

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1181

ANSWERED ON:28.07.2015

Eco-Sensitive Zone

Owaisi Shri Asaduddin

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

- (a) whether the Government proposes to demarcate an eco-sensitive zone in the western ghats to balance the needs for environmental conservation and development and banning mining and polluting industries in such areas;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the State Governments have submitted survey reports in regard to livelihood of people likely to be affected and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether successive panels of the Government had recommended restriction on development activity in such zone; and
- (e) if so, the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) & (b): The Ministry has issued a draft notification declaring Ecologically Sensitive Area under the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 in the Gazette of India vide S.O. No 733 (E) dated 10th March 2014 inviting suggestions and objections from stakeholders on the proposals contained in the draft notification.

(c) No. Sir.

(d) The Government had constituted the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel (WGEEP) under the Chairmanship of Prof Madhav Gadgil on 4th March 2010. The major recommendations of WGEEP report, submitted to this Ministry in August 2011, inter alia relate to demarcation of ecologically sensitive zones in Western Ghats and regulation/prohibition of identified sectors of activities. Subsequently, the Ministry constituted a High Level Working Group (HLWG) under the Chairmanship of Dr. K. Kasturirangan, the then Member (Science), of the erstwhile Planning Commission on 17th August, 2012 to inter alia examine the WGEEP Report in a holistic and multidisciplinary fashion keeping in view the comments received from the concerned State Governments / Central Ministries / Stakeholders. The HLWG submitted its report on 15th April 2013. Major recommendations of the HLWG inter alia relate to (i) identification of eco-sensitive areas in the Western Ghats region, (ii) regulation / prohibition of certain activities in the eco-sensitive areas, and (iii) measures for incentivizing green growth in Western Ghats region.

(e) As per the Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986, as amended from time to time, the Ministry has 545 days to finalize the draft notification from the date of publication of the same in the Gazette of India.
