November 8, 2026

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Importing hazardous waste, scrap and used equipment into India

India admits hazardous and other waste only for recycling, recovery, reuse or use, never disposal. A hazardous waste import from Part A of Schedule III needs permission from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and the exporting country's prior informed consent. Part B needs MoEFCC permission. Part D clears Customs on documents; Schedule VI is banned.

WASTE CAN BE imported into India only for recycling, recovery, reuse or use, including co-processing. Rule 12 of the Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management and Transboundary Movement) Rules, 2016 bars any import for disposal. MoEFCC is the nodal ministry, and the Schedule entry your material falls under decides the route.

KEY FACTS

LAW

Environment (Protection) Act, 1986

PLASTIC EPR

Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2022

E-WASTE EPR

E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2022

UPDATED

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What waste can be imported into India?

Waste can be imported into India only for recycling, recovery, reuse or use, including co-processing. Rule 12 of the Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management and Transboundary Movement) Rules, 2016 bars any import for disposal. MoEFCC is the nodal ministry, and the Schedule entry your material falls under decides the route.

The rules cover hazardous waste and "other wastes", such as metal scrap, waste paper and used electrical assemblies. The rest is in our guide to MoEFCC rules for companies in India. Whether goods may be imported at all is for DGFT's import policy.

Waste tires can't be imported to make pyrolysis oil or char, and used oil comes in only for re-refining. See waste tire and used oil EPR in India.

Latest change, July 2026

G.S.R. 636(E) of July 16, 2026 took brine sludge from caustic soda and chlorine production off Schedule I of hazardous wastes (our tracker note).

Which wastes need MoEFCC permission or prior informed consent?

Wastes in Part A of Schedule III need MoEFCC permission and the exporting country's prior informed consent. Part B wastes need MoEFCC permission, and both parts are for actual users, with wider rules for used medical equipment. Part D wastes clear Customs on documents without MoEFCC permission. Schedule VI wastes are banned.

Import routes under the 2016 rules

Schedule entry	What it needs	Who may import	Rule
Schedule III, Part A (hazardous wastes)	MoEFCC permission and the exporting country's prior informed consent	Actual users only	Rule 12(3)
Schedule III, Part B (other wastes)	MoEFCC permission	Actual users only, with wider rules for used medical equipment	Rule 12(4)
Schedule III, Part D (other wastes)	No MoEFCC permission; documents to Customs	For metal and paper scrap, actual users or traders authorized by the state board	Rules 13(2) and 13(4)
Schedule VI (prohibited wastes)	Import not permitted	No one	Rule 12(6)

An actual user is a unit that obtains hazardous or other waste and processes it for reuse, recycling, recovery, pre-processing or use, including co-processing (rule 3(1), clause 2).

If you ship waste to India, each consignment travels with the Form 6 movement document and, where it applies, a test report from a laboratory the exporting country recognizes (rule 13(10)).

How do you get MoEFCC permission for a hazardous waste import?

An actual user applies to MoEFCC in Form 5, with the listed documents and, for Part A waste, the exporting country's prior informed consent. It copies its state pollution control board at the same time and files the board's acknowledgement with the application (rule 13(1)). An Expert Committee then reviews it.

1. Check the import policy

Confirm DGFT's import policy allows the goods, and get any import licence the policy requires.

2. Hold your state board consent and authorization

Form 5 asks for your valid consent to operate and authorization, your process and your capacity.

3. Apply in Form 5

Give the waste's quantity, Basel number and composition, the port of entry and your last three years of permitted imports.

4. Wait for the Expert Committee's review

MoEFCC also weighs any state board comments.

5. Receive the permission

MoEFCC copies it to the port, Customs, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and your state board (rule 13(6)).

6. Keep records and file returns

Record imports in Form 3 and file Form 4 with your state board by June 30 each year (rules 13(7) and (8)).

Rule 13(5) says MoEFCC "may grant the permission for import within a period of sixty days" of a complete application, if you meet its conditions, such as sound facilities and a valid authorization. That's the rule's own limit, not a promised decision time.

What does MoEFCC's Expert Committee look at?

MoEFCC's Expert Committee appraises applications to import or export hazardous and other wastes. In its April 2026 record, each lead and battery scrap application lists the Form 5, a justification for the import, the unit's consent and authorization, its production and any past permissions. MoEFCC then decides on the committee's recommendations.

Its 155th meeting, on April 23, 2026, also kept a residual life test for used medical equipment (the decision).

Can plastic scrap be imported into India, including into an SEZ or EOU?

Most plastic waste can't come in: Schedule VI, the list of wastes India bars from import, holds the plastic entry, Basel No. B3011. G.S.R. 178(E) of March 1, 2019 ended its exception for units in special economic zones (SEZs) and export-oriented units (EOUs). A few plastics have their own route.

Rule 12(6B), as G.S.R. 177(E) rewrote it on March 12, 2024, permits imports of "post-industrial or pre-consumer polyethylene wastes" with "a requirement to export at least thirty five percent of the total annual turnover".

Part B of Schedule III, which needs MoEFCC permission, lists polyethylene terephthalate (PET) under Basel No. B3011. The same 2024 notification added post-industrial or pre-consumer polysiloxanes to that entry and took polysiloxanes off Schedule VI.

The 2019 amendment also took polymethyl methacrylate, a solid plastic waste, off Part B and added it to Schedule VI.

Can waste paper and metal scrap be imported without MoEFCC permission?

Waste paper and metal scrap in Part D of Schedule III need no MoEFCC permission. That covers iron and steel, aluminum and copper scrap (Basel No. B1010) and paper and paperboard waste (B3020). The importer gives Customs Form 6 and the Schedule VIII documents, which Customs checks before clearance.

For these grades, Schedule VIII of the 2016 rules, as notified, also lists:

- Any import licence from the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) that applies
- A pre-shipment inspection certificate
- The actual user's consents and authorization, or the trader's state board authorization
- A chemical analysis report, and last year's acknowledged annual return

Inspection agencies and scrap ports are DGFT and Customs ground. See India's import policy and our guide to customs in India.

Since April 1, 2026, aluminum, copper and zinc scrap importers also carry extended producer responsibility (EPR) for 100% of the previous year's imports (G.S.R. 438(E)). See EPR registration in India.

Can equipment be sent to India for repair and shipped on to another country?

Used electrical and electronic assemblies can come into India for repair or refurbishment under Basel No. B1110 in Part D, and must leave within one year of import. Since G.S.R. 500(E) of July 12, 2023, they may go to the original maker or any other company, in any country.

Up to 5% by weight of assemblies that can't be repaired may stay in India, and they go only to authorized recyclers. Customs asks for a certificate from the company taking back the repaired and unrepairable assemblies and spares (Schedule VIII, item (e); our tracker note).

Defective assemblies made in India can come back to the original maker within twelve months of export (G.S.R. 178(E)).

A common mistake

Some guides say used electronics can't be imported into India at all. This repair route says otherwise.

Can you import used electronics, laptops or machinery into India?

Whether used electronics or machinery may be imported at all is set by DGFT's import policy, not by MoEFCC. MoEFCC adds a duty: an importer of used electrical and electronic equipment carries a 100% e-waste EPR obligation for it at end of life, unless it re-exports it (E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2022, Schedule III).

For capital goods, see importing second-hand machinery into India; for the restricted and prohibited lists, DGFT's import policy. Who registers as an e-waste producer is in our e-waste EPR guide.

Can used or refurbished medical equipment be imported, and who may import it?

High end and high value used medical equipment, other than used critical care equipment, can be imported for reuse with MoEFCC permission, as a Part B entry. The actual user, the original maker, its Indian subsidiary or a trader for the actual user may import it (G.S.R. 900(E), December 23, 2022).

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare decides which equipment counts as high end and high value. Used critical care equipment stays on Schedule VI (our tracker note).

A MoEFCC office memorandum of October 15, 2024 asks for at least seven years of residual life, certified by a chartered engineer or an accredited agency of the exporting country. In December 2025 the Expert Committee chose to recommend only equipment under five years old and to send older equipment to CDSCO for views. On April 23, 2026 it went back to the residual life test for now (our insight).

Device quality is CDSCO's ground under the Medical Device Rules, 2017, as CDSCO told the committee. Follow it in our CDSCO tracker.

Do waste samples for testing need MoEFCC permission?

Samples of hazardous or other waste up to 1,000 grams or 1,000 milliliters, imported for testing or research and development, need no MoEFCC import permission under rule 13(9) of the 2016 rules. A larger quantity, or one imported for another purpose, follows the route of its Schedule entry.

What happens if waste is imported without permission?

An import without permission, with permission got by fraud or misrepresentation, that departs from its movement documents, or that amounts to dumping is illegal traffic under rule 15. The importer must re-export the waste at its own cost within ninety days of arrival, and the port and Customs enforce it.

Anyone who breaks the rules is also liable to a penalty under section 15 of the Environment (Protection) Act (rule 40, as rewritten in 2024: our tracker note). See environmental compensation and penalties under India's EPR rules.

Do you need MoEFCC permission to export hazardous waste from India?

Exports of wastes in Part A or Part B of Schedule III, or in Schedule VI, need MoEFCC permission under rule 12(7). The exporter applies in Form 5 with insurance cover and, for Part A and Schedule VI wastes, the importing country's written prior informed consent, which must arrive before shipment.

Rule 14(2) says MoEFCC "may give permission for the proposed export within a period of sixty days" of a complete application. That's the rule's own limit, not a promise.

How IndusDesk helps with waste import permissions

We work out which Schedule entry and route your material falls under. We prepare the Form 5 application and its documents for you to file, and follow it through the Expert Committee's meetings. MoEFCC decides, so we can't promise a permission or its timing.

Regulatory & trade advisory →

Rule exposure audit →

Talk to our desk about a waste import permission Message us on WhatsApp

Frequently asked questions

Who can apply for a hazardous waste import permission?

For Part A and Part B wastes, only an actual user: a unit that processes the waste for reuse, recycling, recovery or use. Used medical equipment may also be imported by its maker, the maker's Indian subsidiary or a trader for the actual user.

Can an SEZ unit import plastic scrap into India?

Not as a special case. G.S.R. 178(E) of 2019 removed the note that let SEZ and export-oriented units import solid plastic waste. Post-industrial or pre-consumer polyethylene waste may come in under rule 12(6B), with a requirement to export at least 35% of total annual turnover, and PET and the polysiloxanes Part B lists need MoEFCC permission.

Does MoEFCC have to decide an import application within 60 days?

No. Rule 13(5) says MoEFCC "may grant" permission within sixty days of a complete application. That's the rule's own limit, not a promised decision time.

Is there an age limit on imported used medical equipment?

Not for now. On April 23, 2026 the Expert Committee went back to a residual life test, after recommending only equipment under five years old from December 2025. It asks for at least seven years of residual life, certified by a chartered engineer or an accredited agency.

How long can equipment imported for repair stay in India?

One year. Used electrical and electronic assemblies imported for repair must be re-exported within a year of import, to any company in any country. Up to 5% by weight that can't be repaired may stay, for authorized recyclers only.

Sources

- Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management and Transboundary Movement) Rules, 2016, G.S.R. 395(E), April 4, 2016 (CPCB's copy, as notified): rules 3(1), clause 2, and 11 to 15, Schedule I, Schedule III Parts A to D, Schedule VI, Schedule VIII and Forms 5 and 6
- G.S.R. 178(E), March 1, 2019: Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management and Transboundary Movement) Amendment Rules, 2019 (CPCB's copy, a scan), paragraph 2(iv) to (vi)
- G.S.R. 900(E), December 23, 2022: Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management and Transboundary Movement) Second Amendment Rules, 2022, Schedule III, Part B, B1110 and its note (used medical equipment) (PDF, 1.4 MB)
- G.S.R. 500(E), July 12, 2023: Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management and Transboundary Movement) Amendment Rules, 2023, Schedule III, Part D, B1110 and Schedule VIII, serial 4 (repair and refurbishment) (PDF, 607 KB)
- G.S.R. 177(E), March 12, 2024: Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management and Transboundary Movement) Amendment Rules, 2024, paragraphs 5, 8 and 9 (rule 12(6B); Schedule III, Part B and Schedule VI, B3011) (PDF, 1.3 MB)
- G.S.R. 698(E), November 12, 2024: Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management and Transboundary Movement) Second Amendment Rules, 2024 (rule 40) (PDF, 2.1 MB)
- G.S.R. 636(E), July 16, 2026: Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management and Transboundary Movement) Amendment Rules, 2026 (brine sludge, Schedule I) (PDF, 642 KB)
- G.S.R. 801(E), November 2, 2022: E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2022, Schedule III, note (2) (PDF, 1.5 MB)
- G.S.R. 438(E), July 1, 2025: Chapter VIII (non-ferrous metal scrap) and Schedule XI, item (ix) (PDF, 969 KB)
- G.S.R. 593(E), July 21, 2022: Schedule IX, paragraph 4(1)(b) (waste tire imports) (PDF, 1.3 MB)
- G.S.R. 677(E), September 18, 2023: Chapter VII (used oil imports for re-refining) (PDF, 1.3 MB)
- Decision of MoEFCC on import and export of hazardous and other waste, 155th meeting of the Expert Committee (April 23, 2026; issued May 11, 2026): initial discussion (iii) to (xii) and agenda item 1 (PDF, 743 KB)

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Read online: indusdesk.com/moefcc/hazardous-waste-imports/