

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
TRIBAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1835  
ANSWERED ON:16.08.2013  
APPLICABILITY OF FOREST RIGHTS ACT  
Panda Shri Baijayant

**Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government proposes to extend the applicability of the Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 to fisherman of Bhitarkanika wildlife sanctuary for fishing inside the sanctuary;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SMT. RANEE NARAH)

(a) to (c): The Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 seeks to recognize and vest the forest rights and occupation in forest land in forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers who have been residing in such forests for generations but whose rights could not be recorded. The term "forest land" as defined in Section 2(d) of the Act means land of any description falling within any forest area including the wildlife sanctuaries. The forest rights recognized under the Act include the community rights of uses or entitlements of fish and other products of water bodies. Therefore, if the fishermen of Bhitarkanika wildlife sanctuary are "forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes" and "other traditional forest dwellers" within the meaning of the Act, then they are eligible for recognition of the said community right of uses or entitlements of fish and other products of water bodies.