

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

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 388
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05TH DECEMBER, 2023

IMPACT OF SOIL EROSION ON AGRICULTURE

388. DR. AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken cognizance of the finding of the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (UN FAO), which states that soil erosion is depleting the ability of soil to produce food and could lead to a 10% loss in global crop production by 2050; and

(b) if so, the details of the initiatives that are proposed to be taken by the Government to save our soil for agriculture?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री (SHRI NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR)

(a) & (b): In general, the extent and impact of soil erosion in the country depleting the ability of soil to produce food is being addressed by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) through research, technology development and its dissemination. ICAR through Indian Institute of Soil and Water Conservation (IISWC) has developed several location specific bio-engineering measures to check soil erosion due to run-off of rainwater. ICAR-Central Arid Zone Research Institute, Jodhpur has also developed sand dune stabilization and shelter belt technology to check wind erosion. Further, ICAR provides technical backstopping and organizes regular training courses for field functionaries and farmers on participatory watershed management.

Several steps have been taken to improve soil health and ecosystem up-gradation along with improving soil fertility status in the country including soil erosion. Under National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) to improve the soil health across the country, Soil Health Card (SHC) / Soil Health Management (SHM) scheme is operational through the State Governments under National Project on Management of Soil Health & Fertility. The

main objective of the scheme is to assist states in promoting Integrated Nutrient Management (INM) for improving soil health and its productivity. Soil Health Card provides information to farmers on soil nutrient status of their soil and recommendation on appropriate dosage of nutrients to be applied for improving soil health and its fertility. NMSA also addresses the problem of soil erosion through its schemes namely Rainfed Area Development (RAD) and On Farm Water Management (OFWM); Sub Mission on Agroforestry (SMAF) and Restructured National Bamboo Mission (NBM).

The Department of Land Resources (DoLR) has been implementing Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) since 2009-10 with primary objective to develop rainfed / degraded lands. IWMP was merged with the umbrella scheme of PMKSY in 2015-16 and named as the Watershed Development Component of the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (WDC-PMKSY). A total of 8214 watershed development projects were sanctioned from 2009-10 to 2014-15 under Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) in 28 States (now 27 States and 2 UTs of the Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh). Out of the 6382 projects funded by DoLR, 6376 projects have been completed. Under WDC-PMKSY 1.0, a total of 6.56 lakh water harvesting structures have been created / rejuvenated. An additional area of 14.54 lakh hectares has been brought under protective irrigation benefiting 31.94 lakh farmers during the same period. Under WDC-PMKSY2.0, DoLR has sanctioned 1149 projects to States/UTs covering an area of 50.55 lakh hectares and an amount of Rs. 2858.76 crore as central share of fund has been released to States/UTs. Under WDC-PMKSY 2.0 during FY 2022-23 and FY2023-24 (till 2nd Qtr.), 77,000 water harvesting structures have been created / rejuvenated. An additional area of 0.81 lakh hectare has been brought under protective irrigation benefitting 4.30 lakh farmers during the same period.
