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# 4 states yet to submit report on Western Ghats

August 25, 2015, New Delhi, dhns



Four of the six Western Ghat states including Karnataka have not submitted the assessment of their eco-sensitive areas to the Centre, though the deadline to notify these areas on the basis of the Kasturirangan committee report is less than three weeks away.

Though Kerala presented its report long back, the Union Ministry of Environment and Forest has now posed several questions to the Malabar state, which is yet to respond. Goa is the only other state that submitted its eco-sensitive zone assessment.

Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are the other states in the Western Ghats, one of biodiversity hot spots of the world.

"Some clarifications were sought from Kerala, but I can't disclose what they are. We need reports from other states as the deadline to come out with a final notification is September 9," Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar said here. The Union government is legally bound to finalise the notification by September 9, 2015, which is 18 months from the day of issuing the draft notification on March 10, 2014, when a draft notification on the ecologically sensitive areas in the Western Ghats was issued based on the report of an expert panel headed by space scientist K Kasturirangan.

The states objected to the ESA boundaries as recommendations by the panel on the ground that it would hamper the states' right to development. The state governments were asked to carry out their own assessment and submit a report to the central ministry. More than 500 days later, those ESA reports from the states are still pending.

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Tel: +91 (80) 25880000 Fax No. +91 (80) 25880523