

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1972**

TO BE ANSWERED ON 12.12.2024

**Forest cover in India defined under ISFR**

1972 SHRI SAKET GOKHALE:

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

- (a) whether all lands measuring more than one hectare with a tree canopy of more than 10 per cent, irrespective of ownership and legal status, including orchards, bamboo and palm, are defined as forest cover according to Indian State of Forest Report (ISFR);
- (b) whether the tree patches of less than one hectare outside forest areas are defined as forest cover according to ISFR; and
- (c) whether any international standards are relied upon by the Floor Space Index (FSI) in the ISFR for defining forest cover in India, if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE  
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

- (a) Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun, an organization under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, carries out the assessment of forest cover of the country biennially and the findings are published in India State of Forest Report (ISFR). As per ISFR, forest cover includes all lands, more than one hectare in area with a tree canopy density of more than 10 percent irrespective of ownership and legal status. Such lands may not necessarily be a recorded forest area. It also includes orchards, bamboo and palm.
- (b) As per ISFR, the tree patches of size less than one hectare outside the recorded forest area are defined as Tree Cover.
- (c) The India's definition of forest cover as stated (a) above is within the internationally accepted criteria. As per Decision 19/ Conference of Parties (CoP) 9 – Kyoto Protocol, the forest can be defined by any country depending upon the capacities and capabilities of the country and is as follows:  
Forest is defined structurally on the basis of
  - Crown cover percentage: Tree crown cover – 10 to 30% (India 10%)
  - Minimum area of stand: area between 0.05 and 1 hectare (India 1.0 hectare) and
  - Minimum height of trees: Potential to reach a minimum height at maturity in situ of 2 to 5 metre (India 2 metre).

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