

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO: 2189**  
**TO BE ANSWERED ON 23.09.2020**

**Incidence of Forest Fire**

2189. SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH PATEL:  
SHRI RAVI KISHAN:  
SHRI NAYAB SINGH:  
SHRI RAVINDRA KUSHWAHA:  
SHRI JOHN BARLA:  
SHRI MANOJ TIWARI:

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken note of the rise in incidence of forest fires globally causing widespread damage to bio-diversity including wildlife and plant-life;
- (b) if so, the special arrangements formulated under Forest Fire Prevention and Management Schemes in our country;
- (c) the manner in which modern technology has been leveraged under this scheme; and
- (d) the funds earmarked/allocated/utilized in this regard during the last three years?

**ANSWER**

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

- (a) Yes sir. As reported in “Forest Fire Management: Global Best Practices” a compendium prepared by National Disaster Management Authority, forest fires across the globe are increasing. Large area of forest fires have been reported in many countries including in Australia, Brazil, California and Canada. Some fires are too severe, occurring in habitats where they were very limited, unseasonal, or even more intense and frequent. In these cases, forest fires pose a serious threat to forest ecosystems and humans well-being.

As per the report, the forest fire engulfs large tracts of forest in the USA, Australia, Siberia, and Amazon. In 2018, fires burned through 1.8 million acres in California, USA. The Amazon saw more than 80,000 forest fires in 2019, an increase of 75% from 2018. The Australian State of Forest Report 2018 mentions that annual area of fire in Australia’s forests in the period 2011-12 to 2015-16 varied from a high value 27.4 million ha in 2012-13 to a low value of 14.9 million ha in 2015-16. Cumulative area affected by fire in the period is 106 million ha. In 2018, there were more than 7,000 forest fires in Canada, burning almost 2.3 million ha of forest.

As regards India, an area of 2,56,710 ha has been affected by fire in 2019 as reported by the States. Most of forest fires in the country are ground fires in which ground vegetation, etc. get burnt. The number of incidents of forest fire in the country varies from year to year depending on various natural and anthropogenic reasons. The numbers of fire alerts sent by Forest Survey of India to various States/UTs were 29547 during 2018-19 and 22447 during 2019-20 respectively.

- (b) As forests are managed by State Forest Departments, the responsibility of forest fire prevention and management lies primarily with the respective State Governments. The Ministry supports the efforts of State Governments/Union Territory Administrations in prevention and control of forest fire by providing financial assistance for various forest fire prevention and management measures such as creation and maintenance of fire lines in forest areas, engagement of fire watchers, creation of water storage structures in forest areas, strengthening of forest infrastructure, procurement of firefighting equipment, soil and moisture conservation works in high risk areas, awareness creation, incentivizing villages/communities for protection against forest fire etc. under the Centrally Sponsored Forest Fire Prevention and Management Scheme. State Governments prepare Annual Plan of Operation for prevention and management of forest fire under this central sponsored scheme and funds are released as per the Central Sponsored Scheme Guidelines.
- (c) The scheme provides for preparation of fire danger rating system and forest fire forecasting system. The States/UTs are provided satellite based forest fire alerts on near real time basis. In addition members of Joint Forest Management Committee, Eco- Development Committees, NGOs, volunteers, etc also get forest fire alerts in their registered mobile numbers. Till date around 1, 01, 550 users have been registered to receive fire alerts from the Forest Survey of India.
- (d) The details of fund released to the States/UTs under the Forest Fires Prevention and Management Scheme during the last three years are as follows:

(Rs. In Lakhs)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Earmarked/Allocated</b>	<b>Utilized</b>
2017-18	4525.00	3481.40
2018-19	5000.00	4657.42
2019-20	4700.00	4684.69

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