

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 675
ANSWERED ON 08.02.2024

Sacred groves protection

675. Smt. P.T. Usha:

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

- (a) whether Government intends to preserve and protect the sacred groves and ponds located in the vicinity of temples in the State of Kerala owing to their significance in ecology and environment;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and funds allocated, if any, during the last three years and current year;
- (c) whether Government is also aware of any destruction, encroachment and degradation of mangrove forests and sacred groves in Kerala; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and action taken in this regard?

ANSWER

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

- (a) and(b) The management of wildlife and its habitat is primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Government. The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 empowers State Government for declaration of any private or community land, as a community reserve, for protecting fauna, flora and traditional or cultural conservation values and practices. Sacred groves are generally very small patches of trees traditionally protected by local communities for their religious and cultural significance and also contribute in conserving local biodiversity. The funds released under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of 'Development of Wildlife Habitat' to State of Kerala for the Kadalundi-Vallikkunnu Community Reserve during the last three years and current year is as given below:

S.No	Year	Funds allocated (in Rupees Lakhs)
1	2020-21	11.195
2	2021-22	3.1125
3	2022-23	2.574
4	2023-24	4.695

(c) and (d) No specific reports have been received from the Government of Kerala regarding destruction of mangroves in the State of Kerala. As per the India State of Forest Report-2021, there has been an increase of 0.46 % in mangrove cover from the 2019 assessment in the State of Kerala.
