

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1
TO BE ANSWERED ON 18.07.2022

Demarcating Buffer Zones under ESZ

1. SHRI K. MURALEEDHARAN:
ADV. DEAN KURIAKOSE:
SHRI ANTO ANTONY:
PROF. SOUGATA RAY:
ADV. ADOOR PRAKASH:
SHRI M.K. RAGHAVAN:
ADV. A.M. ARIFF:

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

- (a) whether the SC ruling regarding the 1km Eco- Sensitive Zone (ESZ) around National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries be given consideration of the geographical landscape of each state or not;
- (b) whether the Government is aware that this verdict will seriously affect the life of residents there and whether the slew of projects lined up in the particular area be cancelled thereof;
- (c) if so, the action taken thereon thereof along with the details number of people affected by the above said order in each of the Wildlife Sanctuaries and National Parks in the country;
- (d) whether the Government has created any Committee to study the scientific manner of demarcating buffer zones under ESZ, if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Government intends to bring in legislation to protect the interests of the people living near to the boundaries/buffer zone of Wildlife Sanctuaries and National Parks in the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (f) whether the State Government of Kerala has given any representation to amend the requirement of Buffer Zone, if so, the details of action taken thereon; and
- (g) whether the Government has taken steps for implementation of Dr. Kasturirangan Report on Western Ghats, if so, the details thereof and steps taken in this regard?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

- (a) to (e) Hon'ble Supreme Court, by its judgment dated 3rd June 2022 in I. A. No. 1000 in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 202 of 1995, has directed that each protected forest, that is national park or wildlife sanctuary, must have an ESZ (Eco-

Sensitive Zone) of minimum one kilometre measured from the demarcated boundary of such protected forest in which the activities proscribed and prescribed in the Guidelines of 9th February, 2011 shall be strictly adhere to.

Hon'ble Court has further directed that the minimum width of the ESZ may be diluted in overwhelming public interest but for that purpose the State or Union Territory concerned shall approach the CEC and MoEF&CC and both these bodies shall give their respective opinions/ recommendations before the Court. On that basis, the Court shall pass appropriate order.

Within the ESZ notified under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, there are activities which are prohibited, promoted and regulated as per the notification.

- (f) Yes, Sir. As per the procedure laid down for notification of ESZ, the draft proposals related to finalization of ESZ received from the State Governments are examined in the Ministry before publication. The final notification is published after examining the claims and objections received after the draft notification
- (g) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has published draft notification for an area of 56,825 square kilometre spread across six States, namely, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, as the Western Ghats Ecologically Sensitive Area recently on 6th July, 2022.
