

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3028
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13.08.2026

Decline of forest lands

3028. SHRI I.S. INBADURAI:

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

(a) whether Government has undertaken any assessment regarding changes in forest cover and forest land diversion across the country during the last three years and the current financial year, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is a fact that forest lands are facing pressure due to industrial projects, mining, infrastructure development, urban expansion and other activities, if so, the details thereof and steps taken; and

(c) the State-wise details of forest land diverted for non-forest purposes during the last three years and the current financial year, indicating the purpose and area involved?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c): The Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun, an organization under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, carries out biennial assessment of the forest cover of the country and publishes the findings in the India State of Forest Report (ISFR). The assessment is based on remote sensing supported by intensive ground verification. 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. The forest cover of the country has increased by 156.41 square kilometer as compared to the last assessment of ISFR 2021.

Further, during the last three years and in current financial year till 06.08.2026, an area of 828.18 square kilometer of forest land was approved for diversion for non-forestry purposes under the provisions of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.

The proposals received for the diversion of forest land for non –forestry purposes are examined on a case to case basis in accordance with the provisions of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and the Rules and Guidelines made thereunder, with due consideration to their likely impact on environment, forest and wildlife. Diversion of forest land is permitted only in cases where it is unavoidable and site-specific and is restricted to bare minimum extent of forest land required for the project. Wherever diversion of forest land is unavoidable, prior approval of Central Government for use of such forest land is subject to various conditions and mitigation measures. These include undertaking Compensatory Afforestation (CA) in lieu of the forest land being diverted, payment of Net Present Value (NPV), Soil and Moisture Conservation measures, Wildlife Management Plans, and Catchment Area Treatment (CAT) Plans as applicable.

The details of forest land approved for diversion under the provisions of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 during the last three years and in current financial year till 06.08.2026, State/UT-wise are given at **Annexure-I**.

Annexure referred to in reply of (c) of Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 3028 due for answer on 13.08.2026 regarding 'Decline of forest lands'

State/UT-wise area approved for diversion of forest land for non-forestry purposes under the provisions of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 during the last three years and the current financial year till 06.08.2026.

(Area in hectares)

S. No.	State/UT	Area Approved
1	Andaman and Nicobar	4.79
2	Andhra Pradesh	1,143.68
3	Arunachal Pradesh	7,828.31
4	Assam	619.34
5	Bihar	34.23
6	Chandigarh	0.36
7	Chhattisgarh	4,274.12
8	Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	79.89
9	Delhi	116.83
10	Goa	129.99
11	Gujarat	4,964.12
12	Haryana	639.63
13	Himachal Pradesh	1,676.73
14	Jammu and Kashmir	1,086.01
15	Jharkhand	6,199.41
16	Karnataka	957.68
17	Kerala	63.58
18	Ladakh	3.98
19	Madhya Pradesh	22,027.02
20	Maharashtra	5,282.18
21	Manipur	1,679.65
22	Meghalaya	73.54
23	Mizoram	674.97
24	Nagaland	3.93
25	Odisha	10,098.99
26	Punjab	753.25
27	Rajasthan	4,066.34
28	Sikkim	1,000.89
29	Tamil Nadu	108.17
30	Telangana	1,994.74
31	Tripura	257.80
32	Uttar Pradesh	3,686.00
33	Uttarakhand	1,125.06
34	West Bengal	162.70
Grand Total		82,817.92