

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3478
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.08.2025

Preservation of Orans

3478. SHRI RAO RAJENDRA SINGH:

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

- (a) whether the Government has any information on the sacred groves that exist in the country and whether there is any criteria to determine the same;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the steps taken for the preservation of such groves and encouragement of forest worship by the local communities;
- (d) the steps taken to formalise such communities and to bring such areas under the purview of various biodiversity related laws; and
- (e) the steps taken for the protection of the Orans in Rajasthan?

ANSWER

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

- (a) and (d) Sacred groves are community conserved land parcels, which usually have a religious and cultural significance and contribute in conserving local biodiversity. The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 empowers State Government and Union Territory for declaration of any private or community land, as a community reserve, for protecting fauna, flora and traditional or cultural conservation values and practices. Additionally, in accordance with Section 37 of Biological Diversity Act, 2002 (as amended in 2023) the State Governments in consultation with local bodies may notify such areas of biodiversity importance as Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS).

The Ministry supports protection and conservation of sacred groves with a strong focus on community participation and eco-development initiatives.

- (e) In compliance of Hon'ble Supreme Court order dated 18-12-2024, an expert committee has been constituted by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to review the progress of identification, ground survey, satellite mapping, classification of sacred groves such as Orans, Dev-vans, Rundhs or by any other name in the State of Rajasthan.
