

## Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) - UPSC Notes

The GEAC is India's apex biotechnology regulatory body. It is an important governmental body and features often in the news. It is a part of the environment and ecology segment of the [UPSC syllabus](#).

### Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC)

The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) is a statutory body constituted under the 'Rules for the Manufacture, Use /Import /Export and Storage of Hazardous Microorganisms/Genetically Engineering Organisms or Cells, 1989' notified under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

- It was formed as the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee and was renamed to its current name in 2010.
- It functions under the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change.
- The body regulates the use, manufacture, storage, import and export of hazardous microorganisms or genetically-engineered organisms and cells in India.

### GEAC Functions

The GEAC is the apex biotech regulatory body in India. **It is a statutory body.** The functions of the GEAC are described below.

- It is responsible for the appraisal of activities that involve the large scale use of hazardous microbes and recombinants in research and industrial production from the point of view of the environment.
- The GEAC also assesses proposals regarding the release of genetically engineered products and organisms into the environment, and this includes experimental field trials as well.
- The body also looks into proposals regarding the use of living modified organism that comes in the risk category III and above in the import/manufacture of recombinant pharma products, or where the end-product of the recombinant pharma product is a modified living organism.
- The Committee has the power to take punitive action against people/body under the Environment (Protection) Act.
- The approval of the GEAC is mandatory before genetically modified organisms and products derived from them can be used commercially.

### GEAC Composition

The Committee is chaired by the Special Secretary/Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, GOI. A representative of the Department of Biotechnology is a co-chair.

There are many other members who meet every month to review the applications in the Committee's domain. The members include experts from other ministries as well as institutions such as the ICAR, ICMR, CCMB, etc.

## UPSC Questions related to GEAC

### What is Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee?

The GEAC is India's apex biotechnology regulatory body. It regulates the use, manufacture, storage, export

and import of hazardous microorganisms or genetically-engineered organisms and cells in India.

**Is Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee a statutory body?**

Yes, the GEAC is a statutory body.

