

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.6583
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.04.2018

Land Degradation Neutrality

6583. DR. KAMBHAMPATI HARIBABU:

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

- (a) Whether India has committed to land degradation neutrality by 2030;
- (b) If so, the details thereof along with the resolution adopted in 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- (c) the measures taken by the Government for land degradation neutrality; and
- (d) the manner in which land degradation neutrality will benefit the farmers as well as the habitants of the country?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

(a) Yes, Madam. India became a signatory to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) on 14 October 1994 and ratified it on 17 December 1996. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change is the nodal ministry in the Government of India for UNCCD and Desertification Cell is the nodal point within the ministry to coordinate all issues pertaining to the Convention. The Hon'ble Minister, MoEF&CC, on the occasion of World Day to Combat Desertification on 17 June 2014, had announced India's commitment to work towards achieving Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) by 2030, with the cooperation and synchronized efforts of other relevant line-Ministries. LDN 2030 is also Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)-Target 15.3 out of the seventeen SDG goals.

(b) In the Thirteenth session of Conference of Parties (COP-13) India has expressed its intention to join the Global Mechanism's Land Degradation Neutrality Target Setting Programme (LDN-TSP) to achieve land degradation neutrality by 2030 which is also Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)-Target 15.3

(c) The following measures have been taken by the Government for land degradation neutrality:

- (i) Desertification and Land Degradation Atlas of India, was first prepared in 2007 covering Desertification and Land Degradation (DLD) Status of India of 2003-05 time period, by the Space Applications Centre in collaboration with MoEFCC. This was followed by another Atlas published in 2016 covering the years 2011-13. The Atlases presented Desertification and Land Degradation (DLD) Status Maps depicting Land Use, Process of Degradation and Severity Level along with area statistics consolidated for entire country as well state-wise.
 - (ii) A study was commissioned on "Economic of Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought in India (EDLDD)" which has quantified and projected the cost of land degradation in India through macro and micro economic analysis including a comprehensive analysis of existing programmes and schemes related to Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought (DLDD) issues.
 - (iii) The Ministry has partnered with the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) to execute a joint project on "Policy and Institutional Reform for Mainstreaming and Up-scaling Sustainable Land and Ecosystem Management (SLEM) in India" following a bottom up approach. The study was carried out for enhancing the institutional and policy framework for harmonization, coordination and monitoring of interventions in agricultural and natural resources management and a book was published on best practices of SLEM in 2014.
 - (iv) In line with Sustainable Development Goal 15.3, the Government is targeting Land Degradation Neutrality by 2030, involving all stakeholders from line-Ministries like Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Water Resources, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Ministry of statistics, etc. The line-Ministries are continuing their efforts at efficient utilization and conservation of land and water resources through a number of programmes/schemes on watershed management, rainwater conservation, afforestation under schemes like Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), National Food Security Mission (NFSM), Soil Health Card Scheme, Pradhanmantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojna (PKSY), Per Drop More Crop, Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, DeenDayalAntyodayaYojana- National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), DeenDayalUpadhyayaGrameenKaushalyaYojana (DDU-GKY), HarKhetKoPani (HKKP), Scheme of Artificial Recharge of Ground Water through Dug well, etc.
- (d) Achieving Land Degradation Neutrality by 2030 through sustainable-development projects will provide environmental benefits, socio-economic benefits and financial returns to farmers, by stabilizing land degradation, improving soil quality, increasing productivity and improving livelihood conditions. This also aims to generate revenues from sustainable use of natural resources, creating green job opportunities for local communities, increasing food and water security and sequestering carbon dioxide (CO₂).
