

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 155
TO BE ANSWERED ON 25.11.2024

Final Notification on Western Ghats

155. ADV. ADOOR PRAKASH:
SHRI V K SREEKANDAN:
SHRI ANTO ANTONY:
ADV DEAN KURIAKOSE:

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

- (a) whether the Government has released a draft notification classifying parts of the Western Ghats in six States as Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESA);
- (b) whether it is true that all affected States have objected to specific places that have been included in the ESA regions, if so, the details of the objections raised by the concerned States, State-wise;
- (c) the details of the steps taken by the Government on the recommendation of the newly appointed committee to re-examine the suggestions raised by the States in a holistic manner, if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has received suggestions/representations from the States including Kerala for exclusion of villages demarcated as ESA on Western Ghats Conservation report after the last iteration of draft notification, if so, the details thereof and the response of the Government thereto, State wise;
- (e) whether the Government has deputed a central team to Goa as per the request of that State Government, if so, the details thereof including the recommendations of the team and the action taken by the Government in this regard;
- (f) whether the Government has taken any decision about the final notification on the Dr. Kasturirangan panel report relating to the conservation of Western Ghats, if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor and the time by which the final notification is likely to be issued; and
- (g) whether the Government has considered separate final notification for States, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) In order to protect the rich biodiversity of the Western Ghats, this Ministry has issued draft Notification on Ecologically Sensitive Area of Western Ghats, vide S.O. 3060(E) dated 31.07.2024 with an area of 56,825 square kilometer, spread across six States, namely, Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, based on the report submitted by the High Level Working Group (HLWG).

(c) to (g) Further, in order to address the issues raised by the stakeholders including the respective State Governments while finalizing the draft notification, the Ministry has constituted a Committee to examine the suggestions received in this regard in a holistic manner, keeping in view the conservation aspects of the disaster prone pristine ecosystem, and the rights, privileges, needs and developmental aspirations of the region.

The Government of Kerala has submitted a revised proposal on 02.11.2024, requesting for declaring 98 villages spread across 29 talukas in 12 districts as Ecologically Sensitive Area based on the verification of the suggestions received from the Local Self Government Department. The committee undertakes visits of States from time to time including Goa to give its recommendations. The concerned stakeholders including State Governments give their suggestions/recommendations on the draft notification which are examined by the Committee on merit before submitting its recommendations.
