

**Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Presidency of Meteorology and
Environment**



**General Environmental Regulations
And
Rules for Implementation**

(Translated From the Official Arabic Version)

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(In case of any dispute, Arabic Version Shall be Referred to and Shall be Final)



*Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques
King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz
King of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*



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Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister
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Preface

God created the mankind intellectually superior to all other creatures and assigned him as the caretaker of earth after providing him with all the needs to secure the continuation of the mankind. The man has affected the surrounding natural resources and ecosystems and in turn has been affected by them.

Preservation of environment is shared by all without any limitation or restriction. However, the Islamic perspective as related to environment and natural resources is based on its protection, conserving its advancement and prohibiting any act of damaging it, so that the life will be in a continuous state of built-up and sustainable development.

In our current era, environmental issues, including its management and protection, are attracting the attention of the whole world. This is so, because many countries in the world are facing depletion and deterioration of their natural resources' reserves; emergence of numerous environmental pollution problems and the danger of the extinction of many wildlife species.

Being a part of this world, and not isolated from the influence of what is going on around us, the government of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, God may save him, has paid a great attention to environmental protection and development of its resources. The government has actively attempted to; establish a balance between the environmental considerations and pre-requisites; rationalization of the use of available resources and their development and advancement in various fields. As a result, the Kingdom has become one of the distinguished active countries in this field at international level due to the inherited religious, political and economical prestige. The Kingdom has ratified many regional and international conventions in various areas, especially in the field of environment. The Kingdom, represented by the Presidency of Meteorology and Environment (PME), has played its pioneer role in this area through the development of the



“Environmental Regulations and Its Rules of Implementation”, which aims essentially to enhance the balanced environmental activities, to take care of the environment, conservation of natural resources and promoting environmental awareness in the society. The ultimate achievement is the implementation of sustainable development concept, which is a paramount goal for all nations, by all government sectors while preparing their overall development planning.

These rules for implementation of environmental regulations aim at setting forth the procedures, ground and basis for regulating all actions having impact on the environment, in addition to the coordination of response operations, pollution control, protection of natural resources and programs for related investment funds. It includes the types of environmental violations and appropriate penalties for protecting the human health from pollution both at present and in the future.

Finally, we call upon all to preserve the environment, to participate in pollution prevention and to abate the deterioration of the available natural resources, so that our future generations and the country’s economy are saved.

May God grant success for all.

**Turki Bin Nasser Bin Abdulaziz
President
Presidency of Meteorology and Environment**



General Environmental Regulations



GENERAL ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS

Chapter One: Definitions and Goals

Article One:

In the implementation of these regulations, the following expressions shall have the meaning set forth below.

1. The Competent Agency: Meteorology and Environmental protection Administration (MEPA).
2. The Competent Minister: Minister of Defense and Aviation and Inspector General.
3. The Public Institution: Any Ministry, Department or Government Establishment.
4. The Licensing Institution: Any Institution In-charge of licensing projects with potential negative impacts on environment.
5. The Concerned Institution: The Government Institution In-charge of environment-related projects.
6. Person: Any private natural or judicial person. This includes private establishments and companies.
7. The Environment: All that surrounds man such as water, air, land and outer space and all the contents of these milieus such as inanimate objects, flora, fauna, various forms of energy, systems and natural processes and human activities.



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| 8. Environmental Protection: | Preservation of the environment and prevention of its contamination and deterioration. |
| 9. Environmental pollution: | Presence of one or more materials or factors in quantities or quality for periods of time that directly or indirectly lead to harming public health, bio-organisms, natural resources, property or adversely affect quality of life and human welfare. |
| 10. Environmental Deterioration: | The negative impact on environment that changes its general nature or characteristics or the balance among its elements or loss of its beauty and appearance. |
| 11. Environmental Disaster: | An incident which causes damage to the environment and requires greater capabilities to deal with than those required for normal incidents or exceeding the local capabilities. |
| 12. Source Standards: | Maximum allowable limits or percentages of the concentration of various pollutants discharged to the ambient environment. This includes identification of the necessary controlling techniques to comply with these limits. |
| 13. Environmental Quality: | Limits and percentages of concentrations of Standards pollutants that are not allowed to |



- be exceeded in the air, water and land.
14. Environmental Standards: Both environmental quality and source standards.
15. Environmental Criteria: The environmental specifications and criteria to control pollution sources.
16. Projects: Any facilities, installations or activities with potential impact on the environment.
17. Major Change: Any expansion or change in design or operation of any existing project that might negatively affect the environment. For the purpose of this definition, any equivalent substitution of quality and capacity shall not be deemed a major change.
18. Environmental Assessment: The study carried out to identify the potential of the project or consequential environmental impacts, the procedures and appropriate methods to prevent or reduce the negative impact and increase or achieve positive outputs of the project on the environment in accordance with the environmental standards in force.

**Article Two:**

These General Environmental Regulations and Its Rules For Implementation are aimed to achieve the following:

1. Preserve, protect and develop the environment and prevent its pollution,
2. Protect public health from activities and acts that harm the environment.
3. Conserve and develop natural resources and rationalize their use.
4. Include environmental planning as an integral part of overall development planning in all industrial, agricultural, architectural and other fields.
5. Raise awareness in environmental issues and strengthen individual and collective feelings of responsibility for preserving and improving the environment and encouraging national voluntary efforts in this field.

Article Three:

The competent agency shall execute duties aimed at preserving the environment and preventing its deterioration and shall specifically do the following:

1. Review and evaluate condition of the environment, develop monitoring means and tools, collect information and conduct environmental studies.
2. Document and publish environmental information.
3. Prepare, issue, review, develop and interpret environmental protection standards.
4. Propose environmental regulations relevant to its area of jurisdiction.
5. Ensure that public agencies and individuals comply with environmental regulations, criteria and standards and undertake necessary procedures in coordination with the concerned and licensing agencies.
6. Keep abreast the latest developments in the field of environment and its management at the regional and global level.



7. Publicize environmental awareness at all levels.

Article Four:

1. All public agencies must take appropriate actions to apply the rules set forth herein for their projects or projects under their supervision or licensing and ensure commitment to environmental regulations, criteria and standards stated in the rules for implementation hereof.
2. All public agencies responsible for the issuance of standards, specifications or rules related to the practice of activities impacting the environment must coordinate with the competent agency before its issuance.

Article Five:

Licensing agencies must ascertain that the environmental evaluation studies for projects which may cause negative impacts on the environment are done at the project feasibility stage, the agency in charge of implementation of the project shall be responsible for conducting the environmental assessment studies in accordance with the environmental basics and standards determined by the competent agency in the rules for implementation.

Article Six:

The agency implementing new projects or making major modifications to existing projects or has projects whose specified investment terms had expired must utilize the best and most suitable technologies available for the local environment and use materials that cause least contamination to the environment.

Article Seven:

1. All agencies in-charge of education must include environmental concepts in curricula at various stages of education.
2. All agencies in-charge of media must enhance environmental awareness in various mass media and support concept of environmental protection from Islamic perspective.
3. All agencies in-charge of Islamic affairs, call and guidance must enhance the role of mosques in encouraging the community to preserve and protect the environment.



4. All concerned agencies must prepare appropriate training programs to develop capabilities in the field of preserving and protecting the environment.

Article Eight:

Taking into consideration the regulations and directives, public agencies and persons shall:

1. Rationalize the use of natural resources to preserve and develop renewable resources and prolong the duration of use of non-renewable resources.
2. Achieve harmony between consumption rates and patterns and the carrying capacity of resources.
3. Apply technologies for the recycling and re-use of resources.
4. Develop conventional technologies and systems compatible to the local and regional environmental conditions.
5. Develop technologies of traditional building materials.

Article Nine:

1. The competent agency in cooperation and coordination with the concerned agencies shall develop an environmental disaster plan, which should be based on identifying the available local, regional and international capabilities.
2. All concerned agencies must commit to prepare and develop contingency plans as required for the protection of the environment from pollution hazards which may result from emergencies in their projects during normal activity.
3. Any person supervising a project or facility whose operations have potential negative impact on the environment must develop contingency plans to prevent or mitigate risks of these impacts and must acquire the means capable of implementing such plans.
4. The competent agency shall coordinate with the concerned agencies to, periodically, review the appropriateness of the contingency plans.

**Article Ten:**

Environmental considerations must be incorporated in the process of planning for development projects, programs and developmental plans for various sectors and the general developmental plan.

Article Eleven:

1. Any person responsible for designing or operating any project or activity must commit to ensure that the design and operation of the project are in conformity with the regulations and standards in force.
2. Any person involved in a work which may result in negative impact on the environment must take all appropriate steps to limit the effects or decrease their potential occurrences.

Article Twelve:

1. Anyone performing digging, demolition, construction, or debris and dirt transportation works must take necessary precautions for the safe storage and transportation of such materials, which must be treated before and disposed off properly.
2. All smoke, gases or vapors and solid or liquid residue resulting from the burning of any kind of fuel or alike for industrial purposes and power generation etc. must be within allowable limits as permitted in the environmental standards.
3. The owner of the plant must take all necessary precautions and measures to ensure that no air pollutant leak or emission occurs in the work place beyond the allowable limits of the environmental standards.
4. Adequate ventilation requirements must be applied in enclosed and semi-enclosed public places according to the size and carrying capacity of the place and the kind of activity carried out in it.

Precautions, measures, methods and environmental standards must be set forth in the rules for implementation.

Article Thirteen:

Anyone commencing production, service or other activities must take necessary precautions to achieve the following:



1. Prevent direct or indirect contamination of surface, ground and coastal waters that may be caused by solid or liquid residues.
2. Preserve the soil and land and limit its deterioration or contamination.
3. Limit noise particularly when operating machinery and equipment and using horns and loudspeakers which should not exceed allowable environmental standard limits set forth in the rules for implementation.

Article Fourteen:

1. Hazardous, poisonous or radioactive waste are prohibited to enter into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia including its territorial waters and free economic zone.
2. Persons in-charge for the production, transportation, storage, recycling, treatment and final disposal of poisonous, hazardous or radioactive materials must comply with the procedures and controls set forth in the rules for implementation.
3. Any harmful pollutants, poisonous, hazardous or radioactive wastes are prohibited to be disposed off or discharged by vessels or alike in the territorial waters or the free economic zone.

Article Fifteen:

Projects existing at the time of the publication of these regulations shall be given a maximum term of five years as of the date of validity of the regulations in order to reorganize its condition accordingly. If the said term is not sufficient for projects of special nature, an extension may be granted by the decision from the Council of Ministers based on a proposal by the competent minister.

Article Sixteen:

Commitment to environmental protection regulations and standards must be a pre-requisite for receiving loans for projects from lending agencies.

**Article Seventeen:**

1. When the competent agency is certain that any of the environmental criteria and standards have been violated, it should coordinate with the agencies concerned and obligate the violator to do the following.
 - (a) Eliminate any negative impact, terminate the process and rectify the damage, within a specified time, as required by the environmental criteria and standards.
 - (b) Submit a report showing the steps taken by violator to prevent recurrence of violations of criteria and standards in the future provided that these steps are approved by the competent agency.
2. If the situation is not rectified according to the above, the competent agency shall in coordination with the concerned agencies or the licensing agencies, take necessary action to oblige the violator to correct the situation pursuant to the provisions of these regulations.

Article Eighteen:

1. Taking into consideration Article (230) of UN Marine Convention ratified by Royal Decree No. (M/17) dated 11 Ramadan 1416 and without prejudice to any severe penalty imposed by Islamic laws or provided for in other regulations, whoever violated the provisions of Article fourteen shall be punished by imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years or a monetary fine not exceeding Saudi Riyals 500,000 or both. An appropriate compensation shall be ordered and the violator shall be obligated to eliminate the violation. The plant may be closed or the vessel detained for a period not exceeding ninety days. In case of recurrence, the maximum limit of imprisonment shall be raised but may not exceed double the initial term or the maximum limit of the fine shall be increased but may not exceed double the initial fine or both. An appropriate compensation shall be ordered and the violator shall be obligated to eliminate the violation. The plant may be



temporarily or permanently closed or the vessel temporarily detained or confiscated.

2. Without prejudice to any severe penalty imposed by other regulations, he who violates any of the terms of other articles shall be subject to a monetary fine not to exceed Saudi Riyals 10,000 and the violator shall be obligated to rectify the violation. In case of recurrence, the violator shall be punished by imposing an increased maximum limit of the fine that may not exceed double the initial penalty and shall be required to rectify the violation. The plant may be closed for a period not exceeding ninety days.

Article Nineteen:

Competent agency shall designate staff to report violations to these regulations and bylaws. Rules for implementation shall specify procedures to be followed in reporting and documenting violations.

Article Twenty:

1. Grievance Board shall have the jurisdiction to apply penalties set forth in paragraph (1) of Article Eighteen on violators of terms of Article Fourteen of these regulations.
2. Subject to paragraph (1) of this Article, one or more committees shall be formed by a decision of the concerned Minister comprising of three members each with at least one specialized in the regulations into look the violations and apply penalties set forth herein. Decisions of the committee shall be issued by majority vote of its members and authorized by the concerned minister.

Whoever is penalized by the committee shall have the right to file a petition to the Grievance Board within sixty days from the date of notification of the penalty.

Article Twenty One:

The committee set forth in paragraph (2) of Article Twenty may order, if necessary, an immediate rectification of the violation without awaiting issuance of a decision from the Grievance Board in respect to the petition or the case depending on the circumstances.

**Article Twenty Two:**

The competent agency shall establish the rules for implementation of these regulations in coordination with the concerned agencies. These rules shall be issued by decision from the concerned minister within a year from the date of publication of these regulations.

Article Twenty Three:

Current regulations, rules, decisions and instructions related to the environment in force at the time of publication of these regulations shall remain valid provided there is no contradiction.

Article Twenty Four:

This regulation shall be published in the official Gazette and go into force after one year from the publication date.