

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4979
ANSWERED ON:23.12.2014
IMPACT OF SAND EXTRACTION ON ECOLOGY
Karadi Shri Sanganna Amarappa

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

- (a) whether the Government has undertaken/proposes to undertake any study to assess the impact of sand mining on ecology;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the findings of the said study along with the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

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

(a) to (c): Sand mining is regulated in terms of the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and the Mineral Concession Rules framed by the State Government. Further, the projects of sand mining require prior environmental clearance as per the EIA Notification, 2006, as amended from time to time framed under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change had constituted a Group under the Chairmanship of the then Secretary (E&F) to look into the environmental aspects associated with mining of minor minerals vide order dated 24.03.2009. The report of the Group was submitted in 2010 which inter-alia include the recommendations viz. (i) Minimum size of mine lease should be 5ha; (ii) Minimum period of mine lease should be 5 years; (iii) A cluster approach to mines should be taken in case of smaller mine leases operating currently; (iv) Mine plans should be made mandatory for minor minerals as well; (v) A separate corpus should be created for reclamation and rehabilitation of mined out areas; (vi) Hydro-geological reports should be prepared for mining proposed below groundwater table; (vii) For river bed mining, leases should be granted stretch wise, depth may be restricted to 3m /water level, whichever is less, and safety zones should be worked out; and (viii) The present classification of minerals into major and minor categories should be re-examined by the Ministry of Mines in consultation with the States.

The MoEF&CC has sent the Report to all States in June 2010 with the request for incorporating in the Mineral Concessions Rules for mining of minor minerals u/s 15 of the MMDR Act, 1957. Subsequently, the Hon'ble Supreme Court vide order dated 27.02.2012 in SLP(C) Nos.19628-19629 of 2009 titled Deepak Kumar etc. Vs. State of Haryana & Ors., inter alia directed the State Governments to take immediate steps to frame necessary rules u/s 15 of the MMDR Act taking into consideration the recommendations of aforesaid report of MoEF&CC and model guidelines framed by Ministry of Mines, Government of India.