

Focus on community rights in FRA implementation, Collectors told

District magistrates have been asked to activate their administrative machinery for expeditious implementation of Forest Rights Act with a focus on disposal of community forest rights. A general direction issued by ST and SC Development department to all collectors says wherever communities interested in protection, conservation and management of the forest resources apply for Community Forest Resource claims it needs to be facilitated and the claims should be disposed at the earliest.

A committee should prepare a conservation and management plan for community forest resources to sustainably and equitably manage such resources, the SSD department instruction said. "This should require a lot of support from the forest department officials for preparation of such plans and wherever required, integrate such conservation and management plan with micro plans or management plans of the forest department," it says.

"The field level officials should be given the mandate to facilitate filing of application for community rights by the Forest Rights Committees or gram sabhas," it adds.