

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1030
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13.02.2025

Habitat destruction

1030. DR. ASHOK KUMAR MITTAL:

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

- (a) whether Government has year-wise data on the extent of deforestation and habitat destruction in the country, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons for the same;
- (b) the specific steps taken by Government to implement stricter laws to combat deforestation and habitat destruction;
- (c) details of comprehensive legislation introduced by Government to address the rising threat of deforestation and its impact on biodiversity and climate change; and
- (d) whether Government has a roadmap for adopting stricter laws and policies to combat deforestation and habitat destruction, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons for the same?

ANSWER

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

(a) The protection of forests and wildlife is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. In order to assess the extent and quality of forest cover in the country, the Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun, an organization under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, carries out the assessment biennially and the findings are published in the India State of Forest Report (ISFR). As per the ISFR published by FSI, the forest cover of the country has increased consistently since 2013. The details are given in **Annexure**.

(b) to (c) The State Governments /UT Administrations take appropriate actions to protect forests and wildlife from deforestation and habitat destruction under the specific legislations. The instances regarding deforestation and habitat destruction as and when detected are booked under the relevant Acts and proceeded against the offenders before the competent authorities. The details in this regard are maintained by the concerned State Governments/ UT Administrations.

There are legal frameworks for the protection of forests and wildlife from deforestation and habitat destruction which include, the Indian Forest Act 1927, Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam 1980, Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972, Biodiversity Act of 2002, and the State Forest Acts and Rules.

(d) The Central Government has established a comprehensive legal framework, including Indian Forest Act 1927, Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam 1980, Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972, and Biodiversity Act 2002. Together, these laws effectively address deforestation and habitat destruction, ensuring the protection and sustainable management of forests and biodiversity.

As forests fall under the Concurrent List of the Constitution of India, both the Central and State Governments have the authority to legislate on matters related to forest conservation. Accordingly, States enact appropriate laws and regulations to address deforestation and habitat destruction, complementing national policies and legal frameworks to ensure the effective protection and sustainable management of forest resources.

Annexure

Annexure referred in the answer of the Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question no. 1030 due for reply on 13.02.2025 regarding “Habitat destruction”

Year -wise status of forest cover in the country

Sr. No.	Year of ISFR	Forest cover reported in ISFR (in Square kilometres)
1.	2013	6,97,898
2.	2015	7,01,495
3.	2017	7,08,273
4.	2019	7,12,249
5.	2021	7,15,186.20
6.	2023	7,15,342.61