

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO: 1013
TO BE ANSWERED ON 15.12.2022

Decline in forest cover

1013. DR. SUMER SINGH SOLANKI:

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

- (a) the measures being adopted by Government to arrest the continuous decline in forest cover;
- (b) whether any schemes have been formulated by Government in this regard; and
- (c) the details of the budgetary allocation made during the last three years, scheme-wise?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(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. As per latest ISFR 2021, the total forest cover of the country is 7,13,789 square kilometre which is 21.71% of the geographical area of the country. There is no continuous decline in the forest cover of the country, in fact forest cover has increased by 12,294 square kilometre as per the assessment of ISFR 2021 compared to assessment of ISFR 2015.

(b) & (c) To further increase the forest cover in the country, afforestation programmes are taken up under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes of the Ministry such as National Mission for a Green India (GIM). GIM is one of the eight Missions outlined under the National Action Plan on Climate Change. It aims at protecting, restoring and enhancing India's forest cover and responding to Climate Change by undertaking plantation activities in the forest and non-forest areas. So, far a sum of Rs. 681.92 Crores have been released to fifteen States and one Union Territory for creation of plantation over an area of 128383 hectares.

The Ministry is also implementing Nagar Van Yojana (NVY) since the year 2020 which envisages developing 400 Nagar Vans and 200 Nagar Vatika in the country during the period of 2020-21 to 2024-25 with an objective to significantly enhance the tree outside forests and green cover, enhancement of biodiversity and ecological benefits to the urban and peri-urban areas apart from improving quality of life of city dwellers with the funds under the National Fund of the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA). The Ministry has approved 270 projects under Nagar Van Yojana with the total cost of Rs.238.64 Crore till date, which includes an amount of Rs. 57.14 Crore for creation of 97 Nagar Van/Vatika during 2022-23.

Further, Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAMPA fund) are being utilized by States/UTs for undertaking various afforestation activities and forest & wildlife protection activities as per approved Annual Plan of Operations for compensating the loss of forest & tree cover. Afforestation activities are also being taken up under various programmes/schemes of line Ministries such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, National Bamboo Mission, Sub-Mission on Agroforestry etc., and under various schemes of State Government /UT Administration, and by various departments, Non-Government Organizations, Civil Society, Corporate bodies etc. The multi departmental efforts have yielded good results in conserving forest and 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.
