

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 383
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28.11.2024

Norms for Eco Sensitive Zones

383. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI:

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

- (a) whether Government has prescribed norms for Eco Sensitive Zones (ESZs) around the protected areas (PAs) of the national parks/wildlife sanctuaries, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether it is a fact that the ESZ shield around Gir Protected Area in Gujarat has been reduced from 3328.81 sq. km. to 2061.77 sq. km., if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether reduction if any, on ESZs will affect the prestigious Project Lion adversely, if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the details of opposition by the villagers etc., concerned to declaration of such ESZs in the country and remedial measures taken by Government?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d) The very purpose of declaring Eco-sensitive Zone is to create some kind of “Shock Absorber” for the specialized ecosystems, such as Protected Areas or other natural sites, to act as transition zone from areas of high protection to areas involving lesser protection.

Notifying Eco-sensitive Zones/Areas around the Protected Areas is important for management and conservation of wildlife and biodiversity around Protected Areas and sustainable development. To assist the State Governments/Union Territory administrations in formulating Eco-Sensitive zones around protected areas, the Ministry has issued “Guidelines for declaration of Eco-Sensitive zones around Protected Areas” on 9th February, 2011 and shared with the State Governments/Union Territory administrations. So far, the Ministry has published 347 final Eco-sensitive Zone notifications covering 488 Protected Areas of the country.

The Ministry has issued a draft notification dated 18th September 2024 to declare an integrated Eco-sensitive Zone around the Gir Protected Area in Gujarat based on the proposal received from the State Government. This integrated draft notification encompasses four Protected Areas viz. Gir National Park, Gir, Mitiyala and Paniya Wildlife Sanctuaries. The proposed ESZ extends from 2.78 km to 9.50 km and covers an area of 2,061.77 sq. km. The proposed Eco-sensitive Zone includes riverine habitats and critical wildlife corridors essential for the movement of Asiatic Lions across the Gir landscape.

The draft notification to declare Eco-sensitive Zone around the Gir Protected Area has been issued under sub-rule (3) of Rule 5 of the Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986, for the information of the public likely to be affected thereby. The Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986 prescribes for a period of 60 days from the date on which copies of the Gazette containing the notification are made available to the public for furnishing objections/suggestions on the draft notification which are duly considered before finalizing draft notification.
