

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3675**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.08.2025

**Conservation of the Sundarbans Mangrove Ecosystem**

3675. SHRI JAGANNATH SARKAR:

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the 4.23 per cent decline in very dense mangrove cover in the Sunderbans during the last decade, if so, the reasons therefor;
- (b) the measures taken/being taken by the Government to address salinization, erosion, and threats to the mangrove ecosystem, including the Royal Bengal Tiger habitat; and
- (c) the plans to enhance conservation efforts in the Sunderbans to protect biodiversity, sustain local livelihoods, and strengthen its role as a natural buffer against cyclones?

**ANSWER**

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

- (a) The total mangrove cover in West Bengal, including the Sundarbans, as per the Indian State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2013 and ISFR 2023 is 2,097 sq. km. and 2,119.16 sq. km. respectively, thus reflecting a gain of 22.16 sq. km over the last decade. This growth is largely attributed to afforestation and eco-restoration efforts under State and Central schemes such as MISHTI and CAMPA–MGNREGS convergence. The Government has implemented both promotional and regulatory measures to protect, sustain, and augment mangrove plantations nationwide. Regulatory steps like the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) notifications have curbed destructive activities and promoted natural regeneration, while key promotional initiatives include the ‘Conservation and Management of Mangroves and Coral Reefs’ Scheme and the MISHTI programme, which is being implemented across all coastal States and Union Territories.
- (b) To address salinization, erosion, and other threats to the mangrove ecosystem including the Royal Bengal Tiger habitat, the Government, in coordination with the State Government of West Bengal, has implemented Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) projects involving mangrove afforestation, strengthening saline embankments, and promoting alternative livelihoods. Additional support comes from eco-restoration initiatives under the Green India Mission and conservation efforts for the Royal Bengal Tiger under Project Tiger in the Sundarban Tiger Reserve, which include anti-poaching camps, habitat improvement, and monitoring using camera traps and satellite telemetry. Continuous monitoring of salinity, hydrological changes,

and shoreline erosion is also conducted in collaboration with national scientific institutions.

- (c) For enhancing conservation efforts in the Sundarbans to protect biodiversity, sustain local livelihoods, and strengthen its role as a natural buffer against cyclones, key initiatives taken include preparation of a comprehensive management plan for the long-term conservation of the Sundarbans biosphere, with integrated attention to biodiversity, disaster resilience, and community participation. Efforts are underway to expand mangrove cover through afforestation and reforestation, strengthen early warning systems and climate-resilient infrastructure, and actively engage local communities in eco-development and mangrove stewardship through Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs).

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