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ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP) FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF GREEN GUARDIAN CLUBS FOR ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION



UTTARAKHAND STATE LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

High Court Campus, Nainital - 263001, Telefax: 05942-236552, e-mail: slsa-uk@nic.in,
Website: https://uttarakhand.nalsa.gov.in
Portal For Free Legal Aid: https://nyaymitraslsa.uk.gov.in
Facebook Link: https://www.facebook.com/uttarakhand.slsa
YouTube Link: https://www.youtube.com/@ukslsa-uttarakhandstateleg6415
Toll Free No:-**UKSLSA**-18001804000, **NALSA**-15100

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STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP) FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF GREEN GUARDIAN CLUBS FOR ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION

Pursuant to the constitutional mandate for environmental protection, the Uttarakhand State Legal Services Authority (UKSLSA) hereby **formulates** this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the Establishment and Functioning of Green Guardian Clubs, 2026, for uniform implementation by the concerned Legal Services Institutions and participating educational institutions across the State of Uttarakhand, with the objective of promoting environmental legal literacy, awareness of constitutional and statutory duties, conservation of natural resources, sustainable and climate-conscious practices, and meaningful participation of students and communities in environmental protection.

1. EXTENT AND COMMENCEMENT

1.1. This Procedure shall be called the *"Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Establishment of Green Guardian Clubs for Environment Protection"* (hereinafter referred to as "the SOP").

1.2. This SOP shall apply to all District Legal Services Authorities (DLSAs), Tehsil Legal Services Committees (TLSCs) and participating schools and colleges in the State of Uttarakhand.

1.3. This SOP shall come into force from the date of its approval by the Hon'ble Executive Chairman, Uttarakhand State Legal Services Authority (UKSLSA).*

1.4. This SOP shall be read and construed in conjunction with:-

a. The UKSLSA SOP for Conducting Plantation Drive (2026) and

b. The UKSLSA SOP for Para-Legal Volunteers-2026

1.5. In case of any matter relating specifically to plantation methodology, species selection, site preparation, pit preparation, watering, protection, survival assessment, replacement of saplings or technical plantation reporting, the UKSLSA SOP for Conducting Plantation Drive (2026) shall prevail.

2. OBJECTIVES

The Green Guardian Club Programme aims to:-

2.1. Institutionalize student participation in environmental protection and conservation through structured Green Guardian Clubs.

2.2. Promote tree plantation, tree conservation, climate-resilient practices, water conservation, waste management, biodiversity protection and sustainable environmental practices.

* Approved by the Hon'ble Executive Chairman, UKSLSA on 09.10.2026

2.3. Develop students as responsible *"Green Guardians"* through tree adoption, environmental stewardship and continuous participation in environmental activities.

2.4. Connect environmental protection with legal literacy, constitutional duties, civic responsibility and access to lawful mechanisms for reporting environmental concerns.

2.5. Establish effective coordination among UKSLSA, DLSAs, TLSCs, educational institutions, Eco Clubs, Para-Legal Volunteers, Forest Department, Education Department and local communities.

2.6. Ensure that plantation activities extend beyond one-time plantation drives through systematic adoption, monitoring, protection and aftercare.

2.7. Encourage convergence between existing environmental initiatives, including Eco Clubs functioning in colleges of the State of Uttarakhand, and the Green Guardian Club Programme.

3. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this SOP:-

3.1. *"UKSLSA"* means the Uttarakhand State Legal Services Authority established under Section 3(1) of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987.

3.2. *"DLSA"* means the District Legal Services Authority constituted under Section 9 of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987.

3.3. *"TLSC"* means the Tehsil Legal Services Committee constituted under Section 11 of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987.

3.4. *"Green Guardian Club"* means a student-oriented environmental club established in a school or college under this SOP for promoting environmental protection, tree plantation, tree adoption, environmental awareness and legal literacy.

3.5. "Green Guardian" means a student member of a Green Guardian Club who undertakes to adopt and care for at least one sapling for a minimum period of two years.

3.6. *"Eco Club"* means an Eco Club or similar environmental club already established or functioning in a college or other educational institution in the State of Uttarakhand under any applicable Government, institutional or educational initiative.

3.7. *"Ex-officio Member"* means a member who, by virtue of being a member of an existing Eco Club, shall automatically be entitled to associate with and participate in the Green Guardian Club of the concerned institution, subject to this SOP and institutional arrangements.

3.8. *"Nodal PLV"* means the Para-Legal Volunteer designated by the Secretary, DLSA to mentor, coordinate with and facilitate legal-awareness activities of a Green Guardian Club.

3.9. *"Supervisory Authority"* means the Secretary, DLSA.

3.10. *"Adoption"* means the voluntary undertaking by a student member to monitor, protect and care for an adopted sapling for a minimum period of two years.

4. COORDINATION FRAMEWORK

4.1. UKSLSA – State Level

UKSLSA shall:-

a. Issue policy directions and model formats for Green Guardian Clubs,

b. Provide guidance, training and capacity-building support,

c. Monitor State-level progress,

d. Facilitate coordination with relevant departments and institutions,

e. Review consolidated reports received from DLSAs,

f. Promote convergence with existing environmental programmes and Eco Clubs and

g. Recognize good practices and achievements in accordance with applicable norms.

4.2. DLSA – District Level

The DLSA shall be the nodal implementing authority at the district level.The Secretary, DLSA shall supervise the establishment, functioning, monitoring and reporting of Green Guardian Clubs within the district.

4.3. District Green Guardian Coordination Committee

Each DLSA may constitute a District Green Guardian Coordination Committee, comprising the following members:-

a. Secretary, DLSA – Chairperson (Ex-Officio),

b. Sub-Divisional Magistrate, nominated by the District Magistrate,

c. One representative of the Forest Department, not below the rank of Forest Ranger,

d. District Education Officer, or his/her representative not below the rank of Block Education Officer and

e. Nodal Para-Legal Volunteer (PLV) for Green Guardian Clubs.

Note-1:- The District Plantation Coordination Committee constituted under the relevant Plantation SOP may also function as the District Green Guardian Coordination Committee, *mutatis mutandis*, subject to such modifications in its composition or functioning as may be necessary for the effective implementation of this SOP

Note-2:-The Committee may meet at least once every quarter or as considered necessary by the Secretary, DLSA.

Note-3:-The Committee shall review the establishment and functional status of Green Guardian Clubs, student participation, plantation and tree-adoption activities, environmental awareness programmes, issues requiring inter-departmental coordination, and the overall implementation of this SOP.

4.4. TLSC – Tehsil Level

TLSCs shall assist the DLSAs in:-

a. Identifying eligible educational institutions,

b. Facilitating local-level activities,

c. Mobilizing communities,

d. Supporting awareness programmes and

e. Assisting in monitoring and follow-up activities.

5. ESTABLISHMENT AND CONSTITUTION OF GREEN GUARDIAN CLUBS

5.1. Applicability

a. A Green Guardian Club shall be established in educational institutions in accordance with the directions issued by UKSLSA and the concerned DLSA,

b.Every school having students of Class VIII and above and every college may be brought within the Green Guardian Club Programme, subject to the directions of UKSLSA and the administrative arrangements of the concerned DLSA and

c. The concerned DLSA shall facilitate and monitor the establishment of Green Guardian Clubs in eligible educational institutions within its jurisdiction.

5.2. Minimum Composition

Each Green Guardian Club shall ordinarily comprise:-

a. Principal/Head of Institution – Patron,

b. Two Teachers – Coordinator and Co-Coordinator,

c. Five Students – Green Guardians,

d. One Para-Legal Volunteer – Mentor/Nodal PLV and

e. Ex-officio members from the existing Eco Club, wherever an Eco Club is established or functioning in the institution, in accordance with Clause 5.4.

5.3. Establishment Procedure

The Green Guardian Club shall be established through the following process:

a. The DLSA shall identify an eligible educational institution,

b. The Secretary, DLSA, shall constitute the Club by nominating two teachers and at least five students from Class VIII onwards, or college students, as applicable,

c. The Principal or Head of the Institution shall be designated as the Ex-officio Patron,

d. The Secretary, DLSA, shall assign a Nodal PLV to coordinate the Club's activities,

e. The DLSA may recognise and integrate an existing Eco Club, wherever applicable,

f. A brief Club Charter shall be prepared, specifying the Club's objectives, composition, functions, and reporting mechanism,

g. The Club shall operate after approval and formal authorisation by the Secretary, DLSA and

h. The details of the Club shall be entered in the district-wise register maintained by the DLSA and updated periodically.

5.4. Convergence with Existing Eco Clubs

a. All Eco Clubs already established and functioning in colleges of the State of Uttarakhand shall be encouraged to function in convergence with the Green Guardian Club Programme.

b. The members of an existing Eco Club of a college shall be ex-officio members of the Green Guardian Club of that college.

c. Such ex-officio membership shall not require a separate selection process or separate membership application, provided the concerned student is a recognized member of the existing Eco Club.

d. Ex-officio Eco Club members may participate in Green Guardian Club meetings, plantation activities, tree-adoption programmes, awareness programmes, legal-literacy activities, community outreach and other environmental activities.

e. The existing office-bearers/coordinators of an Eco Club may be associated with the Green Guardian Club activities as appropriate, subject to the overall supervision of the Principal/Head of Institution and the Teacher Coordinators.

f. The inclusion of Eco Club members as ex-officio members shall not alter the prescribed minimum composition of the Green Guardian Club under Clause 5.2.

g. Where an Eco Club already performs environmental activities or maintains environmental records, duplication of activities and records shall, as far as practicable,

be avoided. Existing records may be utilized for Green Guardian Club reporting where they satisfy the requirements of this SOP.

h. Colleges may, with approval of the Principal/Head of Institution, conduct joint activities of the Eco Club and Green Guardian Club so as to ensure convergence, wider student participation and effective utilization of available resources.

5.5. Additional Members

Additional student volunteers, Eco Club members, faculty members, community representatives or other appropriate persons may be associated with the Green Guardian Club for specific activities, with the approval of the Principal/Head of Institution and intimation to the DLSA.

5.6. Club Charter

The **Club Charter** shall specify the name and objectives of the Club, its composition and membership, the roles and responsibilities of its members, the annual activity plan, the tree-adoption commitment, environmental awareness activities, the reporting mechanism and the basic code of conduct to be followed by its members.

The Charter shall be signed by the Principal/Head of Institution, Teacher Coordinators and student members and submitted to the Secretary, DLSA.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1. Secretary, DLSA

The Secretary, DLSA shall:-

a. Establish Green Guardian Clubs,

b. Designate Nodal PLVs,

c. Coordinate, wherever required, with the Forest Department and Education Department,

d. Monitor Club functioning,

e. Review periodic reports,

f. Undertake or authorize field verification,

g. Issue directions for rectification of deficiencies,

h. Maintain district-wise information regarding Green Guardian Clubs,

i. Consolidate district-level information and

j. Submit reports to UKSLSA in the prescribed format.

6.2. Principal/Head of Institution – Patron

The Principal/Head of Institution shall:-

a. Provide institutional and logistical support,

b. Nominate Teacher Coordinators,

c. Facilitate Club meetings and activities,

d. Ensure appropriate student participation,

e. Facilitate convergence with existing Eco Clubs,

f. Provide necessary campus space and institutional support for activities and

g. Oversee the overall functioning of the Club.

6.3. Teacher Coordinator

The Teacher Coordinator shall:

a. Organize Club meetings and activities,

b. Mentor student members,

c. Maintain Club records,

d. Coordinate with the Nodal PLV,

e. Facilitate environmental and legal-awareness programmes,

f. Monitor tree-adoption activities,

g. Facilitate reporting to the DLSA and

h. Coordinate, where applicable, with the Eco Club and its coordinators.

6.4. Teacher Co-Coordinator

The Co-Coordinator shall:

a. Assist the Coordinator in all activities,

b. Perform the functions of the Coordinator during absence,

c. Support documentation and record keeping,

d. Facilitate student participation and

e. Assist in coordination with Eco Club members and other student volunteers.

6.5. Student Members – Green Guardians

Student members shall:

a. Participate actively in Club activities,

b. Adopt and care for at least one sapling for a minimum period of two years,

c. Participate in plantation activities under appropriate supervision,

d. Participate in environmental awareness programmes,

e. Promote water conservation, cleanliness and waste segregation,

f. Monitor adopted saplings and report damage or environmental concerns,

g. Participate in environmental legal-literacy programmes,

h. Assist in documentation and photographs and

i. Comply with the Club's code of conduct.

6.6. Eco Club Members – Ex-officio Members

Members of existing Eco Clubs in colleges shall:-

a. Participate in Green Guardian Club activities as ex-officio members,

b. Contribute to environmental awareness, conservation and community activities,

c. Participate in plantation and tree-adoption activities,

d. Assist in mobilizing students for environmental programmes,

e. Share relevant Eco Club experience, resources and good practices and

f. Coordinate with the Green Guardian Club through the Principal/Head of Institution and designated Teacher Coordinators.

Note-1 An Eco Club member who undertakes individual tree adoption in accordance with this SOP may be recognised and recorded as a **"Green Guardian"** for the purpose of such activity.

Note-2 No remuneration, honorarium, or other monetary benefit shall be payable to the Principal/Head of the Institution, teachers, or students solely by reason of their membership or participation in the Green Guardian Club.

6.7. Nodal PLV

The Nodal PLV shall:-

a. Act as a link between the Club and DLSA,

b. Facilitate legal-awareness programmes,

c. Assist in community mobilization,

d. Support monitoring and documentation,

e. Bring relevant environmental/legal concerns to the notice of the DLSA,

f. Assist the Teacher Coordinators in reporting and

g. Perform such other functions as may be assigned by the Secretary, DLSA.

7. STUDENT MEMBERSHIP AND DUTIES

7.1. Students of Class VIII and above, or college students, may be enrolled as Green Guardians.

7.2. Selection of the five core student members may be through nomination, voluntary participation, peer selection or another transparent method determined by the institution.

7.3. Every Green Guardian shall, as far as practicable:

a. Adopt at least one sapling for a minimum period of two years,

b. Participate in at least two plantation activities annually, subject to institutional feasibility,

c. Attend Club meetings and activities,

d. Participate in at least one environmental awareness activity each month,

e. Monitor the adopted sapling and report its condition,

f. Promote water conservation, waste segregation and cleanliness,

g. Participate in environmental legal-literacy activities and

h. Follow the Club's code of conduct.

7.4. Plantation and aftercare activities shall be undertaken strictly in accordance with the UKSLSA SOP for Conducting Plantation Drive (2026).

7.5. Students shall not be made personally responsible for technical plantation decisions. Technical decisions shall be guided by the concerned Teacher Coordinator, PLV and/or competent Forest Department personnel.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL AND LEGAL AWARENESS

8.1. Green Guardian Clubs shall organize or facilitate awareness activities on:-

a. Environmental protection,

b. Climate change and climate resilience,

c. Water conservation,

d. Waste segregation and management,

e. Reduction of plastic use,

f. Biodiversity and wildlife protection,

g. Forest conservation,

h. Cleanliness and sustainable living and

i. Community stewardship.

8.2. The Nodal PLV, DLSA or panel advocates may facilitate legal-literacy sessions concerning relevant environmental laws, constitutional provisions and citizens' duties.

8.3. Students may be sensitized regarding:-

a. Article 21 and environmental protection,

b. Article 48A,

c. Article 51A (g),

d. Applicable environmental and forest laws and

e. Lawful mechanisms for reporting environmental violations.

8.4. Green Guardians shall not undertake enforcement activities.

8.5. Any suspected illegal tree felling, pollution, encroachment, unauthorized environmental activity or other violation shall be reported through the appropriate institutional, local-authority, Forest Department or legal-services channel.

9. ACTIVITIES OF GREEN GUARDIAN CLUBS

The Clubs may undertake activities suited to local conditions, including: -

9.1. Tree plantation and tree adoption.

9.2. Environmental awareness programmes, debates, poster competitions, exhibitions, street plays and rallies.

9.3. Cleanliness and waste-segregation drives.

9.4. Water-conservation and rainwater-management awareness.

9.5. Plastic-reduction and sustainable-lifestyle campaigns.

9.6. School/college/community gardens and biodiversity activities.

9.7. Awareness programmes relating to forest and wildlife conservation.

9.8. Observance of important environmental days.

9.9. Legal-literacy and civic-responsibility programmes.

9.10. Community outreach in coordination with the DLSA, TLSC, Forest Department, Education Department, local bodies and other competent authorities.

9.11. Joint environmental activities with existing Eco Clubs, wherever applicable.

10. PLANTATION AND TREE CARE

10.1. All plantation-related activities, including site selection, species selection, pit preparation, procurement, planting, protection, watering, aftercare, survival assessment, replacement, and reporting, shall be governed exclusively by the **UKSLSA SOP for Conducting Plantation Drive (2026)**.

10.2. The Forest Department shall be consulted wherever technical guidance is required.

10.3. Students shall participate only under appropriate supervision and shall not be assigned technical responsibilities beyond their capacity.

11. TREE ADOPTATION

11.1. As far as practicable, every student member shall adopt at least one planted sapling.

11.2. The adoption details and subsequent changes shall be recorded in the Tree Adoption Register.

11.3. The adopter shall periodically report the condition of the sapling to the Teacher Coordinator.

11.4. In the event of death of a sapling or discontinuance by the adopter, the Club shall arrange its replacement or transfer of responsibility, as appropriate.

12. TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

12.1. The DLSA shall facilitate orientation for Club members on the objectives and functioning of the Club, their roles, tree adoption, environmental awareness, legal literacy, record maintenance and reporting.

12.2. Technical plantation training shall be conducted in accordance with the Plantation SOP and, where necessary, with the assistance of the Forest Department.

12.3. The Nodal PLV shall receive orientation on environmental legal literacy, community mobilisation, monitoring and reporting.

12.4. Refresher training may be organised as required. Existing Eco Club members may be included in relevant programmes.

13. MEETING AND RECORDS

13.1. The Club shall ordinarily meet at least once every quarter.

13.2. The following records shall be maintained, as applicable:

a. Membership and Attendance Register,

b. Activity Register,

c. Tree Adoption Register and

d. Photographs and supporting documentation.

13.3. Plantation-related records shall be maintained in the formats prescribed under the Plantation SOP. Existing Eco Club records may be adopted wherever they contain the required information, to avoid duplication.

14. MONITORING AND REPORTING

14.1. Teacher Coordinators shall maintain basic records of Club activities and student participation.

14.2. The Nodal PLV shall periodically review Club activities and submit reports to the Secretary, DLSA in the prescribed format.

14.3. The Secretary, DLSA shall review:

a. Number of Clubs established and functional,

b. Student and Eco Club participation,

c. Plantation and adoption activities,

d. Environmental awareness programmes,

e. Community outreach,

f. Issues requiring intervention and

g. Compliance with this SOP.

14.4. Plantation numbers, species, survival rates and other technical plantation data shall be reported in accordance with the UKSLSA Plantation SOP.

14.5. DLSAs shall submit consolidated reports to UKSLSA in the format prescribed from time to time.

15. VERIFICATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

15.1. The DLSA may conduct field visits or verification of Green Guardian Club activities.

15.2. Verification may cover the Club's existence and functioning, student and Eco Club member participation, tree-adoption and plantation records and environmental awareness activities.

15.3. Technical verification of plantation activities shall be undertaken in accordance with the mechanism prescribed under the Plantation SOP.

15.4**.** The Secretary, DLSA may issue directions for rectification of any deficiencies.

15.5. In cases of persistent non-compliance, the DLSA may take appropriate action, including reconstitution or closure of the Club, after providing a reasonable opportunity for corrective action.

16. RECOGNITION AND GOOD PRACTICES

16.1. DLSAs may recognize students, teachers, Eco Club members and Green Guardian Clubs demonstrating sustained participation, environmental awareness, effective tree adoption and good practices.

16.2. UKSLSA may recognize good practices at the State level.

16.3. Recognition shall be based on transparent criteria and availability of resources.

17. GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL

17.1. Grievances relating to the activities of the Green Guardian Clubs shall ordinarily be addressed and resolved through the following sequential channels:-**Teacher Coordinator/Principal, Secretary, DLSA, Chairman, DLSA and Member-Secretary, UKSLSA**, as the case may be.

17.2. Technical forestry matters may also be referred to the concerned Forest Department authority.

18. REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

18.1. UKSLSA may review this SOP periodically.

18.2. Necessary amendments may be made with the approval of the competent authority.

18.3. This SOP shall be harmonized with amendments to applicable laws, rules, policies and the UKSLSA SOP for Conducting Plantation Drive and SOP for Para-Legal Volunteers.

ANNEXURE-I

GREEN GUARDIAN CLUB MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name of Student: _____

Class/Section: _____

Institution: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Contact No.: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Parent/Guardian Contact: _____

Declaration

I agree to:

Participate in Green Guardian Club activities,

Adopt and care for at least one sapling for a minimum period of two years,

Participate in environmental awareness activities,

Attend Club meetings and activities as far as practicable and

Follow the instructions of the institution and Club coordinators.

Signature of Student: _____

Date: _____

Principal/Head of Institution: _____

Teacher Coordinator: _____

Nodal PLV: _____

ANNEXURE-II

GREEN GUARDIAN PLEDGE

As a Green Guardian, I pledge to:

Protect and respect nature,

Care for my adopted sapling,

Promote environmental awareness,

Conserve water and reduce waste,

Follow environmentally responsible practices,

Learn about environmental rights and duties,

Report environmental concerns through appropriate channels and

Participate responsibly in Green Guardian Club activities.

Name: _____

Class: _____

Institution: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

ANNEXURE-III

BASIC CLUB ESTABLISHMENT CHECKLIST

A. Before Establishment

☐ Eligible educational institution identified

☐ Institutional approval/resolution obtained

☐ Application/communication submitted to DLSA

☐ Principal/Head of Institution nominated as Patron

☐ Two Teacher Coordinators nominated

☐Five student members identified

☐ Existing Eco Club identified, wherever applicable

☐ Eco Club members recorded as ex-officio members, wherever applicable

☐ Nodal PLV assigned

☐ Club Charter prepared

☐ DLSA approval/authorization obtained

☐ Club entered in district-wise DLSA record

B. After Establishment

☐ Monthly meeting schedule prepared

☐ Annual activity plan prepared

☐ Student adoption commitments recorded

☐ Eco Club and Green Guardian activities suitably converged

☐ Plantation activities aligned with Plantation SOP

☐ Activity and adoption records maintained

☐ Awareness/legal-literacy activities conducted

☐ Photographic/supporting documentation maintained

☐ Periodic report submitted to DLSA