



Economic Development v/s Environmental Conservation

Ms. Chanda Singh is an officer under the Indian Forest Services (IFoS). She is working in a forest area in Madhya Pradesh known for its rich timber resources.

One day, she receives a proposal from a local timber company to allow them to conduct logging operations (cutting trees to make timber/pulp) in a section of the forest falling under her jurisdiction. The company promises to provide significant financial benefits to the local community and to follow sustainable logging practices.

On the one hand, allowing the logging operations to take place could provide much-needed economic benefits to the local community; however, logging will have a significant negative impact on the environment and could lead to irreversible damage to the forest and its inhabitants.

Ms. Chanda is faced with an ethical dilemma; she could either approve the logging proposal citing the potential economic benefits or she could reject the proposal as her duty as a forest officer is only to protect the forest and its resources and not bother for economic development or is there a third choice that she could make?

What do you think would be the best ethical decision for Ms. Chanda to make in this situation?

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