Syllabus subtopic: Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment.

Prelims and Mains focus: about the issue and the directions given by NGT; about various categories of industries; about NGT; CPCB

News: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed pollution control boards of all States to obtain information from all local bodies pertaining to pollution caused by dairy farms and submit relevant data to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

Background

The directions came when the green panel was hearing a set of pleas seeking remedial action for compliance of environmental norms by the dairies.

Directions given by NGT

- The State pollution control boards and pollution control committees were directed to furnish factual and action-taken reports to the apex pollution control body by April 2020.

- Private operators, including cooperative societies or other entities, not falling within the jurisdiction of local bodies, may also furnish the requisite information to the State PCBs within one month.

- While observing that dairy activities were categorised as “orange” category, the NGT said the guidelines prepared by the CPCB need to be revised by specifying that State boards or committees must enforce ‘consent mechanism’ and in particular, follow an appropriate sitting policy in the light of the carrying capacity of the area for commercial dairy activities, having potential for air and water pollution.

Way ahead
The State PCBs/ PCCs (pollution control committees) may publish an appropriate notice on the subject within two weeks requiring furnishing of information and also adopting all necessary safeguards in the matter.

Various categories of industries

- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has developed the criteria of categorization of industrial sectors based on the Pollution Index which is a function of the emissions (air pollutants), effluents (water pollutants), hazardous wastes generated and consumption of resources.

- The Pollution Index PI of any industrial sector is a number from 0 to 100 and the increasing value of PI denotes the increasing degree of pollution load from the industrial sector.

- Based on the series of brain storming sessions among CPCB, SPCBs and MoEFCC, the following criteria on ‘Range of Pollution Index’ for the purpose of categorization of industrial sectors is finalized.

1. Red category: Industrial Sectors having Pollution Index score of 60 and above.

2. Orange category: Industrial Sectors having Pollution Index score of 41 to 59

3. Green category: Industrial Sectors having Pollution Index score of 21 to 40

4. White category: Industrial Sectors having Pollution Index score incl.& upto 20