



GOVERNANCE IN ACTION

Why Every City Needs an Environment Status Report (ESR)

An **Environment Status Report (ESR)** is an annual, evidence-based document that assesses the environmental health of a city and outlines trends and priorities. When effectively institutionalised and publicly accessible, the ESR becomes a core instrument of accountable, data-driven urban governance and a foundation for building **climate-resilient cities**.

An ESR is prepared by city governments to consolidate data across environmental sectors and present a **comprehensive baseline of conditions and pressures**. It helps in:



Policy and planning

Grounding urban plans and climate strategies in data

Budgeting

Aligning financial priorities with environmental needs

Transparency

Making environmental information accessible to citizens

Accountability

Enabling citizens and institutions to track performance

A ROBUST ESR TYPICALLY COVERS:



City Profile: Description of area, climate, population, urban land use



Air Quality: Ambient pollutant levels and source analysis



Water Resources & Supply: Supply–demand gap, quality and aquifer health



Sewerage & Wastewater: Treatment capacity, network coverage, discharge quality



Solid Waste Management: Segregation, processing, landfill status



Green Cover & Biodiversity: Tree census, open space availability



Disaster Management: Risk analysis, hazard analysis, disaster management



Public Health: Maternal and child health, nutritional status of women

WHY ESR(S) MATTER FOR GOVERNANCE

ESRs shift environmental governance from reactive problem-solving to proactive, measurable performance by:

- Enabling **evidence-based planning**
- Supporting **budget alignment** with environmental priorities
- Establishing **performance tracking** across years
- Enhancing **transparency and citizen oversight**
- Allowing **early detection of risks and hotspots**

Without regular, credible ESRs, environmental governance can become fragmented and opaque.

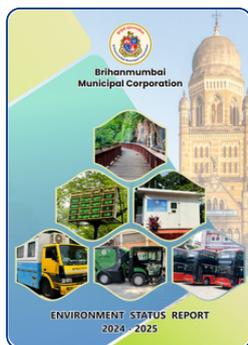


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Maharashtra remains the **most structured example in India** where ESRs are mandated and widely practiced. The **Maharashtra Municipal Corporations Act** and the **Mumbai Municipal Corporation Act** require municipal corporations to publish annual ESRs and submit them to their respective general bodies.



Scan the QR code to access BMC's Environment Status Report 2024 - 2025



EMERGING/HYBRID PRACTICES

The **City of Panaji Corporation Act** mandates publishing ESR for the city of Panaji in Goa.

The **Assam Municipal Corporation Act** has provisions for city governments in Assam (except Guwahati) to publish annual ESRs.

In **Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala**, cities routinely collect and publish data on air quality and urban environmental performance.

Many Indian cities prepare **sectoral environmental assessments** (e.g., air quality indices, water audits) that feed into broader planning documents.



CHALLENGES



DELAYED PUBLICATION
or irregular reporting



INCOMPLETE DATA SETS
and inconsistent methodologies



LIMITED INTEGRATION
with budgets and plans



POOR PUBLIC COMMUNICATION
and accessibility

Addressing these gaps is critical for ESRs to fulfil their governance purpose.

STRENGTHENING THE ESR FRAMEWORK



MANDATE ESR
through
Municipal Corporation acts



PUBLISH ESR
annually and on schedule



LINK ESR OUTCOMES
to municipal budgets and
climate adaptation plans



PROVIDE CITIZEN FRIENDLY
summaries and data
dashboards



INCLUDE MEASURABLE
indicators and targets



ENABLE
independent review and
public engagement

These improvements will enhance ESRs as tools for accountability and progressive environmental governance.

An Environment Status Report is not merely a bureaucratic formality, it is a **governance instrument**. When institutionalised and made publicly accessible, ESRs help city governments plan strategically, track performance, respond transparently, and build trust with citizens. For sustainable urban futures, making ESRs **routine, relevant and actionable** is essential for data-driven and accountable environmental governance.