

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 549
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.07.2018

Forest Cover in Andhra Pradesh

549. SHRI KESINENI NANI:

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

- (a) whether as per India State of Forest Report Andhra Pradesh has the largest growth in forest cover and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the steps taken by the Government to combine afforestation programs with alternative source of livelihood for people who are dependent on forest; and
- (c) the total area of forest cover lost due to fire in the State during the last three years along with the corrective measure taken to manage forest fire including the equipment available for the same?

ANSWER

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

- (a) Forest Survey of India, Dehradun carries out the assessment of forest cover of the Country after every two years and the findings are published in India State of Forest Report. The latest report in the series is India State of Forest Report (ISFR) - 2017. As per this report, the Andhra Pradesh has registered highest net increase in forest cover among the States and UTs. The total forest and tree cover in the State of Andhra Pradesh is 31,900 square kilometers which is 19.57 percent of the total geographical area of the State. There is increase in forest cover by 2141 square kilometer in the State of Andhra Pradesh as compared to ISFR-2015.
- (b) As per the information provided by State Forest Department of Andhra Pradesh, Government of Andhra Pradesh has taken up afforestation programmes including Increased Soil and Moisture Conservation (SMC) works on a large scale for providing livelihood for the people who are dependent on forest through Vana Samrakshana Samithis and Forest Development Agencies.
- (c) As forest fires in Andhra Pradesh are at ground level, no damage is caused to standing trees. Hence, no loss to forest or properties has taken place. The details of forest fires reported during last three years are as follows:-

Year	Number of fire point locations occurred	Area burnt in hectare	Remarks
2016	1690	6046.20	The fire incidents are surface/ground fires only.
2017	8633	11735.20	
2018	1115	1410.73	

The details of corrective measure taken by the Government of Andhra Pradesh to manage forest fire are as follows:-

- Publicity and awareness among people.
- People's participation (JFMCs/VSS/EDCs) to control forest fires.
- Co-ordination with line departments.
- Janmabhoomi programmes.
- Fire watchers are engaged during fire season every year to sweep the dry leaves, twigs etc. in forest floor to the nearest fire line and carry out control burning repeatedly apart from keeping vigil on the occurrence of fire.
- Watch towers provided with the manpower to keep 24 hours watch on the occurrence of forest fire in surrounding area during the period from January to May, Fire Watch Towers constructed at Fire Risk Zone areas.
- Fire Monitoring Cell.
- Fire alerts received from Forest Survey of India are attended immediately.
- Base Camps, Strike Force watchers invariably utilized to control the fires in respective jurisdiction.
- To protect forest areas in Andhra Pradesh State from fire hazards, provisions for required infrastructure and fire control measures are being made which includes fire line creation, fire line maintenance, firefighting equipment etc.
