

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2259
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 07/08/2026

CONVERSION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND FOR NON-AGRICULTURAL PURPOSE

2259. SHRI JAGGESH:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the continuous diversion of cultivable agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes has emerged as a matter of concern with regard to the country's long-term food security;
- (b) whether Government has assessed the extent of agricultural land converted for non-agricultural use across the country;
- (c) whether Government has conducted any assessment of the impact of the shrinking cultivable land base on agricultural production; and
- (d) if so, the policy measures, legislative safeguards and incentives introduced by Government to conserve cultivable land, prevent its indiscriminate conversion and ensure sustainable agricultural production and national food security?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
(SHRI RAMNATH THAKUR)

(a) to (d): Land and agriculture are the state subjects, as per Entry No. 18 of List II (State List) of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. Accordingly, regulation of land, land-use and conversion of agricultural land for industrial or other non-agricultural purposes falls within the jurisdiction of the respective State/UT Governments and is governed by the State/UT specific laws.

As per the Land Use Statistics 2024-25, the total cultivable land across the country during the last three years are 179.43 million hectares (in 2024-25), 179.77 million hectares (in 2023-24) and 179.98 million hectares (in 2022-23).

However, the Gross Cropped Area has expanded significantly, rising from 198.28 million hectares in 2014-15 to 225.19 million hectares in 2024-25. The adoption of modern technologies and effective policy interventions has also led to a continuous improvement in cropping intensity, which has risen from 142.2% in 2014-15 to 159.7% in 2024-25, reflecting a positive shift toward multiple cropping practices, highlighting farmers' enhanced ability to cultivate the same land more than once annually. Additionally, food grain production has increased from 252.02 million tonnes in 2014-15 to 376.56 million tonnes in 2025-26 (Advance Estimates), while horticulture production has increased from 280.98 million tonnes in 2014-15 to 377.77 million tonnes in 2025-26 (Advance Estimates).

The Government of India supplements the efforts of States through appropriate policy measures and schemes aimed at sustainable agricultural development, conservation of natural resources and enhancement of

agricultural productivity. The Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is implementing various Central Sector and Centrally Sponsored Schemes including the National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF), National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA), Soil Health & Fertility (SH&F), Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) component under Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY), National Food Security Mission (NFSM) and Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM), National Mission on Edible Oils (NMEO)-Oil Palm, National Mission on Edible Oils (NMEO)-Oilseeds, Mission for Atmanirbharta in Pulses, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY). These initiatives promote sustainable agricultural practices, efficient use of natural resources, soil and water conservation, crop diversification and enhancement of agricultural productivity, thereby contributing to balanced and sustainable development while ensuring judicious use of natural resources and ecological balance.

Department of Land Resources is implementing Watershed Development Component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (WDC-PMKSY) which primarily focuses on development rainfed/ degraded lands. The activities undertaken in the scheme, inter alia, include ridge area treatment, drainage line treatment, soil and moisture conservation, rainwater harvesting, nursery raising, pasture development, improvement in livelihood/income potential of land etc. The measures taken under WDC-PMKSY supplements the effort of the Government to increase the area under cultivation.

Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has developed several technological measures to increase the area under cultivation. This includes location specific bio-engineering to check soil erosion due to run-off of rainwater, sand dune stabilization and shelter belt technology to check wind erosion and reclamation technology for problem soils in the country. ICAR has also developed the gypsum technology package, consisting of land levelling, bunding, flushing, removal of excess water, good quality irrigation water, application of amendments, selection of crops and efficient nutrient management. ICAR further recommends several agronomic measures to improve the degraded soils and bringing them under crop cultivation, soil test based balanced and integrated nutrient management through conjunctive use of both inorganic and organic sources (manner, biofertilizers etc.) of plant nutrient and location specific soil & water conservation measures for preventing deterioration of soil health and fertility.

In addition, under the National Innovations in Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA) project of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), climate change risk and vulnerability assessment has been carried out for 651 agricultural districts as per Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) protocols. Capacity building for establishing village level seed banks and community nurseries is undertaken under NICRA to enable availability of seed in the adopted villages. Drought and flood tolerant climate-resilient varieties of rice, wheat, soybean, mustard, chickpea, sorghum, gram, and foxtail millet were demonstrated in several NICRA villages. Under NICRA, technical assistance for small and marginal farmers is extended to additional vulnerable districts beyond the 151 currently covered districts, to promote adoption of climate-resilient practices. Village level institutions through farmers' participatory approach, such as Village Climate Risk Management Committees, seed and fodder banks have been established for smooth functioning and need based technology penetration. Further, ICAR has released 2900 varieties during last 10 years (2014-2024) of which 2661 varieties are tolerant to one or more biotic or abiotic stresses.

Further, the Central Government has enacted the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation & Resettlement (RFCTLARR) Act, 2013, which came into force on 01.01.2014, lays down the statutory framework governing land acquisition, compensation, rehabilitation and resettlement, including safeguards relating to the acquisition of multi-crop irrigated land. The Act mandates Social Impact Assessment prior to acquisition to evaluate the impact on livelihoods, agricultural practices and food security. Wherever agricultural land is acquired, compensatory mechanisms, including monetary compensation, rehabilitation and resettlement benefits, and in some cases, land for land compensation etc. are provided to mitigate the impact on farmers. The Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare does not maintain State/UT-wise data centrally on the extent of agricultural land converted for non-agricultural purposes.
