

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2123**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21.12.2023

**Preservation of forests and their biodiversity**

2123. SHRI K.R. SURESH REDDY:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government agrees with the fact that it is necessary to enhance forest-based benefits, including improvement of livelihoods for forest dependent communities, in order to carry forward the country's rich tradition of preserving forests and their biodiversity;
- (b) if so, the details of the steps that are proposed to be taken by Government in this regard; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE  
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

- (a) to (c) The National Forest Policy, 1988 emphasizes that the life of tribals and other poor people living within and near forests revolves around forests and the rights and concessions enjoyed by them should be fully protected. Having regard to the symbiotic relationship between the tribal people and forests, the Policy also focus to associate the tribal communities closely in the protection, regeneration and development of forests as well as to provide gainful employment to people living in and around the forest.

Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) and Village Eco-Development Committees (EDCs) have been established, through participatory approaches, at the village levels involving local communities in forest protection, conservation, and management of forests, including enhancing the livelihoods of forest dependent communities.

The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (FRA, 2006) recognizes the rights of the forest dwelling tribal communities and other traditional forest dwellers to forest resources, on which these communities were dependent for a variety of needs, including livelihood, habitation and other socio-cultural needs. The Act encompasses rights of self-cultivation and habitation, community rights as well as recognition of traditional customary rights and right to protect, regenerate or conserve or manage any community forest resource for sustainable use.