

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1051
TO BE ANSWERED ON 08.02.2019

Eco-Sensitive Areas

1051. ADV. JOICE GEORGE:
SHRI C. MAHENDRAN:

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

- (a) whether the Government is progressing with final notification of Eco Sensitive Areas (ESA) across Western Ghats, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government is planning to include more areas under ESA, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government of Tamil Nadu has raised objections in this regard, if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the consultation with State Governments has been completed. If so, the details thereof; and
- (e) whether the Government has any commitment regarding declaration of ESA, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

(a) to (e) To conserve and protect the unique biodiversity of Western Ghats the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) had set up the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel (WGEEP) which was followed by High Level Working Group (HLWG) for recommending measures for the conservation of the Western Ghats.

Based on the recommendation of HLWG to declare Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESA) of the Western Ghats, Government had issued first draft Notification *vide* S.O. 733 (E) on 10.02.2014. Later, to continue with the Notification process, the draft Notification was republished *vide* S.O. 2435 (E) on 04.09.2015 and S.O. 667 (E) on 27.02.2017 and MoEF&CC had arranged several meetings with the entire States of Western Ghats region at various levels on 15th January 2016; 9th to 11th February 2016; 11th August, 2016 and 11th April 2018. As, the State Governments, based on physical verification proposed to alter / reduce the ESA of their States from the original recommendations of HLWG, the draft Notification could not be finalised and the draft Notification is again republished *vide* S.O. 5135 (E) on 03.10.2018.

In order to follow a coherent and consistent approach in notifying the ESA of the Western Ghats, MoEF& CC after republishing the latest draft Notification on 03.10.2018 has sought views /comments of the state Governments of Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Maharashtra and Goa. MoEF&CC is willing to finalise the ESA Notification in consultation with all the States of the Western Ghats region.
