

Final call on Western Ghats by August-end: Javadekar

Excessive commercial mining and polluting industries will not be permitted in the ghats, says Union minister

Mayank Aggarwal



The latest announcement from environment ministry came after a meeting of the environment and forest ministers of Karnataka, Gujarat, Goa and top government officials from Maharashtra, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Photo: Hemant Mishra/Mint

New Delhi: Environment minister Prakash Javadekar on Tuesday said that the ministry will take a final call on demarcation of ecologically sensitive areas (ESA) in the Western Ghats by end of August.

The announcement came after a meeting of the environment and forest ministers of Karnataka, Gujarat, Goa and top government officials from Maharashtra, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Javadekar said excessive commercial mining and polluting industries will not be permitted in the Western Ghats.

“It will not have any impact on the livelihood of the people and that all the fears are misplaced and the misgivings must be done away with,” Javadekar told reporters after the meeting. “All the states have given their proposals and have also got public opinion, as well as scientific studies done. The government will finalise the decision on Western Ghats by August-end,” Javadekar added. In 2010, the environment ministry constituted an expert

panel headed by Professor Madhav Gadgil to identify ESAs in Western Ghats which submitted its report in 2011 suggesting dividing the Western Ghats into several ecologically sensitive zones. It recommended different levels of prohibition on developmental activities and measures to control environmental degradation. But as states governments opposed the move, a committee under Dr K. Kasturirangan, was formed which recommended declaring 37% (60,000 hectares) of Western Ghats as ecological sensitive areas. After state governments objected to the recommendations of the Kasturirangan committee as well, MoEF favoured ground verification of all claims.

Source:

<http://www.livemint.com/Politics/3eaeqokdXAsi8ziqXte6AM/Final-call-on-Western-Ghats-by-Augustend-Javadekar.html>