

identification ecologically sensitive areas on scientific basis. However, the States were advised to also resolve the apprehensions/concerns expressed by various stakeholders of Western Ghats from time to time.

Concession to projects of Uttarakhand under Forest (Conservation) Act

†31. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) the names of projects of Uttarakhand received by the Ministry to provide concession to them under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980;
- (b) whether all such projects have been sanctioned; and
- (c) if not, the names of projects which were not given sanction together with the details thereof along with the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) to (c) There is no provision of any sort for concession in obtaining prior approval of Central Government regarding diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes under the provision of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and the guidelines issued there under. Hence, no proposal was received from Uttarakhand to provide concession under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. However, the total 326 proposals were received online for diversion of forest land since 1.1.2015 to till date. Out of which, 72 proposals were granted in-principle (Stage-I) approval, 2 projects were granted final (stage- II) approvals and one project was rejected. At present 20 project proposals are in process in the regional office Dehradun of MOEF and CC. 231 project proposals are pending with the State Government for submission of requisite documents.

Phasing out of outlived trees

32. DR.CHANDAN MITRA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there are any guidelines about phasing out and replacing old outlived trees;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether it is a fact that old trees become 'net Carbon dioxide generators' after a certain age; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to allow felling of such trees and their replacement across the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has not issued any guidelines about phasing out and replacing old outlived trees.

(c) and (d) As per some published research work, old trees are not net 'Carbon dioxide generators'.

Handing over of degraded forests to private companies

33. PROF. M.V. RAJEEV GOWDA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHNAGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has issued guidelines allowing degraded forests to be handed over to private companies;

(b) whether the Ministry has also waived off the requirement for permission from Gram Sabha for such transfer;

(c) whether the Ministry has evaluated the environmental risks or assessed the possible misuse of this provision for mining or land grabbing; and

(d) if so, the reasons thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has not issued any guidelines allowing degraded forests to be handed over to private companies so far. However, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change is working on draft policy guidelines for encouraging participation of private/public sector in afforestation of degraded forest with a view to improving the forest condition and decrease import of wood products. The proposed guidelines titled "Guidelines for Public Participation in Afforestation of Degraded Forests" provide for consultation with the Gram Panchayat/Village Panchayat/ Joint forest management Committee, wherever necessary and obtain their consent in respect of forest land identified under the scheme before inviting Expression of Interest (EoI).

(c) and (d) To ensure that ecological, environmental and Social security of the people dependent on forests is not compromised, the draft guidelines provide for adequate safeguards.