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apportioning 70% of forest area exclusively for maintenance of life-support systems and conservation of biodiversity and 30% of the forest area for multiple use to meet the local socio-economic needs in a sustainable manner, catering to the needs of both conservation and development, which is a sound and balanced approach has, perhaps, been overlooked by Prof. Shekhar Singh Commission. The vital considerations of forests and forestry in meeting the well recognized social, economic, cultural and spiritual human needs of the present and future generations of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, therefore, need to be reaffirmed. This would always be in consonance with the conservation and wise use of the multiple values of forests and biodiversity resources as envisaged in various international conventions on the subject.

9. That sixthly, the Administration reiterates that the management of environment and forests in these islands is highly conservation oriented and that conservation of natural resources does not preclude their use in a sustainable manner. The World Conservation Strategy of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) recognizes three components of any conservation strategy, namely, (a) protection and conservation of life support systems, (b) conservation of biodiversity, and (c) sustainable use of resources. Accordingly the Administration has set aside 70% of the forest area for protection and conservation of life support systems and for conservation of biodiversity, while retaining 30% of the forest area for sustainable use of the timber and non-timber forest produce (NTFP) resources, essential for meeting the needs of the local population.