

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3069
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.08.2021

Carbon-neutral Village

3069. DR. SHASHI THAROOR:

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

- (a) the number of carbon-neutral zones in the country currently, State/UT-wise including Kerala;
- (b) whether Meenangadi village of Kerala has become the first carbon-neutral village thereby leading Wayanad to be the first such district in the country;
- (c) if so, whether the Ministry is considering some unique approaches, and voluntary commitments to encourage people to reduce their carbon footprint and identify specific plants to tackle climate change and curb greenhouse gas emissions;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether the Ministry intends to implement measures on lines of the initiatives taken by the State Government of Kerala such as managing greenhouses and managing plastic waste; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a) and (b) According to the information received from the Government of Kerala, no zone has been declared as carbon-neutral in Kerala. Keeping in mind the diversity across various States and districts of the country in the endowment of natural resources and in the nature of the overall development of the economy, the Government of India does not envisage or expect carbon neutrality declarations and efforts by all States/Union Territories and/or districts at the panchayat/village level.

(c) to (f) As a developing country Party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), it is recognized that India's priorities are sustainable development, inclusive growth and poverty eradication while addressing the global collective action problem of climate change. It is also recognized that it is the developed countries that have to take the lead in emissions reduction, and to provide finance, technology and capacity building support to the developing countries.

Under the Paris Agreement, India has submitted its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), which include: "To put forward and further propagate a healthy and

sustainable way of living based on traditions and values of conservation and moderation.” Thus all voluntary efforts and initiatives at energy efficiency, conservation of natural resources and growth with development are encouraged keeping in mind the need to improve living conditions, provide all basic amenities and advance the well-being of all.

With specific reference to the absorption of carbon dioxide, the most prominent greenhouse gas, by vegetation, it is noteworthy that forest and tree cover in the country is steadily increasing. As per the Third Biennial Report to the UNFCCC, India has reported that currently, our forest and tree cover has absorbed nearly 15% of our carbon dioxide emissions in 2016. It is anticipated that districts with high forest cover such as Wayanad, can effectively contribute to realising our NDC goal of increasing the carbon sequestration by continued conservation and enhancement of forest and tree cover with minimum degradation.

Further, the Government of India is committed to the constant improvement of waste management including limiting and managing plastic waste. The Government has put in place the policy framework, the State Governments have developed policies and several States have already banned single-use plastics.
