

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF LAND RESOURCES

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3640
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.04.2017

Status of land degradation

3640. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that 37 per cent of country's area is affected by land degradation such as soil acidity, soil and wind erosion and mining waste;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) what remedial measures Government proposes to take in this regard?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV)

- (a) to (c) : As per available estimates of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR-2010), out of total geographical area of 328.73 million hectare, about 120.40 million hectare is affected by various kind of land degradation. This includes water and wind erosion (94.87 million hectare), water logging (0.91 million hectare), soil alkalinity/ sodicity (3.71 million hectare), soil acidity (17.93 million hectare), soil salinity (2.73 million hectare) and mining and industrial waste (0.26 million hectare).

The Department of Land Resources has sanctioned 8214 watershed development projects in 28 States (except Goa) covering an area of about 39.07 million hectare under the Watershed Development Component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (WDC-PMKSY) principally for development of rainfed portions of net cultivated area and culturable wastelands (since 2009-10 to 2014-15). The projects are at various stages of implementation. At present Department of Land Resources does not propose to sanction further watershed development projects; priority is being given to qualitative and time bound completion of the on-going sanctioned projects.

The activities being undertaken *inter alia* include ridge area treatment, drainage line treatment, soil and moisture conservation, rain water harvesting, nursery raising, afforestation, horticulture, pasture development, livelihoods for assetless persons, etc.

In addition, other Central Ministries / Departments like Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare are implementing schemes and programmes like the Per Drop More Crop component of PMKSY which *inter alia* includes activities for water conservation, drought proofing, water harvesting, ground water recharge, etc. that complement and supplement interventions undertaken under the WDC-PMKSY.

National Afforestation & Eco-Development Board in the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme "National Afforestation Programme" for regeneration of degraded forests and adjoining areas through people's participation in the country.

Further Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare has launched Reclamation of Problem Soil (RPS) as a sub-scheme of Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) during 2016-17 for reclamation of problem soils (Alkalinity / Salinity and Acidity) on pilot basis in the States having higher extent of problem soil area.
