

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1964
ANSWERED ON:19.08.2013
CLEARANCE TO HYDRO ELECTRIC PROJECT
Vishwanath Shri Adagur H

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

- (a) whether a proposal submitted by the State Government of Karnataka seeking environmental clearance to 200 MW Gundya Hydro-Electric Project is still pending with the Ministry;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the clarifications, information and documentation sought for from the State Government have been furnished to the Government;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the State Government of Karnataka has requested for fresh environment assessment survey of the project;
- (f) if so, whether the environment groups/citizen`s groups have objected to the comprehensive environment impact assessment and management plan; and
- (g) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN)

(a) to (d) Karnataka Power Corporation Ltd submitted a proposal on Gundia Hydroelectric Project (200 MW) to this Ministry for seeking environmental clearance. The project document along with clarifications was considered by the designated Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) in its meeting held on 30.6.2010 and the EAC had recommended the project for environmental clearance with a condition that the Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF) may consider the recommendations of the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel (WGEEP). The WGEEP report, however, mentioned that the project may not be considered as it is located in the Western Ghats region which is an ecologically sensitive zone with rich biodiversity.

(e) & (f) In view of representations received from environmental groups/citizens, the Government of Karnataka was asked to submit further clarifications. Afterwards, the project was considered by EAC thrice when it met during 10-11th February, 2012; 30-31st March, 2012 and 20-21st July, 2012. The EAC again recommended environmental clearance to the project.

(g) The MoEF further constituted a High Level Working Group (HLWG) in August, 2012 under the Chairmanship of Dr. K. Kasturirangan, Member, Planning Commission for taking a view on the way forward to implement the WGEEP report. The HLWG has submitted its report with the recommendation that Government of Karnataka should reassess the ecological flow in the downstream areas, based on a thorough evaluation of hydrological regimes in the area. The project should not be given the go-ahead, till such a review and reassessment is carried-out.