management, reinforcing the need for sustainable urban governance. [31]

As cities continue to grow, strengthening governance mechanisms, integrating sustainability mandates into urban policies, and enforcing environmental laws will be critical in achieving sustainable urban development. A synergized approach between legal frameworks, governance models, and community-driven initiatives will be essential in ensuring that urban areas remain sustainable, resilient, and livable in the decades to come. [32]

3. Legal Framework with respect to Sustainable Urban Development in India

Sustainable urban development in India is governed by a comprehensive legal framework that includes environmental

protection laws, urban planning regulations, and climate action policies. These legal instruments establish guidelines for land use, pollution control, waste management, and infrastructure planning, ensuring that urbanization aligns with sustainability principles. The National Green Tribunal (NGT) plays a crucial role in enforcing these laws, addressing violations, and shaping environmental governance in cities. However, gaps in implementation, institutional inefficiencies, and conflicting priorities between development and conservation continue to challenge the realization of sustainable urban growth.

Environmental adjudication in India has evolved significantly, with the National Green Tribunal (NGT) emerging as a specialized forum for environmental disputes. Established under the NGT Act, 2010 [33], the Tribunal was created to address the increasing complexity of environmental issues and provide an efficient, cost-effective, and scientifically informed forum for environmental litigation. The NGT holds jurisdiction over cases involving substantial questions of environment and ensures speedy justice while maintaining a balance between environmental protection and developmental imperatives.

3.1. The Role of the National Green Tribunal (NGT)

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) was established to serve as a specialized adjudicatory body aimed at streamlining environmental governance. The primary functions of the NGT include:

- Ensuring Environmental Justice: The NGT facilitates access to environmental justice by adjudicating disputes related to environmental degradation, pollution, and conservation of natural resources.

- Expert-Driven Decision-Making: Unlike general courts, the NGT consists of judicial members and technical experts, enabling a nuanced understanding of scientific and environmental concerns. [34]
- Speedy Resolution of Environmental Disputes: The NGT Act, 2010, mandates the tribunal to dispose of cases within six months from the date of filing, significantly reducing delays in environmental litigation. [35]
- Suo Motu Powers: The NGT has expanded its powers to take suo motu cognizance of environmental issues, ensuring that key concerns are addressed even in the absence of formal petitions.

3.2. The Environmental Protection Act, 1986

The Environmental Protection Act (EPA), 1986, serves as the umbrella legislation for environmental conservation and pollution control in India. Enacted in response to the Bhopal Gas Tragedy, the law grants the Central Government broad powers to regulate industries, infrastructure projects, and urban developments that impact the environment.

- It empowers the government to take measures necessary for environmental protection, including restrictions on industrial emissions, land-use regulations, and pollution control mechanisms.[36]
- It allows the authorities to issue directions, impose restrictions, or prohibit activities that pose environmental threats. This provision has been invoked by the NGT in halting unauthorized urban expansion in eco-sensitive zones.[37]

- It prohibits industries and urban projects from discharging hazardous pollutants beyond prescribed limits, ensuring that urbanization does not degrade air and water quality.[38]

The NGT has enforced the EPA in several landmark cases. For instance, in Delhi Construction Ban Case (2018), the tribunal prohibited construction activities during peak pollution seasons, citing the EPA's provisions. This ruling highlighted the role of environmental laws in mitigating urban pollution and enforcing sustainable development norms.

3.3. The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981

Air pollution remains one of the most pressing urban sustainability challenges in India, particularly in metropolitan areas like Delhi, Mumbai, and Kolkata. The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, provides the regulatory framework for monitoring and controlling industrial and vehicular emissions.

- The Act empowers the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) to establish national air quality standards and regulate emission levels.[39]
- It allows state governments to declare Air Pollution Control Areas, restricting industrial operations and vehicular emissions in urban zones[40]
- The power to restrict or shut down polluting industries that exceed permissible limits. [41]

The NGT has played a critical role in enforcing the Air Act, particularly in Delhi's air pollution crisis. In *Vardhaman Kaushik v. Union of India* (2016) [42], the tribunal ordered the

implementation of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) to curb pollution in Delhi-NCR. This included banning diesel vehicles older than 10 years, restricting construction activities, and imposing penalties on industrial polluters. Such interventions underscore how legal frameworks and judicial oversight contribute to sustainable urban air quality management.

3.4. The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974

Water pollution is a significant concern in Indian cities, with urban rivers, lakes, and groundwater reserves deteriorating due to industrial discharge and untreated sewage. The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, mandates pollution control measures for municipal authorities, industries, and infrastructure projects.

- It requires state pollution control boards to monitor water quality and prevent contamination.[43]
- It prohibits the discharge of pollutants into water bodies beyond prescribed limits.[44]
- It mandates industries and municipalities to obtain clearance for wastewater discharge. [45]

The NGT has been instrumental in enforcing the Water Act in cases like *MC Mehta v. Union of India* [46], where it directed state governments to establish Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) along the Yamuna and Ganga Rivers. The tribunal also penalized municipal authorities in Bengaluru for failing to clean up Bellandur Lake, a highly polluted urban water body. These rulings reinforce the need for strict regulatory enforcement to ensure urban water sustainability.

3.5. The Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016

With India generating 62 million tonnes of municipal solid waste annually, proper waste management is crucial for urban sustainability. The Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016 [47], provide a legal framework for waste segregation, recycling, and landfill management.

- Rule 4 mandates source segregation of biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste.
- Rule 9 requires municipal corporations to establish waste processing facilities, including composting and waste-to-energy plants.
- Rule 15 holds local bodies accountable for scientific landfill management.

The NGT has taken strict action against municipal non-compliance. In Ghazipur Landfill Case (2021), the tribunal imposed a 50 crore fine on Delhi's civic authorities for failing to manage landfill sites. Such rulings highlight the importance of legal enforcement in ensuring sustainable waste management practices.

3.6. National Climate Policies and Urban Sustainability

India's commitment to climate resilience in urban areas is reflected in policies like the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) [48] and the Surakshit Bharat Abhiyan.

- The National Adaptation Fund for Climate Change (NAFCC) supports climate-resilient projects in urban centers.

- The National Mission on Sustainable Habitat promotes low-carbon urban development, energy-efficient housing, and smart transportation.
- The NGT has reinforced climate action by mandating compliance with NAPCC guidelines, directing cities to integrate green infrastructure into urban planning.

3.7. Urban Planning and Land-Use Regulations

Apart from environmental laws, urban sustainability depends on municipal planning regulations and land-use policies.

- State Town Planning Acts govern zoning regulations, land development, and construction norms.
- Building By-Laws establish standards for green buildings and energy-efficient urban infrastructure.

The NGT has actively enforced land-use laws to prevent ecological destruction. In Haryana, NGT halted illegal construction in protected forest areas, reinforcing the need for sustainable urban expansion. Similarly, the tribunal's intervention in *Save Aarey Forest v. State of Maharashtra* [49] prevented the destruction of urban forests in Mumbai, setting a legal precedent for urban biodiversity conservation.

The National Green Tribunal and Sustainable Urban Development: Legal Analysis

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) plays a pivotal role in promoting sustainable urban development in India by adjudicating environmental disputes and enforcing regulations that balance ecological preservation with urban growth. This section examines the NGT's influence across four critical areas: urban land use and construction, air and water pollution control, waste management, and the conservation of urban green spaces and wetlands.

3.8. NGT's Role in Regulating Urban Land Use and Construction

Urban expansion often leads to environmental degradation, necessitating judicial oversight to ensure sustainable practices. The NGT has been instrumental in addressing illegal constructions and protecting eco-sensitive zones:

- **Protection of Eco-Sensitive Zones:** In the Okhla Bird Sanctuary Case [50], the NGT intervened to halt unauthorized constructions within a 10-kilometer radius of the sanctuary, emphasizing the need for environmental clearances to protect biodiversity. [51]
- **Preservation of Water Bodies:** In *Dr. Jeet Singh Yadav Vs Govt. of NCT of Delhi & Others* [52] dated 02/12/2024 The tribunal addressed the encroachment of ponds in Delhi, directing authorities to restore six ponds in Mundka village, thereby safeguarding urban water resources.

NGT by its orders reinforces land use regulations and environmental due diligence in urban planning. This

strengthens the mandate of EIA notifications under the Environmental Protection Act, 1986 and demonstrates NGT's role in preserving ecological balance amidst urbanization.

3.9. NGT's Impact on Air and Water Pollution Control in Urban Areas

The NGT has actively enforced measures to combat pollution in urban centers:

- Air Pollution Control: In *Vardhman Kaushik v. Union of India* [53], the NGT implemented the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) to tackle severe air pollution in Delhi, mandating actions like restricting vehicular emissions and industrial activities based on pollution levels.
- Water Pollution Mitigation: In *Manoj Mishra v. Union of India & others* [54], the tribunal has addressed pollution in rivers like the Yamuna, directing the implementation of sewage treatment plans and penalizing industries discharging effluents, thereby promoting cleaner urban waterways.
- NGT Suo Moto Action in Court on its Own Motion v. State of Karnataka[55]– Ordered closure of polluting industries, imposition of fines, and immediate lake restoration measures because of Toxic foam and fires in Bellandur Lake due to industrial effluents and untreated waste.

NGT enforces Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 and Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974. With use of principles like polluter pay principle, it has held municipalities, industries, MNCs etc accountable. It has

played role in strengthening real-time pollution control mechanisms in Indian cities.

3.10. Judicial Interventions on Waste Management and Circular Economy

Effective waste management is crucial for urban sustainability. The NGT has delivered significant judgments to improve waste handling:

- **Municipal Solid Waste Management:** In the Ghazipur Landfill Case *Almitra Patel V. Union of India* [56], the tribunal reprimanded municipal authorities for inadequate waste management practices, leading to directives for scientific disposal and the promotion of waste-to-energy initiatives.
- **Plastic Waste Regulation:** The NGT has issued various orders in multiple cases to curb plastic pollution, including bans on single-use plastics and directives for extended producer responsibility, fostering a shift towards a circular economy which is in violation of Plastic Waste management rules, 2016.

NGTs order strengthens the implementation of Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016 by enhancing municipal accountability for urban waste management. With suo moto power and speedy redressal it reinforces India's commitment to circular economy and zero-waste initiatives.

3.11. Conservation of Urban Green Spaces, Lakes, and Wetlands

Preserving urban ecosystems is vital for environmental health and quality of life. The NGT has taken steps to protect these areas:

- Protection of Urban Biodiversity: In cases like the Aarey Forest Case [57] in Mumbai, the tribunal examined the environmental impact of infrastructure projects on urban forests, balancing development needs with ecological preservation. Even Supreme court reprimanded Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Limited (MMRCL) over felling of trees and irresponsible approach towards environment.
- Wetland Conservation: The NGT has addressed issues of wetland encroachment and pollution, issuing directives for their restoration and maintenance, recognizing their role in urban flood control and biodiversity support.

NGT applies public trust doctrine, ensuring environmental protection for future generations to promotes urban afforestation and climate resilience measures. It upholds Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017

Through these interventions, the NGT reinforces the importance of integrating environmental considerations into urban planning and development, ensuring that ecological sustainability remains a cornerstone of India's urban growth.

The NGT has played a pivotal role in adjudicating urban environmental disputes, shaping land use policies, pollution control mechanisms, waste management practices, and biodiversity conservation efforts.

While its rulings have strengthened environmental compliance, municipal non-cooperation, weak enforcement, and political challenges remain obstacles to effective implementation. The

next section will critically evaluate these implementation challenges and propose legal/policy reforms.

4. Challenges in NGT's Effectiveness and Implementation

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) of India, established in 2010, has been pivotal in adjudicating environmental disputes and promoting sustainable development. However, its effectiveness faces several challenges that hinder its mission.

4.1. Compliance Gaps in Municipal and State Authorities

The effectiveness of the National Green Tribunal is hampered by a major obstacle: the failure of local and state authorities to carry out its directives. Despite the Tribunal's explicit orders, numerous instances have occurred where local bodies have neglected to take action, resulting in persistent environmental damage. For instance, pivotal rulings concerning pollution in the Ganga River and Delhi's air quality have remained unimplemented due to bureaucratic lethargy and political opposition. This lack of compliance not only diminishes the NGT's authority but also hinders the pursuit of environmental justice. [58] Former NGT Chairperson Adarsh Kumar Goel has also highlighted that non-compliance of green court orders by government is a serious issue. [59]

4.2. Conflicts between Developmental Needs and Environmental Protection

The apex court in *Indian Council for Enviro-Legal Action v. Union of India* - "While economic development should not be allowed to take place at the cost of ecology or by causing widespread environment destruction and violation, at the same time, the necessity to preserve ecology and

environment should not hamper economic and other developments. Both development and environment must go hand in hand; in other words, there should not be development at the cost of the environment.” [60]

The Indian judicial response towards environmental conservation was evident in many judgments, and the approach was, to a greater extent, complementary with the international yardsticks on environmental preservation. Prima facie, the course of the Indian judiciary is more parallel with sustainable development. [61] But this rapid urbanisation and development is creating question with respect to prioritising development over environmental conservation. Industrial sectors and real estate view NGT orders as excessive regulation and hindrance to development. This tension raises debates over judicial overreach versus governance autonomy, where the NGT's interventions are sometimes perceived as hindering economic development. Balancing these competing interests remains a persistent challenge. [62]

4.3. Institutional Limitations of NGT

The NGT faces several institutional constraints that impede its functionality:

- Issue of Jurisdiction: NGT has jurisdiction over ‘substantial question of environmental protection’ under the purview of the Act mentioned under Schedule I which are civil in nature. Appeal of NGT orders lies to Supreme Court. In addition to that citizens have right to approach High court and Supreme Court via writ petition and Public interest litigation. This creates overlapping jurisdictions of NGT, High Court and

Supreme Court. This in turn affects the consistency and authority of environmental adjudication. [63]

- Limited Execution Powers: It has been noted that orders of NGT as disobeyed by polluters. Polluters are turning deaf ear to the orders of the tribunal. [64] Most of the orders, like Ganga water pollution and Delhi air pollution, remain partially enforced. Most of orders gets enforcement stayed or go for an appeal to Supreme Court. This limitation means it relies on other governmental agencies for enforcement, which can lead to delays and non-compliance. [65]

5. Policy and Legal Reforms for Strengthening NGT's Role

To enhance the efficacy of the NGT in promoting sustainable urban development, several policy and legal reforms are imperative.

5.1. Strengthening the Enforcement Mechanism

Mere having laws doesn't establish a system rather its effective implementation is the key towards attaining the objective for which the law was made.

- Establishing a Dedicated Compliance Body: Creating a specialized unit within the NGT focused on monitoring and ensuring the execution of its orders can bridge the current enforcement gap. This body would work in tandem with local urban planning authorities to oversee real-time adherence to environmental regulations.
- Integration with Local Authorities: Fostering collaborative frameworks between the NGT and municipal bodies can facilitate seamless implementation

of environmental directives. Regular joint reviews and shared responsibilities can enhance accountability and expedite action.

5.2. Expanding NGT's Jurisdiction and Powers

- Granting Enhanced Punitive Powers: Amending the NGT Act to provide the Tribunal with broader punitive measures beyond financial penalties can serve as a stronger deterrent against environmental violations. This could include powers to halt projects or revoke clearances in cases of non-compliance.
- Incorporating Climate Resilience in Urban Planning: Mandating that the NGT consider climate resilience strategies in its rulings can ensure that urban development aligns with sustainable and adaptive practices, mitigating future environmental risks.

5.3. Legislative Reforms in Environmental Law

- Enacting Comprehensive Urban Environmental Legislation: Introducing laws that integrate sustainability norms into urban development can provide a robust legal framework supporting the NGT's mandates. Such legislation would clarify the roles of various stakeholders and streamline processes. Once such example is Peru it has The Sustainable Urban development law.[66]
- Amending the NGT Act, 2010: Revising the Act to address current challenges, such as jurisdictional ambiguities and enforcement limitations, can strengthen the Tribunal's authority and operational efficiency.

All such reforms can be incorporated in order to enhance access to justice, promoting sustainable development, meeting of SDGs as promised on international level.

6. Conclusion & the Way Forward

The National Green Tribunal has been instrumental in shaping India's environmental jurisprudence and advocating for sustainable urban development. Its proactive stance has led to significant interventions in areas like pollution control, waste management, and conservation of natural resources.

Key Findings:

- **Crucial Role in Environmental Regulation:** The NGT has effectively filled a critical gap in India's environmental governance by providing a specialized forum for expeditious dispute resolution.
- **Challenges in Enforcement and Coordination:** Despite its proactive judgments, the Tribunal's impact is often diluted due to enforcement challenges and lack of coordination with local authorities.

Future Directions:

- **Enhancing Inter-Agency Collaboration:** Establishing stronger partnerships between the NGT, urban planning bodies, and pollution control boards can ensure cohesive and effective implementation of environmental policies.
- **Adopting International Best Practices:** Learning from global examples of environmental adjudication can provide the NGT with innovative tools and strategies to enhance its effectiveness.

In conclusion, while the National Green Tribunal has made commendable strides in promoting environmental justice, its continued success hinges on addressing systemic challenges through targeted reforms. Strengthening enforcement mechanisms, expanding its jurisdictional reach, and implementing comprehensive legislative changes are pivotal steps toward empowering the NGT to fulfill its mandate of fostering sustainable urban development in India.

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