

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 534
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23.07.2026

Conservation of Western Ghats

534. SHRI DHANANJAY BHIMRAO MAHADIK:

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

- (a) whether Government has undertaken or proposes to undertake any comprehensive measures for conservation, restoration, protection and sustainable management of Western Ghats ecosystem, particularly in the State of Maharashtra, considering its rich biodiversity, ecological sensitivity and importance for water security and climate resilience; and
- (b) the details of conservation, afforestation, habitat restoration, wildlife protection, eco-restoration, watershed management, biodiversity conservation and eco-development projects sanctioned, approved or implemented in the region during the last five years and the current year, district-wise and scheme-wise?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (b) In order to protect the rich biodiversity of the Western Ghats region, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change published the draft notification on Ecologically Sensitive Area of Western Ghats, vide S.O. 3060(E) dated 31.07.2024 with an area of 56,825.7 square kilometre which spread across six States namely, Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. Further, to address the issues raised by the respective State Governments, including Maharashtra, the Ministry has constituted a Committee to examine the suggestions of six States in a holistic manner, keeping in view the conservation aspects of the ecosystem, and the rights, privileges, needs and developmental aspirations of the region. The concerns and suggestions of the State Governments are deliberated upon by the Committee with the respective State Governments on merit for finalizing its recommendations with respect to the draft notification. The recommendations will thereafter be examined by the Ministry before finalizing the draft notification.

For the purpose of wildlife protection, habitat restoration, watershed management and overall conservation of the Western Ghats ecosystem, the Ministry has also issued the final notification to declare Sawantwadi-Dodamarg Ecologically Sensitive Area vide S.O. 976(E) dated 24.02.2026, with an area of 212.59 square kilometre, in Sindhudurg District of Maharashtra.

The Ministry is implementing a number of schemes in the Western Ghats region such as National Afforestation Programme, Nagar Van Yojana, Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitat, Forest Fire Prevention and Management, Project Tiger and National Mission for Green India. Funds under Compensatory Afforestation Management and Planning Authority are also utilized for conservation and eco-restoration in the Western Ghats region, including the areas falling

within the State of Maharashtra. The Ministry has sanctioned and released Rs. 20.25 crore during the last five years and Rs. 4.98 crore, during the current financial year, to the State of Maharashtra under the 'Development of Wildlife Habitats' scheme. Further, under the 'Nagar Van Yojana' scheme, Rs. 5.09 Cr. has been sanctioned and released to the State Government of Maharashtra during last five years. The Government remains committed to the conservation of biodiversity and the ecological restoration of the Western Ghats.
