

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3402**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 26.03.2018

**Impact of mining on forests**

3402. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) the percentage of forests exposed to mining projects in the year 2016;
- (b) whether Government is aware of the report by Forest Survey of India (FSI) in August 2016, which stated that mining should be barred in 40 per cent of India's forests;
- (c) whether Government has adopted a new comprehensive policy to identify and protect 'inviolable forests' post the Supreme Court judgement, cancelling licenses of 204 coal blocks in September 2014; and
- (d) whether Government uses the same parameters as FSI for approving projects, if not, reasons as to why Government parameters for 'inviolable forests' have changed since 2014?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

**(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)**

- (a) Only 0.003 % of forests has been diverted under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for mining in the year 2016.
- (b) No Sir, the FSI has not submitted any report which states that mining should be barred in 40 per cent of India's forests.
- (c) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has developed a Decision Support System (DSS) with the help of forest survey of India (FSI) a subordinate organization of the MoEF&CC which includes different parameters i.e. forest cover map, forest type map, hydrological layer, landscape integrity, biological richness etc. This system helps in taking decision on grant of approval to different projects.
- (d) Yes Sir, the Ministry is using existing DSS with same parameters for decision making while considering the proposals for diversion of forest for mining purposes.

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