THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI M. VEERAPPA MOILY) : (a) The Ministry has not received any such reports. Forest Survey of India has been mapping and assessing biennially the Country's forest cover using remote sensing technology since 1987. As per the India State of Forest Report-2011, Arunachal Pradesh is the only Himalayan State in which a decline of 74 Square kilometer of forest cover, as compared to the last assessment of 2009, has been reported.

(b) Ministry provides financial assistance to State/Union Territory Governments for afforestation as well as protection of existing forest under various Schemes. Afforestation in the country is taken up under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP), National Bamboo Mission (NBM), 13th Finance Commission and also under different State Plan/Non-Plan Schemes including externally aided projects. National Afforestation Programme (NAP) of the Ministry of Environment and Forests is a 100% Centrally Sponsored Scheme for afforestation and tree plantation and eco-restoration of degraded forests and adjoining areas in the country. The Scheme is being implemented through a decentralized mechanism of State Forest Development Agency (SFDA) at State level, Forest Development Agency (FDA) at Forest Division level and Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) at Village levels. An amount of Rs. 2500 crores has been approved for NAP in the Twelfth Five Year Plan. In addition funds are also provided for forest protection under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme-Intensification of Forest Management.

Representations by State Governments on CRZ notifications

2831. SHRI BHARATSINH PRABHATSINH PARMAR : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any representations were made by State Governments to Central Government on CRZ Notification 2011 for the Ports and Harbour;

(b) if so, the response of Government of India thereon; and

(c) whether concerns of State Governments have been addressed by Government?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI M. VEERAPPA MOILY) : (a) to (c) The Government of Gujarat requested to consider projects for Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) clearance in low and medium eroding coastal stretches based on rapid Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) instead of comprehensive EIA Report.

A rapid EIA may not address all the environmental concerns in the low and medium eroding stretches of the coast. Therefore, as per the procedure prescribed for seeking prior clearance under the CRZ Notification, 2011, all project proposals in stretches classified as low and medium eroding as well as stable coasts shall be accompanied by comprehensive EIA studies. This requirement is uniformly applicable throughout the country. To conserve and protect such coastal stretches, promote development through sustainable manner based on scientific principles, it is important that comprehensive EIA studies are carried out and Environment Management Plans worked out accordingly before considering proposals in such stretches.

Further, Ministry of Environment and Forests before finalizing the CRZ Notification, 2011 had a detailed review through an Expert Committee headed by Prof. M.S. Swaminathan and extensive consultations were held with various stakeholders, including the State Governments. The opinions and suggestions of various stakeholders were taken into consideration while finalizing the CRZ Notification, 2011.

New Forest Conservation Rules

2832. SHRIMATI GUNDU SUDHARANI : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that new Forest Conservation Rules give all powers to bureaucracy in place of Gram Sabhas with regard to settlement of rights involved in projects that require diversion of forest land, if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether it does not tantamount to violation of Forest Rights Act; and

(c) if so, in what manner Ministry is planning to protect the rights of forest dwellers?