

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 525
TO BE ANSWERED ON 24.07.2025

Current status of forests

525. SHRI SANT BALBIR SINGH:

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

- (a) the current status of the country's forests, and the manner in which it has evolved over the last five years in terms of forest cover, deforestation rates and biodiversity preservation;
- (b) the details of forest coverage, deforestation trends and afforestation efforts for the last five years, State-wise;
- (c) details of Government policies or programmes that have been effective in improving forest health, and the ones that have faced challenges in implementation; and
- (d) the manner in which the forest resources are being managed to balance economic interests with environmental sustainability?

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 & ISFR 2023. The State/UT-wise forest coverage and change in forest cover between ISFR 2019 and ISFR 2023 is given in Annexure I.

The protection, conservation and management of forest is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. There are legal frameworks for the protection and management of forest of the country which

include, the Indian Forest Act, 1927; the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980; the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and the State Forest Acts and Rules, etc. Further, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change issues advisories to State Governments/UT Administrations to protect forests.

In addition, the Ministry provides technical and financial support to the States /UTs for protection, conservation and management of the 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). These funds support the efforts of the States and UTs for ecological restoration through afforestation in and outside forest areas, forest landscape restoration, habitat improvement, soil and water conservation measures, and protection, etc.

India is one of the few countries in the world that has a scientific system of forest management. Forests are managed on sustainable and scientific basis as per the approved Working Plan, which is the main instrument for balancing the economic interests with environmental sustainability. Further, in order to compensate the losses due to diversion of forest land for non-forestry purposes, the compensatory levies are deposited by the user agencies for undertaking compensatory afforestation, site specific treatment, artificial regeneration, protection of forest, wildlife protection and other ancillary actions.

Annexure I

Annexure referred to in reply (a) to (d) of Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 525 due for answer on 24.07.2025 regarding Current Status of forests asked by Shri Sant Balbir Singh

State/UT wise details of Forest Cover in ISFR 2019 and ISFR 2023

(In square kilometer)

S.No.	State/UT	Forest Cover (ISFR 2019)	Forest Cover (ISFR 2023)	Change in Forest Cover
1	Andhra Pradesh	29,137.00	30,084.96	947.96
2	Arunachal Pradesh	66,688.00	65,881.57	-806.43
3	Assam	28,327.00	28,313.555	-13.45
4	Bihar	7,306.00	7,532.45	226.45
5	Chhattisgarh	55,611.00	55,811.75	200.75
6	Delhi	195.44	195.28	-0.16
7	Goa	2,237.00	2,265.72	28.72
8	Gujarat	14,857.00	15,016.64	159.64
9	Haryana	1,602.00	1,614.26	12.26
10	Himachal Pradesh	15,434.00	15,580.35	146.35
11	Jharkhand	23,611.00	23,765.78	154.78
12	Karnataka	38,575.00	39,254.27	679.27
13	Kerala	21,144.00	22,059.36	915.36
14	Madhya Pradesh	77,482.00	77,073.44	-408.56
15	Maharashtra	50,778.00	50,858.53	80.53
16	Manipur	16,847.00	16,585.46	-261.54
17	Meghalaya	17,119.00	16,966.84	-152.16
18	Mizoram	18,006.00	17,990.46	-15.54
19	Nagaland	12,486.00	12,222.47	-263.53
20	Odisha	51,619.00	52,433.56	814.56
21	Punjab	1,849.00	1,846.09	-2.91
22	Rajasthan	16,630.00	16,548.21	-81.79
23	Sikkim	3,342.00	3,358.40	16.40
24	Tamil Nadu	26,364.00	26,450.22	86.22
25	Telangana	20,582.00	21,179.04	597.04
26	Tripura	7,726.00	7,584.77	-141.23
27	Uttar Pradesh	14,806.00	15,045.80	239.80
28	Uttarakhand	24,303.00	24,303.83	0.83
29	West Bengal	16,902.00	16,832.33	-69.67
30	A&N Islands	6,743.00	6,732.92	-10.08
31	Chandigarh	22.03	25	2.97
32	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	207	225.62	18.62
	Daman & Diu	20.49		-20.49
33	Jammu & Kashmir	21,122.00	21,346.39	224.39
34	Ladakh	2,490.00	2,285.92	-204.08
35	Lakshadweep	27.1	27.06	-0.04
36	Puducherry	52.41	44.31	-8.10
	Grand Total	7,12,249.00	7,15,342.61	3,093.61