

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1098
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.12.2024

Check on Illegal Felling of Trees in Forest Areas

1098. SMT. HEMA MALINI:

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

- (a) whether the forest area has increased in several States on the one hand and the forest area has shrunk in some States on the other hand during the last few years, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the illegal felling of trees is the main reason for shrinking of forest areas in several States;
- (c) the details of the cases of illegal felling of trees in forest areas during the last five years along with the details of the action taken in this regard, State-wise; and
- (d) whether the extant law is not capable in checking the illegal felling of trees in forest areas and if so, whether there is any proposal to amend the law?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

- (a) & (b) Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun, an organization under the Ministry carries out the assessment of forest cover biennially. As per the latest India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2021, the total forest cover of the country is 7,13,789 square kilometer which is 21.71% of the geographical area of the country. The trend for the last three ISFRs shows an increase in the forest cover of the country. The forest cover has increased by 5,517 square kilometer in ISFR 2021 assessment as compared to ISFR 2017.

An increase in the forest cover has been observed in most of the States/UTs, which may be attributed to better conservation measures, protection, afforestation activities, tree plantation drives and agroforestry. In few States/UTs, the forest cover has declined which may be due to factors such as shifting cultivation, felling of trees, natural calamities, anthropogenic pressure and developmental activities.

The State/UT wise details of forest cover and change between the ISFR 2017 and ISFR 2021 and are given in **Annexure-I**.

- (c) & (d) The Protection and management of forests is primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Government/UT Administration. The particulars regarding the illegal felling of trees are maintained by concerned State Government/UT Administration. To prevent the illegal felling, appropriate legal provisions are available under the Indian Forest Act, 1927, the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 and the Local Forest Acts/Rules. Further, in order to prevent illegal felling,

regular patrolling is done by the field staff of the State Forest Department. The Joint Forest Management Committees have also been established at the village levels involving the local communities for protection, conservation and management of the forests.

**Annexure referred to in reply to part (a) of the Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 1098
due for answer on 02.12.2024 regarding 'Check on Illegal Felling of Trees in Forest
Areas'**

States/UTs wise details of change in Forest Cover from ISFR 2017 to ISFR 2021

(Area in square kilometre)

State/UT	Forest Cover		Change (2017-2021)
	ISFR 2017	ISFR 2021	
Andhra Pradesh	28,147.00	29,784.00	1,637.00
Telangana	20,419.00	21,214.00	795.00
Arunachal Pradesh	66,964.00	66,431.00	-533.00
Assam	28,105.00	28,312.00	207.00
Bihar	7,299.00	7,381.00	82.00
Chhattisgarh	55,547.00	55,717.00	170.00
Delhi	192.41	195.00	2.59
Goa	2,229.00	2,244.00	15.00
Gujarat	14,757.00	14,926.00	169.00
Haryana	1,588.00	1,603.00	15.00
Himachal Pradesh	15,100.00	15,443.00	343.00
Jharkhand	23,553.00	23,721.00	168.00
Karnataka	37,550.00	38,730.00	1,180.00
Kerala	20,321.00	21,253.00	932.00
Madhya Pradesh	77,414.00	77,493.00	79.00
Maharashtra	50,682.00	50,798.00	116.00
Manipur	17,346.00	16,598.00	-748.00
Meghalaya	17,146.00	17,046.00	-100.00
Mizoram	18,186.00	17,820.00	-366.00
Nagaland	12,489.00	12,251.00	-238.00
Odisha	51,345.00	52,156.00	811.00
Punjab	1,837.00	1,847.00	10.00
Rajasthan	16,572.00	16,655.00	83.00
Sikkim	3,344.00	3,341.00	-3.00
Tamil Nadu	26,281.00	26,419.00	138.00
Tripura	7,726.00	7,722.00	-4.00
Uttar Pradesh	14,679.00	14,818.00	139.00
Uttarakhand	24,295.00	24,305.00	10.00
West Bengal	16,847.00	16,832.00	-15.00
Jammu & Kashmir		21,387.00	
Ladakh	23,241.00	2,272.00	418
Andaman Nicobar Islands	6,742.00	6,744.00	2.00
Chandigarh	21.56	22.88	1.32
Dadra Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	227.49	227.75	0.26
Lakshadweep	27.10	27.10	0.00
Puducherry	53.67	53.30	-0.37
Total	7,08,273.23	7,13,789.03	5,515.80

* The report of ISFR 2019 reported combined forest cover of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh..