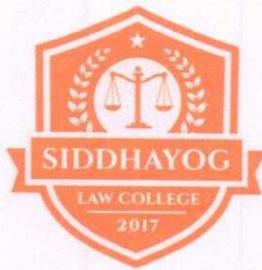


## Environmental Policy of Siddhayog Law College

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## MISSION

**"Creating the finest lawyers and torchbearers of justice"**

**With the captioned vision, at Siddhayog Law College,  
we are committed to creating the finest, skilled,  
professional, ethical and morally upright lawyers who  
will not only work for the dissemination of legal  
knowledge but will also evolve as the warriors against  
various socio-legal as well as environmental issues of  
our society.**



खळखळणारे नद्या-ज्ञरे अन् पर्वतराज हिरवा हिरवा,

कोकण म्हणजे लाल माती, धो धो पाऊस नि थडं हवा

कुठे मारली दडी पावसाने? किती राहिली माती लाल?

बदलणाऱ्या या भवतालाबद्दल, थोडा तरी विचार कराल?

In our culture, **we have long revered nature** – rivers, trees, mountains, animals, and even the wind were worshipped as divine forces.

However, in recent decades, our sensitivity towards Mother Nature seems to have faded and we became quite apathetic toward her suffering. In the wake of the **Industrial Revolution, rapid urbanization, and relentless commercialization**, this sacred relationship began to erode. **The greed for growth and convenience replaced the gratitude for balance.**

From the nature lovers, we came nature-exploiters and as a result the **environmental cycle has lost its rhythm**. Seasons no longer behave as they once did. The monsoon often arrives late, lingers till November, or fails altogether. Such unpredictability has brought with it **climate-related illnesses, crop failures, and ecological imbalance** and the Konkan, Heaven of Maharashtra has been not only the witness to it but a victim too.

The consequences are now visible and undeniable:

- **Deforestation** leading to loss of biodiversity and soil erosion.
- **Falling groundwater levels** and depletion of freshwater resources.
- **Air and water pollution** from unchecked industrial and vehicular emissions.
- **Improper waste management** choking our cities and rivers.



- **Rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, and extreme weather events** indicating a deeper climate crisis.

The global community began acknowledging the environmental crisis only in **1972**, much later than it should have... yet, as they say, *better late than never.*

In India, however, our relationship with nature had long been one of **reverence and guardianship**. As long as our **villages remained alive** and the **soul of rural life** was intact, we lived in harmony with the environment. We saw ourselves not as masters of nature but as her **humble caretakers**, believing that **nature is superior** and we are merely her dependents.

In contrast, the Western world's realization came after **decades of industrial expansion, consumerism, and overexploitation of natural resources**. Only after achieving material abundance and consuming vast amounts of energy did they pause to recognize that the planet was under grave threat.

We, the **Bharatiya people**, must therefore reconnect with our ancient wisdom – to live simply, respect nature deeply, and remind the world that true progress lies not in conquering nature but in **coexisting with her**.

Also, the landmark international efforts like the **Stockholm Conference (1972)**, the **Rio Earth Summit (1992)**, the **Kyoto Protocol (1997)**, and the **Paris Agreement (2015)** have emphasized that *sustainable development* is not a choice but a **shared obligation**.

India, too, has demonstrated its commitment through several landmark laws and judicial pronouncements, from the **Environment (Protection)**



**Act, 1986 to the recognition of the Right to a Clean and Healthy Environment under Article 21 of the Constitution.**

As a **Law College**, our responsibility extends beyond legal education. We must **create advocates of environmental justice** – individuals who understand not only the law but also the spirit behind it.

Thus, the **Environmental Policy and Green Audit Framework** of Siddhayog Law College emerge from this “Why”:

- “To remind ourselves that legal literacy must walk hand-in-hand with ecological responsibility.”
- “To ensure that the campus becomes a microcosm of the sustainable world we wish to create.”



## **1. Vision Statement**

To nurture a legally conscious and environmentally responsible academic community that integrates ecological sensitivity into learning, campus life, and community outreach and building lawyers who advocate not just for human justice, but also for environmental justice.

## **2. Objectives**

1. To promote environmental awareness and eco-friendly practices among students, faculty, and staff.
2. To ensure sustainable use of campus resources (energy, water, paper, plastic).
3. To collaborate with local bodies, NGOs, and legal service authorities for environmental protection drives.
4. To inculcate a sense of personal accountability in students and citizens in the vicinity for ecological conservation.

## **3. Appeal to Students**

*Dear Students,*

You are the future custodians of justice – let justice not stop at the courtroom door. Let it reach the soil beneath your feet, the water that sustains you, and the air you breathe.

We, together, pledge to:

- Use resources wisely.
- Avoid single-use plastic.
- Participate in plantation drives.
- Contribute to environmental awareness through law and action.



#### **4. The Green Audit & Sustainability Committee (GASC)/Environment Committee or Eco Club**

##### **Chairperson:**

Principal - Preeti Ratan Bondre

##### **Coordinator:**

Environmental Cell Faculty In-Charge - Rohan Sawant

##### **Members:**

- 2 Faculty Members from Law & Administration
  - Prof. Harshada Shinde
  - Prof. Anjali Harshe
- 2 Student Representatives (Eco Club / Legal Aid Cell)
  - Swati Namjoshi
  - Pranali Bhosale
- 1 Non-teaching Staff Representative
  - Rushikesh Khedekar
- 1 External Member (Local NGO or DLSA representative)
  - Viraj Chikhale

##### **Functions:**

- Conduct annual environmental audits.
- Maintain records of energy, paper, and water usage.
- Recommend policy updates.
- Plan and execute awareness campaigns.
- Submit annual sustainability reports to IQAC/NAAC Cell.



## Siddhayog Environmental Policy

The Siddhayog campus features a life-size display showcasing indigenous tree species, accompanied by a photograph of **Maruti Chitampalli**, the revered naturalist and Marathi author known as "**Aranya Rishi**." He is regarded as an ideal and inspiration for our institution's commitment to nature and conservation.

Our Environmental Policy embodies our commitment to creating an environmentally responsible lawyers and legally aware campus. The college endeavours to reduce its carbon footprint, manage waste responsibly, and adopt sustainable practices in every area of operation. Environmental consciousness is integrated into academic life through lectures, seminars, moot courts, debates, and street plays focusing on environmental jurisprudence and constitutional rights to a clean and healthy environment. Regular environmental and energy audits are conducted to assess progress and ensure compliance.

On campus, green initiatives such as tree plantation drives on World Environment Day, Earth Day, and Van Mahotsav, use of segregated waste bins, composting units, and paperless office practices promote eco-friendly habits. Efforts are made to introduce rainwater harvesting and solar energy systems wherever feasible. As a symbolic gesture of our green values, saplings are presented to every guest visiting the college.

Beyond the campus, Siddhayog Law College extends its environmental mission through community outreach programmes like legal awareness camps on the Right to a Clean Environment under Article 21, the "Clean Campus, Clean Village" campaign with the DLSA, and eco-legal street plays in local schools and communities. Through these collective efforts, the institution seeks to nurture future lawyers who stand for both legal and environmental justice.



## Our Commitment

- The college commits to **reduce its carbon footprint**, manage waste responsibly, and **adopt green practices** in every operational area.
- Legal literacy sessions, street plays, and client counselling sessions will include themes of **environmental rights and duties** under the Constitution and relevant laws like the *Environment Protection Act, 1986* and *Water and Air Acts*.
- Regular **environmental audits** will be conducted to assess progress and ensure compliance.



## Suggested Green Campus Activities

### Academic Integration

- Guest lectures and seminars on *Environmental Jurisprudence* and *Public Interest Litigation (PILs)* for environmental causes.
- Moot court problems and debates based on environmental cases.

### Campus Initiatives

- Green audit and energy audit annually.
- Tree plantation drives on World Environment Day, Earth Day, and Van Mahotsav.
- Segregated waste bins and composting units.
- Paperless office initiatives (online notice boards, e-certificates).
- Rainwater harvesting system and solar panel installation (if feasible). \
- We present saplings as gifts to all our guests as a symbol of our commitment to a greener future.

### Community Outreach

- Legal awareness camps on *Right to Clean Environment* under Article 21.
- Clean campus, clean village campaign in collaboration with DLSA.
- Eco-legal awareness street plays in nearby schools and communities.



## A Very Brief Law Manual - Crux of Key Environment related laws in India

### **1. Environment (Protection) Act, 1986**

- Enacted after the Bhopal Gas Tragedy, this is the umbrella law for environmental protection in India.
- Empowers the Central Government to issue directions to industries, close polluting units, and regulate hazardous substances.
- Allows the government to set environmental quality standards for air, water, noise, and waste (Section 3, 5).
- Provides authority to issue rules like EIA Notification 2006, Hazardous Waste Rules, Plastic Waste Rules, etc.

### **2. Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974**

- Aims to prevent, control, and abate water pollution and maintain water purity.
- Establishes CPCB and SPCBs to monitor water quality, inspect industries, and issue consents.
- Prohibits the discharge of sewage/industrial pollutants into water bodies beyond prescribed limits (Sections 24, 25, 26).
- Industries must obtain Consent to Establish (CTE) and Consent to Operate (CTO).

### **3. Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981**

- Focuses on controlling air pollution from industries, vehicles, and construction.
- Pollution Control Boards can declare Air Pollution Control Areas and regulate industries in these zones (Section 19).



- Industries emitting pollutants must obtain permission before operating (Section 21).
- Boards can set air quality standards, monitor emissions, and take action against violators.

#### 4. Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972

- Protects wild animals, birds, and plants, especially endangered species.
- Provides for creation of Protected Areas: Wildlife Sanctuaries, National Parks, Conservation Reserves.
- Categorizes species into Schedules I-VI; Schedule I animals get highest protection.
- Hunting, poaching, capturing, and illegal wildlife trade are strictly prohibited (Sections 9, 50).

#### 5. Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980

- Restricts the use of forest land for non-forest activities like mining, dams, roads without Central Government approval (Section 2).
- Helps prevent large-scale deforestation and ensures compensatory afforestation before diverting forest land.
- Aims to maintain ecological balance and conserve biodiversity.

#### 6. Public Liability Insurance Act, 1991

- Ensures immediate, no-fault relief to victims of accidents involving hazardous substances.
- Industries handling dangerous materials must take mandatory insurance to cover potential environmental and human damage.
- Provides quick compensation without requiring victims to prove negligence (Section 3).



## 7. National Green Tribunal (NGT) Act, 2010

- Establishes the National Green Tribunal (NGT) for fast, efficient resolution of environmental disputes.
- Handles cases related to water, air, forests, biodiversity, hazardous substances (Schedule I).
- Can order compensation, restoration of environment, and impose penalties for violations (Sections 14, 15).
- Ensures speedy justice – cases should ideally be disposed within 6 months.



## **1. Monitoring and Review**

The implementation of the Environmental Policy will be continuously monitored by the Environmental Cell of the college. The Cell shall prepare and submit an annual report to the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC), detailing the initiatives undertaken, outcomes achieved, and areas for improvement.

Findings of the Green Audit and Energy Audit will be shared transparently with all stakeholders – including faculty, students, and non-teaching staff – to encourage collective participation in sustainable practices.

The policy will undergo a comprehensive review every three years to ensure its alignment with the latest NAAC, UGC, and Government of India sustainability guidelines, and to incorporate new innovations and best practices in environmental conservation.

- The Environmental Cell shall submit a annual report to the IQAC.
- The outcomes of the audit will be shared with staff and students.
- Policy shall be reviewed every 3 years to align with updated NAAC and UGC sustainability norms.



## Principal's Concluding Statement

At Siddhayog Law College, we hold the belief that nurturing respect for nature is as sacred as nurturing respect for law. Our Environmental Policy and Green Audit Framework spring from the understanding that true justice is not confined to human relationships but extends to all living beings and the environment that sustains them.

Bharatiya ancient wisdom has always seen nature as divine - not a resource to be consumed but a relative to be cherished. Our saints and seers lived by this truth. As Sant Tukaram Maharaj said, "Vruksha Valli Amha Soyari," i.e., the trees, crops, rivers, and animals are our own kin. This timeless philosophy inspires our institutional vision and commitment to live in harmony with the environment.

Through green audits, plantations, outreach, paperless practices, and environmental law education, we strive to unite awareness with action and progress with responsibility.

As a law college, we see it as our duty to prepare future lawyers who will uphold not only social justice but also environmental justice.

**"Committed to walk together in gratitude to our cultural roots, carrying forward the legacy of coexistence our ancestors entrusted to us, ensuring that the law we teach also safeguards the Earth we share."**



— Preeti Ratan Bondre

IC Principal, Siddhayog Law College

