



اداره تحفظ ماحول حکومت پنجاب
An ISO Certified Agency



GOVERNMENT OF THE PUNJAB
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Dated the 26th April, 2026

EPA/SEC/O/260426/0041

ORDER

476/PA/DG/EPA

**ORDER UNDER SECTION 12 OF THE PUNJAB ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT, 1997
FOR MANDATORY INTEGRATION OF SUSTAINABLE URBAN PLANNING AND ECOLOGICAL
RESILIENCE PRINCIPLES IN LAND-USE PLANNING, MASTER PLANS AND ACTION PLANS**

WHEREAS, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Punjab, under the Punjab Environmental Protection Act, 1997 (PEPA), is entrusted with the mandate to protect, conserve, rehabilitate, and improve the environment, and to prevent, control, and abate pollution in all its forms, including emissions originating from industrial activities;

2. **AND WHEREAS**, land-use planning, master plans and action plans, by virtue of their direct influence on urban growth patterns, transport systems, drainage regimes, ecological assets and the built environment, significantly impact ambient environmental quality, public health, climate resilience and sustainable development across Punjab;

3. **AND WHEREAS**, unplanned urban expansion, excessive surface sealing, encroachment upon wetlands and natural drainage channels, habitat fragmentation, traffic congestion, loss of biodiversity and declining green cover have aggravated flooding, urban heat island effects, environmental degradation and exposure of surrounding populations to climate-related risks;

4. **AND WHEREAS**, scientific evidence and international best practices establish that sponge cities, walkable neighborhoods, compact and planned densification, green infrastructure, biodiversity conservation measures, protection of ecologically sensitive areas, protected areas management and wetland conservation function as effective nature-based solutions for stormwater management, groundwater recharge, reduction of heat stress, ecological restoration and sustainable mobility;

5. **AND WHEREAS**, Pakistan's commitments under international environmental frameworks, including the Paris Agreement and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), read together with Action Area Measure (AAM) 2.7 of the Climate Resilient Vision and Action Plan of Punjab, require integration of the concepts of sponge cities, walkability, densification, green infrastructure, biodiversity, protected areas and wetland conservation considerations in land-use planning, master plans and action plans;

6. **AND WHEREAS**, it is necessary to institutionalize such environmental safeguards within the Environmental Approval regime (IEE/EIA) to ensure enforceability, traceability, and long-term compliance by development authorities, planning agencies, project proponents and scheme developers;

7. **AND WHEREAS**, under Section 12 of the Punjab Environmental Protection Act, 1997, no proponent of a project shall commence construction or operation unless an Initial Environmental Examination or, where the project is likely to cause an adverse environmental effect, an Environmental Impact Assessment has been filed with the Provincial Agency and approval has been obtained in respect thereof, and such approval may be accorded subject to such conditions as the Agency may deem fit to impose;

8. **AND WHEREAS**, under Regulation 12 of the Punjab Environmental Protection (Review of Initial Environmental Examination and Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations, 2022, every approval is subject to conditions imposed by the Agency, and the project shall be implemented in accordance with the approved IEE or EIA, with compliance to be duly acknowledged and confirmed prior to construction and operation;

9. **NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Dr. Imran Hamid Sheikh (PAS), Director General, Environmental Protection Agency Punjab, in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 12 of the Punjab Environmental Protection Act, 1997, hereby order that the following shall constitute mandatory conditions of Environmental Approval, applicable to all relevant Land-Use Planning, Master Plans And Action Plans in Punjab, and shall be deemed to form an integral part of all Environmental Approvals already granted as well as those to be granted hereafter:

- i. Integration of the concepts of sponge cities, walkability, planned densification, green infrastructure, biodiversity conservation, protected areas safeguards and wetland conservation shall be mandatory in all land-use plans, master plans and action plans submitted by proponents requiring Environmental Approval.
- ii. Adequate provision for permeable surfaces, rainwater retention areas, green belts, parks, pedestrian pathways, cycling infrastructure, ecological corridors, open spaces and preservation of natural drainage systems shall be incorporated in site layout plans and design proposals.
- iii. Compliance with this order shall be a mandatory condition for grant, renewal or modification of all Environmental Approvals under Section 12 of the Punjab Environmental Protection Act, 1997, with adequate provision in site layout plans and Environmental Management Plans (EMPs).
- iv. Existing approved projects, where implementation of clause 9(i) of this order is feasible, shall incorporate the said measures to the maximum possible extent through revised layouts, retrofitting or subsequent development phases.
- v. This order shall be part of layout plans, land-use plans, master plans and action plans, as the case may be, prepared by the proponents and concerned agencies.

This order shall come into force with immediate effect and shall remain in force until modified or withdrawn.



(DR. IMRAN HAMID SHEIKH)
DIRECTOR GENERAL
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

C.C.

A copy is forwarded for information and necessary action to the:-

- 1) Secretary
Environment Protection and Climate Change Department
- 2) Secretary
Local Government and Community Development Department
- 3) Secretary
Industries, Commerce & Investment Department
- 4) ***The Additional Secretary (Staff), Chief Secretary's Office, Lahore.***
- 5) ***The Additional Secretary (Coordination), Chief Minister Office, Lahore.***
- 6) Senior Chief , (Environment and Climate Change)
P&D Board
- 7) Director General LDA
Lahore Development Authority
- 8) Director General
Multan Development Authority
- 9) Director General
Gujranwala Development Authority
- 10) ***The Additional Director General (Imp) and (Ops), EPA Punjab***
- 11) ***All Directors, EPA Punjab***
- 12) Director EIA , (Environmental Impact Assessment)
Environmental Protection Agency
- 13) ***All Deputy/ Assistant Director (Field), EPA Punjab***
- 14) Deputy Director , (SAW)
Environmental Protection Agency
- 15) Coordinator , (CKENPD)
Environmental Protection Agency
- 16) ***PSO to Minister for Environment, Forest and P&D Board, Punjab***
- 17) Incharge IT Support , (Unit)
Environmental Protection Agency
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