

The Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980

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Introduction & Objectives

- Enacted: 25 October 1980 (Act No. 69 of 1980)
- Applies to whole India
- Objectives: Prevent deforestation; conserve forests; restrict diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes
- Response to large-scale forest loss for development/mining
- Requires prior Central Government approval for de-reservation or non-forest use

Key Provisions

- Restrictions on state governments – no de-reservation, no non-forest use without Centre approval
- Compensatory afforestation mandatory for diverted land
- Penalties: Imprisonment up to 15 days (added 1988)
- Applies to reserved/protected forests;
- Post-1996 Godavarman judgment extended to "deemed forests"