

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, COOPERATION AND FARMERS WELFARE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2729
TO BE ANSWERED ON 19/03/2021

SOIL EROSION AND LAND DEGRADATION IN THE COUNTRY

2729: Dr. FAUZIA KHAN

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state

- (a) whether Government has periodically conducted any scientific survey/study to identify the extent and nature of soil erosion and land degradation across the country;
- (b) if so, the findings thereof;
- (c) the details of the cultivable area affected by soil erosion in the country during the last three years and the current year, State-wise and year-wise;
- (d) whether Government has chalked out any programme for reclamation and development of such land in the country; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof along with the success achieved there under during the said period?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

(SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

(a) to (c): There is no periodical conduct of scientific survey/study specifically to identify the extent and nature of soil erosion and land degradation across the country. However, ICAR-National Bureau of Soil Survey and Land Use Planning (NBSS&LUP) assessed 187 mha of land affected by various kind of soil degradation in 1994, and revised subsequently to 147 mha in 2004. Based on harmonized database, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has reassessed the area as 120.70 mha (NAAS 2010). As per latest information available, the extent of soil erosion (soil loss more than 10 tonnes/ha/yr) in arable land of the country is 92.4 mha based on harmonized database (NAAS 2010). The details of State-wise cultivable area affected by soil erosion in the country is placed at **Annexure-I**.

(d) & (e): This Department under Rainfed Farming System is implementing Reclamation of Problem Soils(RPS) as a sub-scheme of Rastriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) since 2016-17 on pilot basis in 15 selected States namely; Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhatisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Punjab and Tamil Nadu having higher extent of problem soils. The main objective of the scheme is to reclaim problem soils (alkali/saline & acid) and to bring such land under crops/horticulture/fuel wood, plantation purposes in order to enhance income of farmers for sustaining livelihood. Since its inception upto 2019-20, an amount of Rs. 49.51 crore has been provided to these States an area of 23608.65 ha has been developed.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has developed location specific bio-engineering soil & water conservation measures, watershed management interventions, soil reclamation measures for saline, alkali, waterlogged and acid soils, selection of suitable crop including agroforestry interventions to prevent and manage land degradation.

Department of Land Resources has provided financial assistance to 6382 watershed development projects under the erstwhile Integrated Watershed Development Programme (IWMP). IWMP was amalgamated as the Watershed Development Component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (WDC-PMKSY) in 2015-16, for development of rainfed /degraded lands. The Government directed to focus on completion of all ongoing projects, therefore, no new projects under WDC-PMKSY were sanctioned since 2015-16. Since 2019-20, an amount of Rs. 19826.22 crore has been released as Central share to States/UTs (as on 28.2.2021). As per information received from the States/UTs, since 2014-15 to 2020-21 (upto Q3, 2020-21), 7.09 lakh water harvesting structures have been created/rejuvenated. An additional area of 15.17 lakh ha has been brought under protective irrigation.

Statewise cultivable area affected by soil erosion in India

State	Area(000'ha)
Andhra Pradesh (including Telengana)	8093
Arunachal Pradesh	666
Assam	3248
Bihar	851
Chhattisgarh	3733
Delhi	28
Goa	1
Gujarat	984
Haryana	306
Himachal Pradesh	982
Jammu & Kashmir	1369
Jharkhand	3219
Karnataka	7522
Kerala	490
Madhya Pradesh	12262
Maharashtra	8799
Manipur	122
Meghalaya	302
Mizoram	-
Nagaland	46
Orissa	2227
Punjab	229
Rajasthan	19029
Sikkim	45
Tamil Nadu	2308
Tripura	109
Uttar Pradesh	13075
Uttarakhand	1018
West Bengal	1332
Total	92400

Source: Degraded and Wastelands of India – Status and Spatial Distribution, NAAS, New Delhi Publication, June 2010.
