

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1344**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 31.07.2025

**Depleting forest cover**

1344. DR. M. THAMBIDURAI:

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that the forest cover is depleting year after year;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, during the last five years, year-wise;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that the National Green Tribunal has sought a response from Government on this issue;
- (d) if so, the details thereof, including the response of Government thereon;
- (e) steps taken by Government to stop deforestation; and
- (f) the other measures taken by Government in this regard?

**ANSWER**

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

- (a)to (d) Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun, an organization under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, carries out the assessment of forest and tree cover of the country biennially and the findings are published in the 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 the National Forest Inventory.

As per ISFR 2023, the forest cover of the country is 7,15,342.61 square kilometer which is 21.76% of the total geographical area of the country. In the last four years, the forest cover has increased from 7,12,249.00 square kilometer in ISFR 2019 to 7,15,342.61 square kilometer in ISFR 2023. Thus there has been an increase of 3,093.61 square kilometer in the forest cover of the country between ISFR 2019 and ISFR 2023. The forest cover of the country between 2019 and 2023 are given below:

ISFR year	2019	2021	2023
Forest Cover (In square kilometer)	7,12,249.00	7,15,186.20	7,15,342.61

The National Green Tribunal has taken suo moto cognizance in a particular matter related to one State on this issue which is sub-judice.

- (e) &(f) The protection and management of forest and tree resources is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. There are legal frameworks for the protection and management of forest and tree resources of the country which include, the Indian Forest Act, 1927; Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980; the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972; and the State Forest Acts and Rules.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change issues advisories to State Governments/UT Administrations to protect forests and trees, and mitigation of deforestation as per the provisions of the law. Further, in order to protect forests, various measures are taken by the State Forest Departments, which include survey and demarcation of forest areas, fixing of pillars along forest boundary and regular patrolling by field staff.

In addition, the Ministry provides technical and financial support to the States /UTs for protection, conservation and management of forests in the country. This includes funds from the Central Government under various schemes and programmes such as National Mission for a Green India (GIM), Forest Fire Prevention and Management Scheme (FPM), Nagar Van Yojana (NVY), Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats and Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes (MISHTI). Afforestation is also carried out by the States/UTs under the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA). The funds provided under the various schemes support the efforts of States and Union Territories to enhance forest and tree cover through ecological restoration measures such as afforestation within and outside forest areas, forest landscape restoration, habitat improvement, soil and water conservation, protection activities, and other related interventions.

Further, a plantation campaign “एक पेड़ माँ के नाम #Plant4Mother” has been launched on the occasion of World Environment Day 2024 to undertake plantation activities across the country. This campaign follows the “Whole of Government” and “Whole of Society” approach with participation of all stakeholders for increasing the green cover in the country. The campaign has contributed large scale plantation aiding the enhancement of green cover in the country.

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