

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2895
ANSWERED ON:10.02.2014
DIVERSION OF FOREST LAND
Jardosh Smt. Darshana Vikram

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

- (a) whether the Government has any proposal to authorise the regional offices to accord permission of diversion of forest land for small projects to expedite the process of approval in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (Dr. M. VEERAPPA MOILY)

(a) to (c) Regional Offices of the Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF) are competent to finally dispose of all proposals (including decision regarding violation of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980) involving diversion/dereservation for forest land up to 5 hectares, except in respect of proposals for regularization of encroachments and mining (including renewal of mining leases).

Similarly, proposals involving clearing of naturally grown trees in forest area or portion thereof for reforestation shall also be finally disposed of by the concerned Regional Office. The Regional Office will however, invariably seek prior clearance of the Ministry whenever the proposal involves clear-felling of forest area having density above 0.4 irrespective of the area involved. Also, prior clearance would be required when the proposal is for clear felling of an area of size more than 20 hectares in the plains and 10 hectares in the hilly region, irrespective of density.

In respect of proposals involving diversion of forest area above 5 hectares and upto 40 hectares and all proposals for regularization of encroachments and mining up to 40 hectares, the proposals are examined by the concerned Regional Office in consultation with an Advisory Group consisting of representatives of the State Government from Revenue Department, Forest Department, Planning and/or Finance Department and concerned Department whose proposal is being examined. The views of the Advisory Group are recorded by the Regional Office and along with the same, the proposal is sent to the, MoEF for consideration and final decision.