

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 2580
TO BE ANSWERED ON 09.03.2026

Projects approved inside Goa's Protected Areas

2580. SHRI CAPTAIN VIRIATO FERNANDES:

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware that the projects approved inside the Goa's protected areas are in persistent violations leading to ecologically damaging intrusions;
- (b) whether the Government is aware that the State Government has approved / pushing for an Rs. 8 crore luxury tourism project in Surla, inside the proposed tiger reserve's core zone, and a similar project in Mollem Wildlife Sanctuary;
- (c) if so, the response of the Government thereto;
- (d) whether the Government is aware that the South Western Railway (SWR) continues promoting a second railway line through Mollem and is also unloading imported mineral ore within the sanctuary, if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (e) whether the Government has undertaken any study regarding Karnataka's push to divert Mhadei river water which poses a major ecological threat to Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

- (a) to (e) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change considers proposals involving Protected Areas strictly in accordance with the provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. The proposals for developmental activities within National Parks, Sanctuaries, Tiger Reserves, Tiger Corridors and those activities requiring environmental clearance inside Eco-sensitive Zones (ESZ) around National Parks and Sanctuaries are considered and recommended by the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wild Life depending upon the feasibility of the proposal.

The proposals are forwarded to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for placing before the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wild Life after thorough scrutiny by the State/Union Territory Governments/Administrators and the State Board for Wild Life headed by the respective Chief Ministers/Administrators. The Standing Committee of the National Board for Wild Life, which also includes eminent ecologists,

conservationists and environmentalists, takes informed decisions on the proposals placed for its consideration.

As informed by the Goa State Government, there is no luxury project approved in Surla. However, an ecotourism project in Surla falling in Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary and Mahaveer National Park for construction of walkways, paths, eco-camp etc. for development of Eco-Camps at Surla, North Goa was recommended in the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife (SCNBWL) held on 30 January 2024 based on recommendations of National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) with conditions for undertaking activities as per prescriptions of approved Management Plan for Mahaveer National Park.

A Proposal for use of 0.7616 ha of forest area from Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary for permission to handle ore at Kalem Railway Station, South Goa Distt. in favor of Ministry of Railways was recommended in the 87th meeting of the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wild Life held on 09 December, 2025. As informed by the Goa State Government, the proposal for double landing work of its existing track by the South Western Railway is under examination by the State Government.

Further, there is no study conducted by this Ministry on ecological threats of diversion of Mhadei river water.
