

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2524

ANSWERED ON:24.11.2010

CLASSIFICATION OF FOREST LAND

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**Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government has finalized 'go' and 'no-go' area in forest land for clearance of mining including coal mining;
- (b) if so, the details of the areas identified in 'go' and 'no-go' areas, State-wise;
- (c) if not, the time by which the exercise is likely to be completed; and
- (d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to expedite the clearance of mining projects including coal mining in forest and dense forest areas of the country?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) to (d) The Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF) through Forest Survey of India (FSI) and the Ministry of Coal through Central Mine Planning & Design Institute Limited (CMPDI) have jointly undertaken an exercise to overlay the forest cover map on the coal blocks boundaries in respect of 9 coalfields in the country and identified various coal blocks as category 'A' (No-Go areas) and Category 'B' (Go areas). The exercise is not yet concluded. As per the exercise, 450 coal blocks covering about 3,91,000 ha have been categorized as category 'B' out of total number of 602 coal blocks covering about 6,48,750 ha. In addition, the Ministry of Coal may appropriately modify some coal block boundaries having potential for such modifications (involving 82,540 ha area) spread over 8 coal fields excluding Hasdeo Arand, which may ultimately result into addition of some more areas in Category 'B'. The statement showing coalfield wise details of category 'A' and category 'B' coal blocks is given in annexure. The categorization of forest lands into 'go' and 'no-go' areas is expected to create awareness and help the State Governments to prepare projects for those forest areas falling in category 'B' (go areas) as it would enable expeditious environment and forest clearances to projects. However, it may be noted that this categorization does not pre-judge the decision to be taken by the MoEF on the basis of the advice rendered by the Forest Advisory Committee (FAC), a statutory body of independent expert and MoEF officials set up under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 to advise the Government.