

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 3264**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13.03.2020

**Deforestation**

3264. SHRI SUDHAKAR TUKARAM SHRANGARE:

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware that thirty percent of India's land area has been degraded through deforestation, over-cultivation, soil erosion and depletion of wetlands;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the corrective steps taken by the Government in this regard?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE**  
**(SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO)**

- (a) & (b) As per the Desertification and Land Degradation Atlas of India, prepared by the Space Applications Centre, 96.4 million-hectare (mha) area of the country is undergoing the process of land degradation, i.e., 29.32% of the total geographical area of the country during 2011-13.
- (c) Various steps have been taken by the Government of India to address the impact of land degradation through deforestation, over-cultivation, soil erosion and depletion of wetlands. To increase and improve forest and tree cover, afforestation programmes are taken up under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change which include National Afforestation Programme, National Mission for a Green India, Compensatory Afforestation Fund projects, etc. Afforestation and tree planting are also taken up by various Departments, NGOs, Civil Society, Corporate bodies, etc. and under various Central and State Plan/Non Plan Schemes.

The Ministry also supports the States and Union Territories for conservation and management of wetlands in the country through a centrally sponsored scheme namely, National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Eco-systems. For more

effective conservation and management of wetlands in the country, the Central Government has notified the Wetlands (Conservation & Management) Rules, 2017.

Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare has taken up various programmes to tackle land degradation such as the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture which includes interventions such as the Soil Health Card, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojna, Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North-Eastern Region, Rain Fed Area Development, and the Sub-Mission on Agro-Forestry, National Bamboo Mission, Prime Minister Krishi Sinchai Yojna (PMKSY) - Per Drop More Crop, etc.

The then Integrated Watershed Management Programme of the Ministry of Rural Development) has since been amalgamated as a Watershed Development component of PMKSY in 2015-16, and an area of about 20.5 mha has been developed under completed and ongoing projects.

Studies have also been carried out under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research to combat desertification on various issues such as assessment of status of desertification in India's Arid Regions through satellite remote sensing and identification of field-based indicators; checking soil erosion, sand movement and control wind erosion through sand dune stabilization, shelter-belt plantation and soil and water conservation; rehabilitation of mine spoil areas; methodology for reclaiming degraded land due to water logging and salinity-alkalinity etc.

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