

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1400
ANSWERED ON:09.08.2011
WESTERN GHATS IN UNESCO S LIST
Viswanathan Shri P.

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESVO) had shortlisted the Western Ghats for inclusion in the World Heritage list; and

(b) if so, the details and the present status thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (KUMARI SELJA)

(a) The UNESCO had agreed in 2006 to India's proposal to include the Western Ghats on India's Tentative List of Natural Properties to be inscribed on the World Heritage List. Subsequently, India submitted the complete nomination dossier for 'Serial Nomination of the Western Ghats on the World Heritage List in February, 2010. There are 39 sites in the states of Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra that form part of India's Serial Nomination of the Western Ghats.

(b) A team of UNESCO-IUCN experts visited the Western Ghats in October, 2010. The nomination dossier was discussed in the 35th Session of UNESCO's World Heritage Committee (WHC) meeting in Paris from 19-29 June, 2011. The WHC decided to 'refer' the nomination dossier of the Western Ghats to India for reconsideration in 2012. A copy of the Decision 35 COM 8B.9 is at Annexure.

ANNEXURE

ANNEXURE REFFERED TO IN REPLY TO PART (b) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1400 FOR 09-08-2011

World heritage 35 CM

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UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND NATURAL ORGANIZATION

CONVENTION CONFERENING THE PROTECTION OF THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

World Heritage Committee
Thirty-fifth session Paris, UNESCO Headquarters 19-29 June 2011
DRAFT DECISIONS REPORT

Part I and Part II
(this document contains Decisions 3 to 7C)

Final decision of Western Ghat Nomination:

Decision: 35 COM 8B.9

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Documents WHC-11/35.COM/8B and WHC-11/35.COM/INF.8B2,

2. Refers the nomination of the Western Ghats, India, back to the State Party, noting the potential of the nominated property to meet criteria (ix) and (x), to allow the State Party to address the following important issues:

a) Review the scope and composition of the current serial nomination to take account of any recommendations of the 'Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel' or other relevant information, in order to reflect the full spectrum of ecological and biodiversity values of the

Western Ghats, and to further enhance the protection of the values of the nominated property,

- b) Take measures to reduce the impact of existing and planned infrastructure as well as disturbed areas on the values of the property,
- c) Review and strengthen buffer zones or other measures to provide increased protection or buffering for the values within the nominated property, and strengthen the ecological connectivity measures to ensure consistency and greater functional linkages between component sites,
- d) Improve coordination and integration between component parts of the property, particularly through the existing mechanisms of the Western Ghats Natural Heritage Management Committee and the preparation and implementation of an overarching management framework, for the serial property as a whole,
- e) Facilitate increased engagement with all stakeholders to build awareness and support, foster participatory governance approaches, and ensure equitable sharing of benefits,
- f) Harmonize arrangements between the 'Western Ghats Natural Heritage Committee' and the 'Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel' and strengthen community membership and input through the establishment of the proposed 'Western Ghats Natural Heritage Conservation Authority' and other relevant advisory committees;

3. Highly commends the State Party for its on-going commitment to ensure a comprehensive approach to conserving the globally recognised high biodiversity values of the Western Ghats, noting the scale and complexity of this area.