

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 417
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.04.2026

Conservation of forests and wildlife

*417. SHRI BABUBHAI JESANGBHAI DESAI:

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

- (a) the details of protected areas, national parks and wildlife sanctuaries in Gujarat and Maharashtra along with any additions made during the last three years;
- (b) whether Government has undertaken any initiatives to strengthen conservation of tigers and other wildlife species in reserves such as Gir, Kutch wildlife sanctuary, Tadoba-Andhari and Melghat;
- (c) the details of progress made in increasing forest and tree cover in those States; and
- (d) the steps taken to promote climate resilience and biodiversity conservation there?

ANSWER

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI BHUPENDER YADAV)

(a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (D) IN RESPECT OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 417 FOR REPLY ON 02.04.2026 REGARDING CONSERVATION OF FORESTS AND WILDLIFE ASKED BY SHRI BABUBHAI JESANGBHAI DESAI

- (a) The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 empowers the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations for declaration of Protected Areas, viz., National Parks, Sanctuaries, Conservation Reserves and Community Reserves. As per information available in the Ministry, details of Protected Areas in States of Gujarat and Maharashtra are as follows:

Protected Area	Gujarat	Maharashtra
National Park	4	6
Sanctuary	24	52
Conservation Reserve	1	28

During the last three years, two Conservation Reserves (Atpadi and Roha) have been notified in the State of Maharashtra, and one Sanctuary (Premapara) has been notified in Gujarat State.

- (b) to (d) Protection and management of wildlife and their habitat is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations. The important steps taken by the Government, for protection of wildlife, conservation of biodiversity and climate resilience are:
- (i) There are legal and policy frameworks for protection and conservation of forest and biodiversity, including the Indian Forest Act, 1927, the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, the *Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam*, 1980, the Biological Diversity Act, 2002, the National Biodiversity Action Plan, the National Forest Policy and the National Action Plan on Climate Change, under which the States/UTs take appropriate action in accordance with the provisions made therein.
 - (ii) A network of Protected Area (National Parks, Sanctuaries, Conservation Reserve and Community Reserve) have been created in the country.
 - (iii) Financial assistance is provided to States and Union Territories for management of wildlife and development of its habitat under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes 'Development of Wildlife Habitats' and 'Project Tiger & Elephant', as per the Annual Plan of Operation (APO) submitted by the respective States and Union Territories. The activities supported under the schemes include habitat improvement, protection, awareness and Eco Development involving local communities in wildlife conservation.
 - (iv) A specific component of 'Recovery programme for saving critically endangered species and habitats' is provided under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Development of Wildlife Habitats' for focused conservation action on identified 24 critically endangered species.
 - (v) Special programmes like 'Project Tiger', 'Project Lion', Project Dolphin, 'Project Cheetah', 'Project Great Indian Bustard', have been undertaken for their conservation.

- (vi) Eco-sensitive Zones (ESZ) are notified around National Parks and Sanctuaries under the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
- (vii) The Wild Life Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has been set up to ensure co-ordination among various agencies and State Governments to combat organized wildlife crime.
- (viii) The Ministry provides financial assistance for promoting afforestation and forest conservation in the country, which include the National Mission for a Green India (GIM), with aim to protect, restore and enhance India's forest cover and respond to climate change.
- (ix) A scheme named Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes (MISHTI) is implemented to support States, to restore mangrove forests by undertaking mangrove reforestation/ afforestation measures along the coast of India.
- (x) The Nagar Van Yojana (NVY) for developing forest/green spaces in urban and peri-urban areas, and the School Nursery Yojana (SNY), for engaging students in understanding the importance of plants is implemented in recognized public and private schools.
- (xi) The Ministry also promotes mass plantation drives on occasions such as International Day of Forests, World Environment Day, Van Mahotsav, Wildlife Week, etc., and raises awareness through campaigns. The 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign, launched on 5th June 2024, encourages citizens to plant a tree in honour of their mothers and Mother Earth.
- (xii) The Ministry has also launched the National Afforestation Monitoring System (NAMS) to strengthen centralized, transparent monitoring using geospatial tools.

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 details of forest and tree covers as per ISFR -2021 and ISFR-2023 in the States of Gujarat and Maharashtra are as below:

S.No		ISFR-2021 (in sq.kms)		ISFR-2023 (in sq.kms)	
		Forest cover	Tree cover	Forest cover	Tree cover
1	Gujarat	14,926.00	5489	15,016.64	6,632.29
2	Maharashtra	50,798.00	12,108	50,858.53	14,524.88
