

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4840
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23.03.2026

Forest Conservation and Environmental Protection Measures

4840. MS. S JOTHIMANI:
SHRI SANATAN PANDEY:

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

- (a) the current status of forest cover in the country, along with the data on forest area increased or decreased during the last five years, State/UT and year-wise;
- (b) the details of impact of decreasing forest on the forest dwellers/climate in case of its decline;
- (c) the measures taken by the Government to tackle deforestation and forest degradation, particularly in ecologically sensitive areas and the budget allocation for afforestation and reforestation programmes during the last five years and the current year;
- (d) whether the Government has undertaken any assessment of the impact of industrial, mining and infrastructure projects on forest cover and if so, the details and outcomes of such assessments;
- (e) the steps being taken to strengthen the protection of wildlife and forest ecosystems, including capacity building, enforcement mechanisms and funding for wildlife protection programmes; and
- (f) whether the Government has a long-term, comprehensive strategy for enhancing biodiversity conservation and ensuring climate resilience through forest and eco-system restoration and the timeline for its implementation?

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 of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, carries out the assessment of forest and tree cover of the country biennially and the findings are published in the India State of Forest Report (ISFR). The forest cover assessment is a wall-to-wall mapping exercise based on remote sensing supported by intensive ground verification and field data from the National Forest Inventory.

As per ISFR 2023, the forest cover of the country is 7,15,342.61 square kilometer which is 21.76% of the total geographical area of the country. The forest cover of the country has increased by 3,093.14 square kilometer as compared to the ISFR 2019. The State/UT wise details of change in forest cover in the country is given in **Annexure-I**.

- (c) & (e) The protection, and management of forest & wildlife is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. There are legal frameworks for the protection and management of forest & wildlife of the country which include, the Indian Forest Act, 1927; the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980; the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and the State Forest Acts and Rules, etc.

Further, to increase the forest and tree cover, the Ministry provides technical and financial support to the States and Union Territories (UTs) under various schemes and programmes such as National Mission for a Green India (GIM), Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA), Nagar Van

Yojana, Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes (MISHTI), etc.

The Ministry has approved/allocated funds under various afforestation and reforestation schemes. Under the Green India Mission (GIM), an amount of ₹676.19 crore has been approved/released during 2020-21 to 2025-26 (till date) for afforestation and eco-restoration activities. Further, under Nagar Van Yojana (NVY), funds amounting to ₹522.27 crore have been released since 2020-21. In addition, under MISHTI (Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes), ₹88.44 crore has been released since its inception in 2024-25 till 2025-26 (till date). The National Authority CAMPA has approved an outlay of ₹48,945.47 crore for Annual Plan of Operations of the States/UTs CAMPA during 2020-21 to 2025-26 (till date). These schemes and programmes together constitute the major interventions for afforestation, reforestation and ecological restoration in the country.

Further, a plantation campaign “एक पेड़ माँ के नाम #Plant4Mother” has also been launched on the occasion of World Environment Day 2024 and in the current year also to undertake plantation activities across the country. This campaign follows the “Whole of Government” and “Whole of Society” approach with participation of all stakeholders for increasing the green cover in the country. The campaign has contributed large scale plantation aiding the enhancement of green cover in the country.

The Government of India also supplements the efforts of the States/UTs in management & protection of wildlife by providing financial assistance under Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as Development of Wildlife Habitats (DWH) and Project Tiger & Elephant. Further, as outlined in the National Wildlife Action Plan (2017-31), emphasis is laid on strengthening and expanding the Protected Area network, adopting a landscape approach to conservation, integrating climate change concerns, enhancing research, human resource development, and promoting community participation. Further, the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has been established to strengthen enforcement and curb illegal wildlife trade in the country.

In addition, the National Action Plan on Forest Fires, 2018 provides a comprehensive framework for prevention, detection, control and management of forest fires through capacity building, use of modern technology, community participation and strengthening of forest fire management systems.

- (d) The ISFR assessment does not attribute forest cover change exclusively to specific sectors such as industrial, mining or infrastructure projects. ISFR 2023 has recorded that the positive changes in forest cover arise due to natural growth of vegetation, afforestation initiatives, improved protection of plantations and forest areas, increase in trees outside forests, and regeneration in shifting cultivation areas, while negative changes occur due to harvesting of short-rotation plantations, shifting cultivation, encroachment and natural calamities such as storms, floods and landslides.
- (f) The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2024-2030, provides an overarching framework for conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its components and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of biological resources, with a defined implementation period up to 2030.

Climate resilience is integrated into national and regional development planning through the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC), which comprises nine Missions, including those focused on adaptation in water, agriculture, habitat, human health, and the Himalayan ecosystem. Further, 34 States/UTs have prepared State Action Plans on Climate Change (SAPCCs) that outline context-specific adaptation strategies. The National Adaptation Fund for Climate Change (NAFCC) supports vulnerable States/UTs in implementing such measures. India has also reduced the

emission intensity of its GDP by 36% between 2005 and 2020, and its Long-Term Low-Carbon Development Strategy identifies key transitions - such as low-carbon energy systems, sustainable transport, resilient urban design, industrial decoupling, and enhanced forest and vegetation cover - to strengthen climate-resilient development pathways.

Annexure referred to in reply to part (a) of the Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 4840 due for answer on 23.03.2026 regarding 'Forest Conservation and Environmental Protection Measures'

State/UT wise change in Forest Cover between ISFR 2019 and ISFR 2023

(Area in Square kilometre)

S.No.	State/UT	Forest Cover (ISFR 2019)	Forest Cover (ISFR 2023)	Change in Forest Cover
1	Andhra Pradesh	29,137.00	30,084.96	947.96
2	Arunachal Pradesh	66,688.00	65,881.57	-806.43
3	Assam	28,327.00	28,313.555	-13.45
4	Bihar	7,306.00	7,532.45	226.45
5	Chhattisgarh	55,611.00	55,811.75	200.75
6	Delhi	195.44	195.28	-0.16
7	Goa	2,237.00	2,265.72	28.72
8	Gujarat	14,857.00	15,016.64	159.64
9	Haryana	1,602.00	1,614.26	12.26
10	Himachal Pradesh	15,434.00	15,580.35	146.35
11	Jharkhand	23,611.00	23,765.78	154.78
12	Karnataka	38,575.00	39,254.27	679.27
13	Kerala	21,144.00	22,059.36	915.36
14	Madhya Pradesh	77,482.00	77,073.44	-408.56
15	Maharashtra	50,778.00	50,858.53	80.53
16	Manipur	16,847.00	16,585.46	-261.54
17	Meghalaya	17,119.00	16,966.84	-152.16
18	Mizoram	18,006.00	17,990.46	-15.54
19	Nagaland	12,486.00	12,222.47	-263.53
20	Odisha	51,619.00	52,433.56	814.56
21	Punjab	1,849.00	1,846.09	-2.91
22	Rajasthan	16,630.00	16,548.21	-81.79
23	Sikkim	3,342.00	3,358.40	16.40
24	Tamil Nadu	26,364.00	26,450.22	86.22
25	Telangana	20,582.00	21,179.04	597.04
26	Tripura	7,726.00	7,584.77	-141.23
27	Uttar Pradesh	14,806.00	15,045.80	239.80
28	Uttarakhand	24,303.00	24,303.83	0.83
29	West Bengal	16,902.00	16,832.33	-69.67
30	A&N Islands	6,743.00	6,732.92	-10.08
31	Chandigarh	22.03	25	2.97
32	Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu	227.49	225.62	-1.87
33	Jammu & Kashmir	21,122.00	21,346.39	224.39
34	Ladakh	2,490.00	2,285.92	-204.08
35	Lakshadweep	27.1	27.06	-0.04
36	Puducherry	52.41	44.31	-8.10
	Grand Total	7,12,249.47	7,15,342.61	3,093.14