

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1988
TO BE ANSWERED ON 12.12.2024

Extension of Gir area

1988. SHRI NARHARI AMIN:

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

- (a) whether Government has declared 1.84 lakh hectares of area around Gujarat's Gir Protected Area as 'Eco-Sensitive Zone' (ESZ);
- (b) whether it is a fact that this area covers 196 villages and 17 rivers in three districts of Gujarat;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for declaring such a vast area as a sensitive area; and
- (d) the details of the prospective benefits with regard to the conservation of lions?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) to (d) The Ministry has issued the draft notification dated 18th September 2024 declaring an integrated Eco-sensitive Zone (ESZ) encompassing four Protected Areas *viz.* Gir National Park, Gir, Mitiyala and Paniya Wildlife Sanctuaries in the State of Gujarat based on the proposal received from the State Government. The proposed Eco-sensitive Zone extends from 2.78 km to 9.50 km covering an area of 2,061.77 sq. km (2,06,177 ha), which include 196 villages and 17 riverine corridors.

The very purpose of declaring the Eco-sensitive Zone is to create some kind of 'Shock Absorber' for the specialized ecosystems, such as Protected Areas (National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries), to act as transition zone from areas of high protection to areas involving lesser protection. The purpose of declaring the ESZ around Gir Protected Area is to facilitate in the movement of Asiatic lions and other wildlife found in the landscape.
