

Minor Forest Produce (MFP)

November 27, 2020

In news

Recently, the Union government included some Minor Forest Produce items under Minimum Support Price

What is a minor forest produce?

- Section 3(1)(c) of Forest Rights Act 2006 confers ownership rights over minor forest produces (MFP) to forest dwelling STs and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers
- Section 2(i) of FRA Act defines a Minor Forest Produce (MFP) as all non-timber forest produce of plant origin and includes bamboo, brushwood, stumps, canes, Tusser, cocoon, honey, waxes, Lac, tendu/kendu leaves, medicinal plants and herbs, roots, tuber and the like.
- Thus, the definition of “minor forest produce” includes bamboo and cane, thereby changing the categorization of bamboo and cane as “trees” under the Indian Forest Act 1927.
- The Forest Rights Act 2006 **defines forest rights as inclusive of ‘Right of ownership, access to collect, use and dispose of minor forest produce which have traditionally been collected within or outside village boundaries’.**
- Individuals, communities and gram sabhas having rights under this particular section of the Act will not only have the rights to use but also rights of ownership over MFPs.

Transit permits

The Gram Sabha has the authority to regulate transit permits for MFPs where rights have been recognised under FRA. The FR Rules (as amended on 6.9.2012) provide that the transit

permits for transportation of minor forest produce shall be issued by the Committee constituted by the Gram Sabha under Rule 4(1)(e) or the person authorised by the Gram Sabha.

The Rules further provide that all decisions of this Committee pertaining to issue of transit permits shall be placed before the Gram Sabha for approval.

Minimum Support Price to Minor Forest Produce

- The Government of India has launched a central sector scheme for marketing of Minor Forest Produce through Minimum Support Price (MSP) and development of value chain to ensure fair monetary returns to MFP gatherers for their efforts in collection, primary processing, storage, packaging, transportation etc.
- The scheme envisages fixation and declaration of Minimum Support Price for the selected MFP based on the suggestions /inputs received from Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED)