

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:561  
ANSWERED ON:26.11.2014  
FOREST LAND FOR AGRICULTURE  
Kodikunnil Shri Suresh

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

- (a) whether the Union Government has given approval for diversion of forest land for agriculture activities in various States including Karnataka;
- (b) if so, the details of the extent of the forest land diverted and the number of farmers benefited during the last three years and the current year, State-wise;
- (c) whether the Government has given farmers the rights of occupancy for the lands being cultivated by them for decades;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the steps are being taken to give the occupancy rights along with title deeds of the land to farmers?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) to (e) No specific request for allotment of degraded forest land for cultivation has been received by the Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. However, in the past the Central Government received the proposal for de-reservation of forest land for the purpose of regularization of encroachment including encroachment done for the purpose of cultivation. The Central Government has accorded approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for regularization of encroachment over 3,68,432 ha forest area including the land under cultivation in various States/UT of the country. No diversion of forest land for agriculture activities have been made for the last three years.

Prior approval of the Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 is mandatory for use of forest land for non-forestry purposes including cultivation. Further, in accordance with the order dated 13.11.2000 passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, prior approval from the Apex Court is required for regularization of encroachment in forest areas.