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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF LAND RESOURCES

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3950
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.04.2018

Wasteland development in Maharashtra

3950. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT :

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the total arable land in the State of Maharashtra and portion of this land which has degraded into wasteland, desert, saline land and marshy land, on which farming is not possible;
- (b) whether Government has taken steps to check the degradation of land in the State;
- (c) if so, the details and outcome thereof;
- (d) the role of chemicals and fertilizers in degradation of land; and
- (e) the remedial measures Government has taken or proposes to take to control degradation of agricultural land in the State?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (e): As per the 'Land Use Statistics at a Glance 2005-06 to 2014-15' published by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, the area of arable/ agricultural land in Maharashtra is about 210.99 lakh hectare. The area affected by alkalinity, salinity and acidity in the State is about 8.61 lakh hectare.

As per the information provided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, there is no harmful effect of chemical fertilizers with recommended doses and its judicious use on the soil. The Department of Land Resources has sanctioned 1186 watershed development projects in Maharashtra covering an area of about 51.28 lakh 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. 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. As on 26.03.2018, the Department has released Rs. 2250.62 Crore to Maharashtra as Central share for implementation of the programme.

In addition, other Central Ministries / Departments like Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare are implementing schemes and programmes like the Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) 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. Under the PDMC component of PMKSY, the Ministry has released Rs. 745.56 Crore (from 2015-16 to 2017-18) to the State of Maharashtra for implementation of the programme. Further the Ministry has launched Reclamation of Problem Soil (RPS) as a sub-scheme of Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) from 2016-17 for reclamation of problem soils (Alkalinity / Salinity and Acidity) on pilot basis in the States having higher extent of problem soil area. Rs. 33.16 Crore has been released to the States (in 2016-17 and 2017-18) for implementation of this programme.

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. An amount of Rs. 301.97 Crore has been released to Maharashtra for treatment of 153763 lakh hectares since inception of this programme (2000-02).
