

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.66**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.02.2023

**Environmental impact of developmental activities across Trans-Himalayan region**

66 SHRI ANEEL PRASAD HEGDE:

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

the action, if any, being taken to ensure that developments across the Trans-Himalayan region are subordinated to prior environmental and social impact review as per the Environment Impact Assessment notification based on public involvement in environmental decision making, in light of Kedarnath disaster (2013), several others in subsequent years, and more recently the Joshimath disaster?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE  
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

The Ministry has delineated a detailed procedure for comprehensive assessment of environmental and social impacts of the project in the Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006, as amended; which *inter-alia* provides for four stages of consideration process i.e., Screening, Scoping, Public Consultation and Appraisal by the Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC), for assessment of environmental and social impacts taking into account the location of the Project including those located in Trans-Himalayan region. Study of the aforesaid and other related factors in the context of specific projects forms the basis for preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment/Environmental Management Plan.

The EAC comprising domain area experts, after detailed examination and deliberations on various environmental and social aspects of the project including appraisal of the studies/information related to seismology, geological profile, study of landslide prone areas, risk analysis studies, recommend the project for grant of Environmental Clearance (EC) by suggesting suitable mitigation measures and Environment Management to minimize the environmental and social impacts associated with the project. It is only after such detailed study and analysis that environmental clearances are issued subject to compliance of necessary environmental safeguards and general and specific conditions by the Project Proponent (PP) before undertaking construction of the project.

Project specific conditions related to safety measures like installation of Early Warning Telemetric system, drilling and blasting after obtaining required approvals from Competent Authorities, implementation of Emergency Preparedness Plan, Disaster Management Plan, Catchment Area Treatment plan, stabilization of muck disposal sites, rim plantation, pasture development, nursery development etc. are also prescribed in the Environmental Clearances.

Projects involving forest land require Forest Clearance under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. Whenever a proposal for diversion of forestland is received, it is examined and due diligence is exercised to avoid the use of forest land, or to keep it bare minimum. In cases where it is unavoidable, the forest area is allowed to be diverted, subject to certain conditions including the Compensatory Afforestation (CA) and payment of Net Present Value (NPV) wherever necessary, the additional mitigation measures in the form of Soil and Moisture Conservation works, Wildlife Management plan etc. are also stipulated on case-to-case basis.

The compliance of environmental safeguard conditions is regularly monitored by the Monitoring Division within the MoEF&CC and its 19 Integrated Regional Offices (IROs) of the Ministry situated across the country. The EIA Notification, 2006, mandates submission of half-yearly compliance reports by the project proponent in respect of the stipulated EC conditions to the Ministry and its Integrated Regional Offices (IROs). IROs analyze these six monthly progress reports, undertake inspection of the unit, if required. The concerned IRO office shares the Inspection Reports with the Project Authorities for further necessary action at their end. Further, CWC has been entrusted the responsibility of monitoring the compliance by project authorities on maintenance of desired e-flows.

Besides the above, the projects, including the hydro-electric projects/roads/highways, which are not covered under the provisions of the EIA Notification, 2006, as amended, are also required to obtain Consents on regular basis from the concerned State Governments through the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) which stipulate the necessary conditions that are to be adhered to by the Project Proponent and these are to be monitored by the SPCBs/PCCs.

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