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## Task Force against Gundia project

Bangalore, September 28, DHNS:

Suggests Govt come out with comprehensive land use policy

**The Western Ghats Task Force has recommended the State Government against taking up the Gundia hydro-electricity project in the Western Ghats.**

The Task Force, which submitted its interim recommendations on Tuesday, said that no such unsustainable project should be taken up in the ghats.

Task Force Chairman Ananth Hegde Ashisar submitted the recommendations to Forest Minister C H Vijayashankar. Ashisar appealed to the government to safeguard bio-diversity in the Western Ghats by not allowing mining activities. The Government should come out with a policy to conserve and promote agro-biodiversity in the State.

The Task Force recommended the Government not to permit commercial release of genetically modified crops like Bt brinjal.

### 'No GM crops'

Further, it said, the State Government should urge the Centre to take up long-term research on health and environment safety issues in case of GM crops. The Task Force said the Government should come out with a comprehensive land use policy for the Western Ghats and coastal region and opinion of the Task Force need to be considered while deciding on the mega development projects in the Ghats region.

Forest Minister Vijayashankar said the Government will consider the recommendations of the Task Force seriously and take all necessary measures to implement them.

### 'Waiting for report'

Speaking at another function here Union Minister of Environment and Forests Jairam Ramesh his ministry would await the recommendations of biodiversity expert Madhav Gadgil. The project would not be cleared if it had the potential to harm the environment.