

Use biodegradable grow bags, nurseries told

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Polythene grow bags used to plant saplings in nurseries will no longer be allowed in government afforestation projects. The Forest Advisory Committee (FAC), an apex body that decides on permitting the felling of trees in forests for industrial activities, recommended that "...State governments/ Union Territory administrations should ensure that the cost model prepared for CA /Penal CA shall incorporate the cost of alternative biodegradable bags in place of po-

lythene bags." This was decided at an FAC meeting on January 20.

CA refers to compensatory afforestation whereby industries must make good the forest loss by acquiring alternative land and paying the State forest department for planting trees.

The Centre, in 2016, banned plastic bags having a thickness less than 50 microns, under the revised Plastic Waste Management Rules. Several States have announced bans on polythene bags as well as single use plastics.