

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4929
ANSWERED ON:23.12.2014
DIVERSION OF SANCTUARY LAND
Solanki Dr. Kirit Premjibhai

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

- (a) whether the Government has received any proposal for diversion of land covered under the Kachchh Desert Wildlife Sanctuary (KDWS) for construction of Kachchh branch canal, if so, the details thereof and the response of the Government thereto;
- (b) whether the National Board for Wild Life has issued any directions for site inspection and sought recommendations from the State Board for Wild Life (SBWL);
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the response of the State Government and the SBWL thereon; and
- (d) the time by which the proposal is likely to be approved?

Answer

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

(a) to (c) The Ministry of Environment and Forests had received a proposal from the Government of Gujarat seeking recommendation of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife (NBWL), for diversion of 134.0364 ha of forest land from Kutch Desert Sanctuary for construction of Kutch Branch Canal in favour of Sardar Sarovar Narmada Nigam Ltd., Gujarat. The Sardar Sarovar (Narmada) Project is a multipurpose river valley project on the west flowing River Narmada in Gujarat State located along the west coast of India. The project is expected to provide irrigation benefits to a gross area of about 3.43 million hectare and generate a maximum of 1450 MW i.e. about 959 MW hydro powers at 60 percent load factor.

As per the provisions of Section 29 of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, such proposals involving diversion of land from a Sanctuary require consultation of the State Board for Wildlife. Besides, in pursuance to orders of Supreme Court dated 13.11.2000 and 09.05.2002 in Writ petition (Civil) No. 337/1995, recommendation of Standing Committee of NBWL and final approval of Supreme Court are also necessary for such cases.

The Standing Committee of NBWL had considered proposal on 20th March 2013 and decided for carrying out a site inspection and also that the State Government of Gujarat would place the proposal before the State Board for Wildlife and convey the recommendation to the Standing Committee. The site inspection report along with recommendation of the State Board for Wildlife, Gujarat have been referred to the Standing Committee of NBWL. The State Board for Wildlife had recommended this proposal.

(d) The site inspection report and the recommendations of the State Board for Wildlife was considered by the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife in its 31st meeting held on 12-13 August 2014. After discussions the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife decided to recommend the proposal for diversion of 134.0364 ha. of forest land from the Kutch Desert Sanctuary for construction of Kutch Branch canal, with conditions as stipulated by the State Board for Wildlife and the Chief Wildlife Warden along with separate measures for the conservation of Great Indian Bustards simultaneously through addition of area to the GIB Sanctuary.