

**Inter-State transport of bamboo**

208. SHRI RONALD SAPA TLAU: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that bamboo botanically belongs to the grass family;
- (b) which Ministry deals with issues relating to bamboo;
- (c) which department deals with issues relating to bamboo in State Governments; and
- (d) what steps Government has taken to ensure minimum hassle for the bamboo farmers in inter-State transport of the bamboo?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) Yes, Sir. Taxonomically, bamboo belongs to the grass family Poaceae.

(b) Currently the different aspects of "bamboo" are dealt by various Ministries/ Departments in Government of India viz., Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare (DAC&FW), Department of Science and Technology (DST), Department of Agriculture Research and Education (DARE), Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Ministry of Development of North East Region (DoNER), Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoC&I), etc.

(c) In the States, various Departments like Department of Forests and Wildlife, Department of Agriculture, Department of Science and Technology, Department of Industries, etc. are attending to the various bamboo related issues.

(d) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has taken various steps for liberalizing the regulatory regimes regarding requirement of felling and transit of bamboo grown on non forest land in order to encourage the farmers and other private individuals for cultivation of bamboo on non-forest land in the country. The steps taken by the Ministry include various Advisories, Guidelines, etc. to the States/ Union territories (UTs) from time to time including the amendment in the Indian Forest Act, 1927. Details of the action taken by the Ministry are as under:

- Advisory dated 14.5.2013 issued to all the States/UTs to consider for relaxing the transit and felling regime on bamboo grown on private land.

- Guidelines dated 18.11.2014 issued to all the States/UTs to consider relaxing regulatory regime of tree species including bamboo grown on non forest land.
- Advisory dated 18.5.2017 issued to all the States/UTs to consider further relaxing the regulatory regime on bamboo grown on non forest land.
- Advisory dated 19.5.2017 issued to all the States/UTs to consider exempting setting of bamboo units from the requirement of NOC/license.
- Advisory dated 13.06.2017 issued to all the States/UTS to consider exempting royalty on bamboo and its finished products.
- Clarification dated 7.7.2017 issued to all the States/UTs regarding exemption of bamboo from licensing.
- The Wood-based Industry Guidelines have been amended and notified on 12.09.2017. These amendments have further liberalized the setting up of saw mills using bamboo and species grown under Agroforestry. This would encourage setting up of processing units and generate the demand for raw material leading to planting of trees on non forest Land.
- Advisory dated 6.10.2017 issued to all States/UTs to consider that commonly grown agro-forestry tree species to be exempted from the requirement of the felling and transit permits.
- Advisory dated 9.10.2017 issued to all the States/UTs regarding issuing of a Pan India Transit Permit for inter-state movement of bamboo.
- Bamboo, though taxonomically a grass, was treated as tree for the purpose of the Indian Forest Act, 1927. Therefore the permit for transit of bamboo grown even outside the forests was required under provisions of the said Act. Now, the Indian Forest (Amendment) Ordinance, 2017 has been promulgated on 23.11.2017 to amend the section 2(7) of the Indian Forest Act, 1927 for omission of word "bamboos" from the definition of tree. This will encourage bamboo cultivation in non-forest land as the restriction on felling and transport of bamboo not grown inside forests will be removed.
- Advisory dated 30.11.2017 issued to all the States/UTs to consider distribution of good quality Seedlings of common agroforestry species to farmers and interested persons.