

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO: 55*
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 21.07.2022

Steps to reduce Deforestation

55. SHRI S. SELVAGANABATHY:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has taken note of the fact that India has lost millions of hectares of tree cover over the last two decades; and
- (b) if so, the preventive steps that have been taken/proposed to be taken by Government to reduce deforestation?

ANSWER

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI BHUPENDER YADAV)

- (a) & (b) The statement is laid on the table of the House.

Statement refer to in reply to part (a) to (b) of Rajya Sabha Starred Question No. 55 due for reply on 21.07.2022 regarding ‘Steps to reduce Deforestation’ by Shri S. Selvaganabathy

- (a) Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun, an organization under the Ministry carries out the assessment of forest cover of the country biennially since 1987 and the findings are published in India State of Forest Report (ISFR). The forest cover assessment is a wall-to-wall mapping exercise based on remote sensing supported by intensive ground verification and field data from National Forest Inventory. ISFR 2021 is the latest report released by the Ministry on 13th January, 2022. As per ISFR 2021, the total forest cover of the country has increased by 38,251 square kilometre, tree cover has increased by 14,276 square kilometre and total forest and tree cover has increased by 52,527 square kilometre in the last two decades (ISFR 2001 to ISFR 2021). The details of forest and tree cover of the country in last two decades (ISFR 2001 to ISFR 2021) and change in forest and tree cover are given in the table below:-

(Area in square kilometres)			
Class	ISFR 2001 (a)	ISFR 2021 (b)	Change (b-a)
Forest Cover	6,75,538	7,13,789	38,251
Tree Cover	81,472	95,748	14,276
Forest and Tree Cover Combined	7,57,010	8,09,537	52,527

- (b) To compensate the problem of deforestation and to improve and increase the forest & tree cover in the country, afforestation programmes are taken up under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes of the ministry such as National Afforestation Programme (NAP) and National Mission for a Green India (GIM). Now NAP scheme has been merged with Green India Mission. The Ministry also supports school nursery and urban forestry programmes through people's participation. Afforestation activities are also taken up under various programmes /funding sources such as Compensatory Afforestation Funds under Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA), afforestation activities under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA), National Agro-forestry Policy and Sub-mission on Agro-forestry (SMAF), National Bamboo Mission and National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture. In addition to above, State and UT Governments have their own afforestation and reforestation programmes. Almost every State has activities under social forestry, which largely focuses on tree planting in the areas outside forests. In addition, plantations are also done by various departments, Non-Government Organizations, Civil Society, Corporate bodies etc.

The multi departmental efforts have yielded good results in conserving environment by addressing the problem of deforestation, besides keeping the pace of development, which is evident from the fact that the forest cover has stabilized and has been constantly increasing over the years. As per the latest ISFR 2021, the total forest cover of the country has increased by 12,294 square kilometres in the last seven years (ISFR 2015 to ISFR 2021).

The details of forest cover of the country in the last seven years (ISFR 2015 to ISFR 2021) and change in forest cover with respect to previous assessments are given in the table below:-

(Area in square kilometres)

ISFR Years	Total Forest Cover	Changes in forest cover w.r.t. previous ISFR	Change in percentage
ISFR 2015	7,01,495	-	-
ISFR 2017	7,08,273	6,778	0.21
ISFR 2019	7,12,249	3,976	0.56
ISFR 2021	7,13,789	1,540	0.22
