



URGENT APPEAL TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Shri Narendra Modi
Honourable Prime Minister of India
152, South Block
Raisina Hill
New Delhi - 110011

25th April 2017

Honourable Prime Minister,

Sub: Appeal to issue Final Notification of Ecologically Sensitive Areas in the Western Ghats as per Draft Notification dated Feb 27, 2017, without any dilution of conditions or reduction of the area identified.

We support the Government's decision to declare 56,825 square kilometres of the Western Ghats as an Eco Sensitive Area and appeal to the Government to:

1. Not permit any dilution of the above-cited draft notification, and not permit any reduction of the extent identified in the draft notification.
2. To issue the Final Notification without delay

The Western Ghats (a global [UNESCO World Heritage Site](#)) is a priceless treasure that, once destroyed, can never be recreated by the human hand. We have already lost a great deal of the natural wealth of the Western Ghats, and cannot afford to lose any more. The forests and grasslands that clothe this range have evolved through natural processes over millions of years. They not only contain irreplaceable biodiversity, but are also a lifeline for millions of people in peninsular India.

Virtually all the river systems that irrigate crops in the states of Maharashtra, Goa, Telengana, Andhra, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu originate in the Western Ghats. Without water from the Godavari, Krishna, and Cauvery Rivers, and their many tributaries, very little economic development would be possible in the southern states.

The Western Ghats, with its incredible diversity of flora and fauna, is listed among the most important biodiversity hotspots in the world, containing many species that are found nowhere else on the planet.

Safeguarding the Western Ghats is not a charitable act towards nature but a pragmatic and essential step towards ensuring an ecologically secure and self-sufficient India. We therefore appeal to the government to issue the final notification of the Western Ghats Eco Sensitive Area without any dilution or delay. We believe that it is also vital that there is no reduction of the extent identified in the draft notification.

Yours sincerely,

Belinda Wright
Executive Director

Wildlife Protection Society of India (WPSI)

S-25, Panchsheel Park, New Delhi 110017, India
Tel: (91.11) 4163.5920 & 4163.5921 Fax: (91.11) 4163.5924
Email: wpsi@vsnl.com Website: www.wpsi-india.org