

Minutes of the first meeting of the reconstituted Task Force for categorization of new/upcoming/ left over coal or lignite-based Thermal Power Plants as per the Notification dated 31.03.2021 and 11.07.2025 issued by the MoEF&CC, Govt. of India

The first meeting of the reconstituted Task Force for categorization of new/upcoming/ left over coal or lignite-based Thermal Power Plants (TPPs), constituted vide CPCB's Office Order dated 22.08.2025 as per the Notification dated 31.03.2021 and 11.07.2025 issued by the MoEF&CC, Govt. of India, was held under the chairmanship of the Member Secretary, CPCB on 28.10.2025 at 03.00 PM, through VC mode. The list of participants of the meeting is attached at Annexure-I.

At the outset, the Chairman of the Task Force welcomed the members of the Task Force and other participants and briefed about the task to be undertaken by the Task Force. The Member Convener of the Task Force made a presentation to brief the Task Force, which included:

- The background of the emission standards notified by the MoEF&CC vide notification dated 07.12.2015 for TPPs and subsequent amendments,
- Actions taken by the earlier constituted Task Force during the years 2021 and 2022, along with the criteria considered for the earlier categorization exercise,
- A summary of the list of TPPs received from CEA for categorization by the Task Force, along with their tentative category,
- Proposed mechanism for categorization of the list of TPPs provided by CEA and other such existing or future TPPs.

Based on the detailed deliberations on the above points and other relevant issues among the participants of the meeting, the Task Force took the following decisions to categorize the eligible TPPs clearly and efficiently, avoiding the possibilities of any post-categorization claims or disputes from the concerned stakeholders, including TPPs:

1. Geographical coordinates of the stack/proposed stack of the project shall be considered as the reference point from which the Aerial distance to the existing boundary of the relevant Million-Plus City (MPC), Non-Attainment City (NAC), and Critically Polluted Area (CPA), following the same criteria considered during the earlier categorization exercise.
2. While considering projects for categorization, the latest available maps of Municipal Corporations or Councils or Local Administration shall be taken for consideration of the boundary of the respective MPCs and NACs. In case of CPAs, the demarcation areas or boundary details of the concerned CPA, as defined by the concerned SPCBs/PCCs, shall be taken into consideration.
3. The Project Proponents shall be responsible for getting categorized by the Task Force as per the MoEF&CC Notifications for implementation of the emission standards. CPCB may request all SPCBs/PCCs to issue appropriate instructions to all TPPs in their jurisdiction, to ensure the earliest categorization by the Task Force, failing which appropriate action based on compliance monitoring/status review of TPP projects shall be taken by the concerned enforcement agencies.

4. The Task Force members shall identify a feasible prerequisite for considering the requests received from the Project Proponents of upcoming/ proposed TPP projects seeking categorization by the Task Force, which may include appropriate records even at the stage of conceptualizing such projects, so that the possibilities of post-categorization layout changes/retrofitting of Emission Control Systems (ECSs), etc., may be avoided. Such a prerequisite may include documents such as the Coal Linkage Allocation or Defense Clearance for the erection of stacks or finalization of the Detailed Project Report (DPR), along with a declaration from TPP declaring the geo-coordinates of the stack/proposed stack.
5. The concerned SPCBs/PCCs shall be involved in the task of categorization of the TPP projects, as they have information about the grassroots level, especially with respect to demarcation areas of CPAs and small-sized NACs for which authentic administrative maps are not easily available in the public domain.
6. The proposed draft format (given at Annexure-II) for submission of the requisite information by the Project Proponents requesting categorization by the Task Force, shall be circulated among the members of the Task Force for review and providing relevant inputs/suggestions. The said format will also include provisions for inputs from the concerned SPCB/PCC about the confirmed distance from the nearby NCR, MPC, NAC, CPA to conclude the distance criteria of the project.
7. The Project Proponents of the Non-Captive Power Plants requiring categorization of their projects shall submit requests in the prescribed format to the CEA, which shall be presented before the Task Force by CEA for further deliberations and decision-making based on authentic relevant information primarily certified by the concerned SPCBs/PCCs. In reference to CPCB direction dated 12.08.2021 to SPCBs/PCCs under Section 18(1)(b) of the Air Act 1981, the categorization of Captive Power Plants (CPPs) shall be continued to be completed by the concerned SPCBs/PCCs, which shall be submitted by the concerned SPCBs/PCCs to CPCB as per the prescribed format (given at Annexure-III), for finalization by the Task Force.

The meeting ended with thanks to the Chair.

Annexure-I

List of participants of the 1st Meeting of the reconstituted Task Force for categorization of new/ upcoming/ left over coal or lignite-based TPPs, held on 28.10.2025 @ 03:00 PM

Members of the reconstituted Task Force:

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| 1. Sh. Bharat Kumar Sharma, Member Secretary, CPCB | Chairperson |
| 2. Sh. Satish Kumar, Director (Thermal), Ministry of Power | Member |
| 3. Dr. Sonu Singh, Scientist - E, MoEF&CC | Member |
| 4. Sh. Bikash Mallick, Principal Chief Engineer - II, CEA | Member |
| 5. Sh. Prasoon Gargava, Director & Head, IPC - II, CPCB | Member Convener |

Other Participants of the meeting:

6. Sh. Mohammad Anwar, Director, TPRM, CEA
7. Sh. Prankur Patel, Assistant Director, TPRM, CEA
8. Sh. Rohit Bharadwaj, SO (Thermal), Ministry of Power
9. Sh. Gaurav Gehlot, Scientist 'C', CPCB
10. Sh. Naveen Kumar, Scientist 'B', CPCB
11. Sh. Durga Nand Jha, SRF, CPCB