

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO: 2587**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23.03.2023

**Forest cover in the Himalayan States**

2587 SMT. VANDANA CHAVAN:

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

- (a) the change recorded in the forest cover in the hill districts of each of the 13 Himalayan States, in the last ten years;
- (b) whether some States have reported a decline in their forest cover over the years and if so, the reasons for the same;
- (c) the consequences of declining forest cover on the ecology and economy of the affected areas, including the impact on the livelihoods of those persons that depend on forest resources; and
- (d) whether Government is taking any steps to address the impact of losing forest cover in these States?

**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 biennially since 1987 and the findings are published in India State of Forest Report (ISFR). As per latest ISFR 2021, the change in forest cover recorded in the hill districts of each of the 13 Himalayan States in the last ten years is given in **Annexure I**.
- (b) The details of State wise forest cover from ISFR 2017 to ISFR 2021 are given in **Annexure-II**. Some States have shown increase in forest cover while few others have shown decline in forest cover. However, there is overall increase in forest cover of the country by 5516 square kilometre between ISFR 2017 and ISFR 2021. The increase in forest cover may be attributed to conservation measures, afforestation activities, enhanced protection measures in plantation as well as in traditional forest areas, expansion of Tree Outside Forest. The decrease in forest cover may be attributed to short rotational plantation, biotic pressure, clearance in encroached area, developmental activities etc.

- (c) Forests are an invaluable resource to the country providing essential feeder services. Forests not only host villages in their fringe areas but neighboring villages areas are also dependent upon them as a resource base for several forest products like timber, fuel-wood, medicinal plants, food, non-timber forest products (NTFPs). Forests provide a number of products and services and contribute to the national economy.

Forests also provide services such as bio-diversity conservation, watershed protection and carbon sequestration. Decline in forest cover adversely impacts on ecology and economy of the area concerned.

- (d) In order to restore ecosystems and increase the forest cover in the country, afforestation and tree plantation activities are undertaken by States/UTs. The Ministry provides financial assistance to States/UTs under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes namely Green India Mission to support and supplement the efforts of States and Union Territories.

The Ministry is implementing Nagar Van Yojana (NVY) since the year 2020 which envisages creation of 400 Nagar Vans and 200 Nagar Vatika in the country during the period 2020-21 to 2024-25 under the funds available under National Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAMPA). The Nagar Van Yojana aims to enhance the green cover in the urban and peri-urban areas including biological diversity, provide ecological benefits and improve the quality of life of city dwellers.

The Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAMPA fund) are being utilized by States/UTs for taking up compensatory afforestation as per approved Annual Plan of Operations for compensating the loss of forest & tree cover due to diversion of forest land for developmental projects as per provisions of Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act, 2016 (CAF Act) and CAF Rules, 2018.

Afforestation activities are also taken up under various programmes and schemes of line Ministry such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, National Bamboo Mission, Sub-Mission on Agroforestry etc. and under schemes of State Government/UT Administration through different departments, Non-Government Organizations, Civil Society, Corporate bodies etc. The multi departmental efforts have yielded good results in conserving and enhancing forest cover in the country.

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## Annexure-I

Annexure referred to in reply to part (a) of the Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2587 due for answer on 23.03.2023 regarding 'Forest Cover in the Himalayan States'.

<b>Decadal change in the Forest Cover in the Hill Districts of Himalayan States of India</b>						
<b>(Area in square kilometre)</b>						
<b>S. No.</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>No. of Hill Districts</b>	<b>Geographical Area</b>	<b>Total Forest Cover (ISFR 2011)</b>	<b>Total Forest Cover (ISFR 2021)</b>	<b>Change in Forest Cover w.r.t 2011</b>
1	Arunachal Pradesh*	16	83,743	67,410	66,431	-979
2	Assam	3	19,295	12,985	12,900	-85
3	Himachal Pradesh	12	55,673	14,679	15,443	764
4	Manipur	9	22,327	17,090	16,598	-492
5	Meghalaya	7	22,429	17,275	17,046	-229
6	Mizoram	8	21,081	19,117	17,820	-1,297
7	Nagaland**	11	16,579	13,318	12,251	-1,067
8	Sikkim	4	7,096	3,359	3,341	-18
9	Tripura	4	10,486	7,977	7,722	-255
10	Uttarakhand	13	53,483	24,496	24,305	-191
11	West Bengal	1	3,149	2,289	2,350	61
12	Jammu & Kashmir***	22	2,22,236	16,056	21,387	5,331
13	Ladakh	2		6,483	2,272	-4,211
<b>Total</b>		<b>112</b>	<b>5,37,577</b>	<b>2,22,534</b>	<b>2,19,866</b>	<b>-2,668</b>

\* In ISFR 2011 Arunachal Pradesh had only 13 hill districts

\*\* In ISFR 2011 Nagaland had only 8 hill districts

\*\*\* ISFR 2019 onwards J&K was divided into two UTs , J & K and Ladakh

## Annexure-II

Annexure referred to in reply to part (b) of the Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2587 due for answer on 23.03.2023 regarding 'Forest Cover in the Himalayan States'.  
State/UTs wise details of change in Forest Cover from ISFR 2017 to ISFR 2021

(Area in Square Kilometre)

States/UTs	Geographical area	Forest Cover			Change in Forest Cover between ISFR 2017 & ISFR 2019 (b-a)	Change in Forest Cover between ISFR 2019 & ISFR 2021 (c-b)
		ISFR 2017 (a)	ISFR 2019 (b)	ISFR 2021 (c)		
Andhra Pradesh	1,62,968	28,147	29,137	29,784	990	647
Arunachal Pradesh	83,743	66,964	66,688	66,431	-276	-257
Assam	78,438	28,105	28,327	28,312	222	-15
Bihar	94,163	7,299	7,306	7,381	7	75
Chhattisgarh	1,35,192	55,547	55,611	55,717	64	106
Delhi	1,483	192.41	195.44	195	3.03	-0.44
Goa	3,702	2,229	2,237	2,244	8	7
Gujarat	1,96,244	14,757	14,857	14,926	100	69
Haryana	44,212	1,588	1,602	1,603	14	1
Himachal Pradesh	55,673	15,100	15,434	15,443	334	9
Jharkhand	79,716	23,553	23,611	23,721	58	110
Karnataka	1,91,791	37,550	38,575	38,730	1025	155
Kerala	38,852	20,321	21,144	21,253	823	109
Madhya Pradesh	3,08,252	77,414	77,482	77,493	68	11
Maharashtra	3,07,713	50,682	50,778	50,798	96	20
Manipur	22,327	17,346	16,847	16,598	-499	-249
Meghalaya	22,429	17,146	17,119	17,046	-27	-73
Mizoram	21,081	18,186	18,006	17,820	-180	-186
Nagaland	16,579	12,489	12,486	12,251	-3	-235
Odisha	1,55,707	51,345	51,619	52,156	274	537
Punjab	50,362	1,837	1,849	1,847	12	-2
Rajasthan	3,42,239	16,572	16,630	16,655	58	25
Sikkim	7,096	3,344	3,342	3,341	-2	-1
Tamil Nadu	1,30,060	26,281	26,364	26,419	83	55
Telangana	1,12,077	20,419	20,582	21,214	163	632
Tripura	10,486	7,726	7,726	7,722	0	-4
Uttar Pradesh	2,40,928	14,679	14,806	14,818	127	12
Uttarakhand	53,483	24,295	24,303	24,305	8	2
West Bengal	88,752	16,847	16,902	16,832	55	-70
A&N Islands	8,249	6,742	6,743	6,744	1	1
Chandigarh	114	21.56	22.03	22.88	0.47	0.85
Dadra & Nagar Haveli #	491	207	207	227.75	0	0.26
Daman & Diu #	111	20.49	20.49		0	
Jammu & Kashmir*	2,22,236	23,241	21,358	21,387	-1883	29
Ladakh		0	2,254	2,272	2254	18
Lakshadweep	30	27.10	27.10	27.10	0	0
Puducherry	490	53.67	52.41	53.30	-1.26	0.89
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>32,87,469</b>	<b>7,08,273</b>	<b>7,12,249</b>	<b>7,13,789</b>	<b>3,976</b>	<b>1,540</b>

**There is overall increase in forest cover of the country by 5516 (3976 square kilometre + 1540 square kilometre) between ISFR 2017 and ISFR 2021**

\* From ISFR 2019 onwards Jammu & Kashmir was divided into two UTs viz. Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

# From ISFR 2021 onwards Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu have been combined into one UT.

