

Environmental management by Mumbai Port Trust

Highlights

The port did not have a documented Environmental Management Plan (EMP). It did not carry out environmental management audits despite regulatory requirements, which reduced its control over environmental matters.

Adequate environmental protection measures to mitigate the adverse environmental effects of new projects were not taken.

Shortage of qualified manpower coupled with failure to maintain mandatory equipments purchased for environmental monitoring, combating oil spillage etc., constrained the working of the Pollution Control Cell.

Old pipelines abandoned six years back were yet to be removed and were posing risk to the environment.

Hazardous waste management was neglected as Mumbai Port Trust (MbPT) failed to take adequate measures to mitigate the adverse effects of sludge, slop and dirty ballast.

MbPT did not properly monitor air and water quality and failed to control pollution in harbour waters. The methodology adopted by it for testing air pollutants level was not as per regulatory guidelines.

MbPT did not monitor the activities of ship-breaking despite clear directives of the Supreme Court.

MbPT did not attend to its responsibilities relating to the National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan (NOS-DCP).

Recommendations

MbPT should formulate its environmental management plan appropriate to the nature and scale of its operations.

The Port should regularly conduct environmental management audits which may help the port to identify areas of concern and assess the efficacy of its environmental management practices.

The old pipelines which constitute a safety hazards may be removed at the earliest to avert any possible adverse environmental impact.

The air sampling may be done as per the guidelines of CPCB and all relevant parameters of air quality may be monitored.

The Port should pursue with MPCB/MCGM authorities to arrange for treatment of all sewage before discharge in harbour waters.

The experimental mangroves area may be developed. A physical survey may be undertaken.

The oil water separator may be revamped and put to use; the matter may be pursued with the oil industry for removal of sludge.

Regular visits with officials of MPCB/Maritime Board may be conducted to contain pollution due to ship breaking activities. Gas detectors may be procured and made mandatory for ship breakers

to use before entering the sensitive area and taking up any 'hot work' in order to prevent untoward hazards.

The Port may ensure regular attendance at annual NOS-DCP preparedness meetings. The minimum equipments as specified in NOS-DCP may be kept ready for operation by the Port and necessary training may be given to personnel under the guidance of the Coast Guard.