

Panel to Recommend Norms to cut Trees

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In News: Supreme Court said Thursday 23,2021 setting up a seven-member expert committee to recommend policy guidelines for cutting of trees for developmental projects.

About seven-member Panel

- **The SC order** came in a matter pertaining to felling of trees of ages upto 150 years for Road Over Bridges and road widening projects in West Bengal.
- **Headed By:** The Panel will be headed by M K Ranjitsinh Jwala, wildlife expert and former Chairman of the Wildlife Trust of India.
- **Other Members:**
 - Arun Singh Rawat, Director General, Indian Council for Forestry Research;
 - Sandeep Tambe (Indian Forest Service), currently working as Professor of Forestry at the Indian Institute of Forest Management, Bhopal;
 - Gopal Singh Rawat, former Dean and Director, Wildlife Institute of India;
 - Nilanjan Ghosh, Director, Observer Research Foundation, Kolkata;
 - Pradeep Krishen, environmentalist.
 - Jigmet Takpa, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, is the Member Secretary of the Committee.
- SC asks the Panel to submit its recommendations within four weeks from the date of its first meeting.

Panel while recommending policy guidelines Can consider following norms according To SC

- Prescribes a mechanism for assessment of both intrinsic

and instrumental value of the trees, based not only on the value of timber, but also the ecosystem services rendered by the trees.

- The guidelines shall also mandate rules regarding alternate routes/sites for roads/projects, and possibilities for using alternate modes of transport like railways or water-ways
- Prescribe the mode of compensation financial and otherwise, the stage of depositing such compensation and the process that governs the computation and recovery.
- Specify the manner and mechanism of compensatory afforestation to be carried out using the deposited compensation, consistent with the native ecosystem, habitat and species.