

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:127  
ANSWERED ON:02.12.2014  
WESTERN GHATS CONSERVATION  
Karunakaran Shri P.

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

- (a) whether some of the States situated on the Western Ghats, particularly Kerala are facing difficulties in the execution of development projects on account of Kasturirangan Report on Western Ghats conservation;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereon; and
- (c) the corrective steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

**Answer**

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

(a) to (c): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement in reply to parts (a) to (c) of the Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 127 for reply on 02.12.2014 regarding Western Ghats Conservation raised by Shri P. Karunakaran.

(a) to (c): The State Governments of Western Ghats region had inter-alia raised concerns about the extent of the proposed Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA) as identified by the High Level Working Group (HLWG) and the proposed regulation / prohibition of certain activities therein. Apprehensions were also raised by the State Government of Kerala on issues relating to land use, agriculture, plantations and continued occupation of land in possession of local people as also on the status of ongoing projects / activities. The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change has attempted to address these concerns and apprehensions through the Office Memorandum issued on 20th December 2013 inter alia clarifying that the recommendations given by the HLWG neither put any fresh restrictions on land use in the ESA nor do they in any way impact the continued occupation of land in possession of the local people and affect their day to day activities or normal livelihood.

The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change 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. While responding to the draft notification, some of the State Governments in the Western Ghats have conveyed that they would like to undertake the exercise of demarcating ESA by physical verification as was done by the State Government of Kerala, which had conducted demarcation of ESA by physical verification within their jurisdiction post – HLWG report.

The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change has decided to give an opportunity to the State Governments of the Western Ghats region for undertaking demarcation of ESA by physical verification within their jurisdiction, if they so desire and submit their proposals to the Ministry by 15th December, 2014.