

The Tribune

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

Spurt in clearance of projects in forest areas by wildlife committee

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Despite natural disasters dominating several hilly terrains of the country, the statistics by the Union Environment Ministry show an exponential rise in the clearance of projects since 2019 by the Centre.

While 71 projects across the nation were cleared by the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) in 2019-20, the numbers rose to 421 across the nation in 2023-24.

The committee chaired by the Union Environment Minister deals with clearing infrastructure projects inside forests or protected areas.

The maximum clearances pertaining to upgrade of roads, defence projects were given in Ladakh in Changthang Wildlife Sanctuary and Karakoram Wildlife Sanctuary.

Over 200 proposals were cleared in Ladakh since 2019. Diverse wildlife species such as snow leopards, Tibetan urial sheep, Tibetan gazelles, lynxes, Tibetan antelopes, red foxes and Tibetan wolves can be found there.

The ecologically sensitive Uttarakhand too has received 38 clearances from the committee with respect to drinking water, irrigation and upgrade of roads projects.

A Rs 2,580-crore irrigation and drinking water project in Nainital's Dudhwa-Lagga tiger corridor was cleared. The corridor is used by tigers to move between the Corbett, Pilibhit and Dudhwa tiger reserves.

While in-principle approval was granted to the project, the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) has opposed the project on the grounds that the movement of tigers would be hindered and the predators might stray into Haldwani town, thereby increasing the chances of man-animal conflict.

Over 94 projects pertaining to linear infrastructure projects in Rajasthan were cleared by the wildlife panel.

Source: <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/india/spurt-in-clearance-of-projects-in-forest-areas-by-wildlife-committee/>