

Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ)

India is one of the nations with the longest coastlines in the world, having more than 7000 kilometers of shoreline. The Indian government established the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) in 1991 to preserve and safeguard coastal ecology.

To safeguard and preserve the ecology and ecosystem along the nation's coastline, the Government of India issued a notification in 1991 under the Environment Protection Act, 1986, which is overseen by the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF).

- The notification defines the Coastal Regulation Zone as the coastal area up to 500 meters from the High Tide Line (HTL) and a stage of 100 meters along the banks of creeks, estuaries, backwaters, and rivers vulnerable to tidal fluctuations (CRZ).
- The state governments' Coastal Zone Management Authorities are responsible for ensuring that the CRZ Rules are implemented, even though the Union Environment Ministry creates them.

Objectives of CRZ

The main objectives of the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) include the following:

- Conservation of the coastal zones.
- Promote sustainable development in coastal regions considering the natural hazards and rising sea levels.
- To ensure the livelihood security of the local communities who reside in the coastal areas.

Classification of CRZ

Under the authority of the Environment (Protection) Act of 1986, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) first published a Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) notification in 1991, intending to take action to safeguard and conserve our coastal environment.

According to the CRZ Notification from 1991 through 2003, there are four different classifications for the coastal regulation zones across the nation. The following is a list and description of them:

>> Coastal Regulation Zone UPSC [PDF]

CRZ-I

- These are ecologically sensitive areas such as mangroves, coral reefs, etc.
- Apart from projects related to the Department of Atomic Energy and the construction of trans-harbor sea links and roads without affecting the tidal flow of water, no new construction shall be allowed in CRZ-1.

CRZ-II

- These include areas that are developed up to the shoreline and that fall within the municipal limits; They include villages and towns that are already established.
- Building construction is permitted on the landward side of the hazardous line. Activities such as desalination plants are also allowed.

CRZ-III

- Areas that do not fall within CRZ-I or CRZ-II and are relatively undisturbed form CRZ-III
- Between 0-200 metres from the High Tide Line, no construction is permitted. Certain activities relating to the Department of Atomic Energy projects, agriculture, forestry and certain public facilities are allowed in this zone.
- Between 200-500 metres from the High Tide Line, for those who have permission under the 0-200 metres zone, construction of houses for regional communities and tourism is permissible.

CRZ-IV

- The aquatic region from the LTL to the territorial limits is considered CRZ-IV and includes the tidal water-influenced area.
- Fishing by local communities is permitted.
- Untreated liquid or solid waste should not be dumped in this region.

National Coastal Zone Management Authority

The National Coastal Zone Management Authority was established on October 6th, 2017 by the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change. To exercise the authority granted by Section 3's subsections (1) and (3) of the Environment (Protection) Act (EPA) of 1986, the Central Government established the Authority.

- Section 3(1) - It gives the Central Government the authority to take any actions necessary to safeguard and improve the environment's quality and avoid, control, and mitigate environmental contamination.
- Section 3(3) - It may constitute authority to exercise and perform the Central Government's powers and functions under EPA if it is deemed essential to do so by the Central Government for the EPA.

Coastal Regulation Zone Notification 2018-2019

The CRZ 1991 notification underwent several revisions, which were integrated and published in the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) 2011 notification. The problems with CRZ 1991 were considered in the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) 2011 announcement. The objectives of the Coastal Regulation Zone 1991 Notification were:

- To preserve and safeguard coastal stretches;
- To guarantee the security of the fishery and local people residing in coastal areas;
- To advance sustainable development based on scientific principles, taking into consideration natural dangers and sea-level rise.

The Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification, 2018, was authorized by the Union cabinet in December 2018. In 2015, the Shailesh Nayak Committee delivered its recommendations following extensive talks with state governments and other stakeholders. The Union Cabinet gave its approval to that draught notification in December 2018. New CRZ requirements were then announced by the MoEFCC in January 2019.

The Shailesh Nayak committee, which the MoEFCC established in June 2014 to conduct a thorough examination of the provisions under the CRZ 2011 notification in response to demands

from several coastal states, UTs, and other stakeholders, provided the basis for the CRZ 2018 notification.

- The decision to permit the present Floor Space Index (FSI) or Floor Area Ratio (FAR) in urban areas falling under CRZ-II, which regulates building size, is outlined in the new notification.
- The Development Control Rules of 1991's construction limitations are eliminated.
- The no development zone (NDZ) for previously densely populated areas was 200 meters; the new provision, CRZ-III A, applies development limits to a significantly smaller area of 50 meters from the high tide line.
- Areas with a lower population density will still have the NDZ at 200 meters (No-Developmental Zone).
- For areas between the low tide line and 12 nautical miles out to sea and ecologically vulnerable areas (CRZ-I), the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change will give permission.
- Along with these changes, all islands will now have a 20-meter no-development zone, and there will be standards for handling sensitive sites.

Shailesh Nayak Committee Report on Coastal Regulation Zone

Initiated in June 2014; the Shailesh Nayak Committee delivered its report in January 2015. The committee suggested modifying the conditions provided in the CRZ 2011 announcement. The recommendations' primary goals were to increase tourism, port development, and real estate. It suggested that except for the specific activities that require environmental clearance, all other activities should be controlled by the state and local planning bodies instead of the Central Government.

Importance of CRZ

The coastal zone is a transitional area between the marine and territorial zones. It comprises mudflat environments, seagrass ecosystems, salt marsh ecosystems, mangrove ecosystems, coastal ecosystems, and wetland ecosystems.

The importance of the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) is as follows:

- It is necessary to protect ecologically sensitive regions such as coral reefs which act as a shield against tsunamis and cyclones.
- Keeping the coastal zones safe can improve the lives of coastal communities like fishing communities.
- These measures are essential to counter the negative impacts of climate change and global warming.