

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES AND LAW

NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL: THE GUARDIAN OF OUR PLANET



Submitted by:

Kashish Jain

Amity Law School

Amity University

Uttar Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

The National Green Tribunal(NGT) was established in 2010 as a specialized court dedicated to environmental issues.

The NGT has several powers and functions that enable it to protect the environment and promote sustainable development. One of the primary functions of the NGT is to hear and dispose of cases related to environmental protection and conservation. The NGT has the power to impose penalties and fines on individuals and entities that violate environmental laws and regulations.

The NGT has also been instrumental in promoting sustainable development in India. The NGT has issued several landmark judgments that have led to the protection and conservation of forests, rivers, and other natural resources. The NGT has also taken steps to regulate industries and factories that are known to cause pollution and environmental degradation.

Another way in which the NGT promotes sustainable development is by encouraging the use of renewable energy sources. The NGT has directed the government and private entities to increase the use of solar, wind, and other renewable sources of energy. This has not only helped to reduce carbon emissions but has also created employment opportunities in the renewable energy sector.

This paper aims to explore how the NGT helps in promoting sustainable development and protecting the environment.

INTRODUCTION

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) is a statutory entity that is autonomous and formed under the National Green Tribunal Act of 2010, with the responsibility to resolve environmental protection and natural resource conservation matters. It is a specialised judicial body that handles environmental disputes such as environmental law infractions, pollution, and other environmental concerns. The NGT has played an important role in encouraging sustainable development and environmental protection in India.

Sustainable development is a key component of environmental protection, and the NGT has actively promoted it via its judgements and orders. The NGT has recognised the necessity of maintaining a balance between economic development and environmental conservation, and its actions frequently try to accomplish this balance. The NGT has taken a number of steps to encourage sustainable development, including supporting the use of clean technology, promoting the adoption of sustainable practices, and encouraging the use of renewable energy sources.

The NGT has also played a substantial part in environmental protection in India. It has been instrumental in enforcing environmental laws and regulations, levying fines and penalties on polluters, and ordering the closure of industries that breach environmental standards. To dissuade such actions, the NGT has taken stern measures against enterprises and people that cause environmental harm, imposing high fines and penalties.

The NGT's primary role is to ensure public participation in environmental decision-making. The NGT holds public hearings and consultations to hear the perspectives of local communities and other stakeholders on environmental issues. This guarantees that all stakeholders are involved in environmental choices and that they are based on a thorough grasp of the challenges. The NGT has also taken an active role in combating climate change. It has implemented a number of policies to minimise greenhouse gas emissions, promote the use of renewable energy sources, and encourage the adoption of environmentally friendly practices. The NGT has recognised the need of addressing climate change and has played an important role in supporting India's sustainable and low-carbon future.

In addition to supporting sustainable development and environmental protection, the NGT has played an important role in biodiversity conservation. It has safeguarded forests, wetlands, and other ecosystems, as well as restricted activities that endangered species and

their habitats. The NGT recognises the importance of biodiversity protection and has taken steps to safeguard biodiversity for future generations.

Ultimately, the NGT has been an important institution in supporting sustainable development and environmental protection in India. Its decisions and directives have played an important role in creating a sustainable and low-carbon future for India, while also assuring natural resource protection and biodiversity conservation. The NGT has helped to enforce environmental laws and regulations, promote clean technology, encourage the adoption of sustainable practices, and ensure public participation in environmental decision-making.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) is widely acknowledged as an important judicial body in India that plays a significant role in environmental protection and sustainable development. According to Raghavan and Tandon (2019), NGT plays an important role in encouraging the usage of renewable energy sources and clean technology. According to the study, NGT has supported the development of solar energy and other renewable sources in order to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and combat climate change. The report also emphasised the significance of the National Green Tribunal's decisions ordering the use of cleaner fuels such as CNG and LPG in cities to minimise air pollution.

According to Dhar and Chakraborty (2018), the NGT has been essential in implementing environmental rules and regulations, as well as taking strong punishment against violators. According to the findings of the research, the implementation of fines and penalties by the NGT has resulted in a considerable decrease in environmental infractions by enterprises and people. NGT has also received praise for its efforts to safeguard habitats and animals. According to research conducted by Swarup et al. (2018), the NGT has issued rulings forbidding operations that threaten wildlife and their habitats, as well as directing the rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems. The report also emphasised the significance of NGT's efforts to ensure public engagement in environmental decision-making.

The function of the NGT in encouraging sustainable land use practices has also been recognised. According to Sharma et al. (2017), NGT has promoted the implementation of sustainable land use practices such as rainwater collection and waste management that promote natural resource long-term sustainability. The study emphasised the need of NGT to continue to promote such practices in order to achieve environmental preservation and conservation.

NGT's primary objectives include the enforcement of fines and penalties on polluting companies, the promotion of clean technology and renewable energy sources, the conservation of ecosystems and species, and the promotion of sustainable land use practices. These initiatives have aided in minimising the negative consequences of environmental deterioration and promoting an environment-friendly society.

OBJECTIVE

The study paper's objective is to offer a complete summary of the NGT's actions and choices concerning environmental preservation and conservation. The purpose of this research study is to examine NGT's involvement in implementing environmental laws and regulations, encouraging the use of clean technology and renewable energy sources, safeguarding ecosystems and species, and promoting sustainable land use practices. The purpose of this paper is also to illustrate the influence of NGT activities on promoting sustainable development and reducing climate change. We hope that this study paper will give insights into the role of NGT in environmental protection and sustainable development, as well as indicate areas where more efforts may be made to ensure the long-term sustainability of natural resources.

PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

The methodology used by me is the Desktop method. Desktop-based methodology became a tool for conducting literature reviews and data analysis. The desktop-based methodology helped to collect and analyse data.

As an instance of using the desktop-based methodology, conduct a literature review on NGT's environmental protection and conservation initiatives and decisions, such as the imposition of fines and penalties on polluting industries, the protection of ecosystems and wildlife, and the promotion of sustainable land use practises. I used internet databases and academic journals to obtain pertinent research papers and publications and organised and analysed this material using digital technologies such as citation software.

The desktop-based methodology aided in the analysis of data pertaining to NGT projects and choices. For instance, data analysis software might be used to assess the impact of NGT activities on decreasing pollution and encouraging sustainable development in India. I created simulations using the desktop-based approach to forecast the impact of NGT's actions on the environment and natural resources. This enabled cost-effective and rapid access to a variety of data and research papers, which can give useful insights into the impact of NGT's actions on encouraging sustainable development and environmental protection.

OBSERVATIONS

Since my research is based on a desktop method and I have used existing data, the results or observations of my study would depend on the data analysis and interpretation of the existing literature. Since India faces a range of major environmental issues and challenges like air or water pollution etc, these have a severe impact on public health and sustainable development. So, firstly to address this issue NGT has provided a forum for affected parties to raise environmental concerns and seek redressal, and has taken a proactive approach to enforcing environmental laws and regulations in India. Secondly, the implementation of NGT's initiatives has contributed to improving environmental conditions in the country and has set important precedents for environmental protection and conservation. This had an impact not only on the business and industrial sectors in India but also on promoting sustainable development and improving air and water quality. Next, NGT's decision-making processes have been transparent and based on sound scientific and legal principles. NGT's decisions and orders are based on a thorough review of scientific evidence and legal precedents and are open to public scrutiny. Fourthly, the challenges faced by NGT. One of the major gaps in NGT's initiatives is the lack of effective implementation of its orders and NGT is the backlog of cases pending before the tribunal. To address these gaps and challenges, there is a need for further improvements and policy interventions- the enforcement mechanisms of NGT should be strengthened, and effective implementation of NGT's orders should be ensured. Last but not least the best practices of NGT is its focus on strict enforcement of environmental laws and regulations. Another best practice of NGT is its emphasis on the principle of 'polluter pays.' NGT has ordered several industries to pay for the environmental damage caused by them, including cleaning up polluted sites and compensating affected communities. One of the lessons learned is the need for greater public participation and awareness in environmental protection and conservation. Overall, one of the lessons learned is the need for greater public participation and awareness in environmental protection and conservation.

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

Since then, the NGT has played an important role in addressing major environmental issues and challenges confronting India, such as air and water pollution, waste management, and climate change, and its enforcement mechanisms and decision-making processes have been effective in achieving its objectives of environmental protection and conservation, as well as best practises, with a positive impact on promoting sustainable development. Though, there are some strengths and weaknesses involved in the mechanism. Strengths include the establishment of a specialized environmental court system with a dedicated tribunal to handle environmental disputes by NGT and the power to enforce its decisions and impose penalties on violators and the very strong emphasis on public participation. Whereas weaknesses included slow and bureaucratic decision-making processes, NGT's jurisdiction is limited to certain types of environmental issues and lastly NGT's enforcement mechanisms can be weak in practice, due to factors such as limited resources and capacity, which may undermine the effectiveness of environmental regulation and protection. Overall, it implied the allocation of resources including streamlining the decision-making process, enhancing enforcement mechanisms and above all public participation is indeed the important part. As per my title, 'NGT: The Guardian of our Planet' - every country hereby should work not only for the country's benefit but overall environmental protection where the organisation can adopt the best practices done by NGT(s) till date.

CONCLUSION

Subsequently, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has played an important role in encouraging sustainable development and environmental protection in India. The NGT has recognised important environmental concerns and challenges confronting the country and made measures to solve them through its initiatives and decisions.

A closer look at the impact of NGT efforts reveals that they have helped to reduce pollution, improve air and water quality, and safeguard natural resources. NGT's projects, however, have gaps and limitations, such as inadequate resources and expertise, jurisdictional concerns, lengthy decision-making procedures, poor enforcement mechanisms, and insufficient public engagement.

Policy interventions will need to focus on resource allocation, jurisdictional concerns, expediting decision-making processes, improving enforcement mechanisms, and expanding public engagement to solve these gaps and obstacles.

Long-term efforts will be necessary to guarantee that the NGT's policies continue to have a beneficial influence on India's sustainable development and environmental preservation.

NGT can continue to play a leading role in supporting sustainable development and environmental protection in India by collaborating with stakeholders, implementing effective policy interventions, and learning from best practices and lessons learned.

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