

Working Group (HLWG) constituted under the Chairmanship of Dr. K. Kasturirangan, identified a contiguous area of 59,940 square kilometre as Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESA) of the Western Ghats, covering six States namely, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra and Gujarat, requiring specific measures for conservation. Keeping in view the recommendations of the HLWG, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF & CC) had issued Directions under Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 on 13th November, 2013, prohibiting and regulating certain activities that have maximum interventionist and destructive impacts on the natural ecosystems in the ESA of the Western Ghats. Based on the HLWG report, MoEF & CC had invited suggestions/comments from all State Governments of the Western Ghats region for modification of boundary of the ESA as delineated by the HLWG. The Government of Kerala had undertaken the exercise of physically demarcating ESA in the State through Panchayat Level Committee and interaction with various stakeholders and recommended to reduce the ESA area from 13,108.7 square kilometre to 9993.70 square kilometre. MoEF & CC had accepted the revised area of Kerala to form part of ESA while issuing the Draft Notification *vide* S.O. 733 (E) dated 10.03.2014. The Draft Notification was subsequently re-published *vide* S.O. 2435 (E) dated 04.09.2015, S.O. 667(E) dated 27.02.2017 and S.O. 5135 (E) dated 03.10.2018 with the same area of 9993.70 square kilometre for the State of Kerala. Also, considering the request of the State Government of Kerala to rationalise the ESA area appearing in the Draft Notification and in the Directions issued under Section 5 of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, MoEF & CC has recently amended the earlier Directions issued under Section 5 of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 on 03.12.2018.

(c) Yes, Sir. MoEF&CC has received a proposal from the State Government of Kerala for considering the ESA area in the State as 8656.46 square kilometre.

Policy for recycling batteries

2783. DR. KANWAR DEEP SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has formulated a policy in order to decrease environmental impact of the product wherein manufacturers are required to recycle batteries of various kinds;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has formulated norms for specific disposal of dry batteries and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken by Government against those manufacturers, who have violated norms pertaining to recycling of batteries during each of the last three years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) and (b) The Central Government has notified Batteries (Management and Handling) Rules, 2001 as amended from time to time for disposal of used lead acid batteries generated from various sources. The Rules stipulate for establishment of collect back mechanism for old batteries. The manufacturers, importers, assemblers and preconditioners are responsible for collecting and channelizing the used batteries to collection centers for final disposal through registered recyclers.

(c) As per the provisions under Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016, dry batteries generated from domestic and commercial sources have been classified as domestic hazardous wastes. As per rule 4 of said SWM Rules, 2016, generators of waste are required to segregate dry batteries and dispose the same at collection points designated for domestic hazardous waste by local authorities. Domestic hazardous waste thus collected is required to be disposed through Treatment Storage and Disposal Facilities (TSDFs) operating in the country.

(d) There are about 641 authorised recyclers of lead acid batteries with an installed capacity of 2.2 Million tonnes per annum. According to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), 1641 registrations, issued to importers of used batteries, have been cancelled for failing to comply with the provisions of the said Rules.

Dietary change for animals in the zoos

2784. DR. KANWAR DEEP SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some zoos in the country have decided to stop procurement of poultry meat and replaced it with additional quantities of beef and eggs daily to feed animals, mostly carnivores such as lions, tigers and panthers following outbreak of bird flu an airborne disease in some States, and other diseases like H5N1 virus;

(b) if so, the details thereof, zoo-wise and State-wise; and