

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3329**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 16.12.2024

**Proposal on Ecologically Sensitive Areas**

3329. ADV DEAN KURIAKOSE:  
ADV K. FRANCIS GEORGE:

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

- (a) whether the State Government of Kerala has submitted a revised proposal on 02.11.2024 recommending the declaration of 98 villages spread across 29 talukas in 12 districts as Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESA), if so, provide the details of such proposal;
- (b) whether the proposal includes any digital maps or geospatial data such as KML files, if so, the details thereof to ensure clarity on the demarcation of the proposed ESA regions;
- (c) the details of any additional correspondence, reports, or clarifications from Kerala regarding this proposal;
- (d) whether the Government intends to make these documents, including the geospatial data, available for public consultation and feedback;
- (e) the current status of examining and processing this proposal by the Government and the timeline for its final decision;
- (f) whether the Government has considered Kerala's achievements in forest conservation and its participatory management model as a basis for modifying the draft ESA notification and if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) the mechanisms planned to ensure that ESA notifications balance ecological sensitivity with the socio-economic realities of densely populated States like Kerala?

**ANSWER**

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

(a) to (c) In order to protect the rich biodiversity of Western Ghats region, this Ministry has re-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 sq. km. spread across six States, namely, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, based on the report submitted by the High Level Working Group (HLWG).

The Ministry had called for the final information/suggestions or objections on the draft notification dated 31.07.2024. The State Government of Kerala, after verification of the suggestions received from its Local Self Government Departments has submitted the Ecologically Sensitive Area, comprising of 8590.69 sq. km. in 98 villages.

(d) to (g) In order to address the issues raised by the respective State Governments, the Ministry has constituted a Committee to examine the suggestions of all the State Governments in a holistic manner, keeping in view the conservation aspects of the ecologically fragile pristine ecosystem, and the rights, privileges, needs and developmental aspirations of the region. The concerns/suggestions of the State Governments, including Kerala are deliberated by the Committee on merits, before finalization of the draft notification.

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