

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2635
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02.08.2016

Depletion in Forest Area/Cover

2635. SHRIMATI BHAVANA PUNDALIKRAO GAWALI PATIL:
SHRI ARJUN LAL MEENA:

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

- (a) whether depletion in forest area and loss of forest cover has been recorded in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof during each of the last three years, State/UT-wise along with the reasons therefor;
- (c) the extent of depletion in green cover recorded in large metropolis in the country during the said period;
- (d) whether builders and real estate agencies are urging the Government to allow/grant them permission to build on agricultural land, wasteland, hilly areas, coastal land and forest areas in the country; and
- (e) if so, the action plan prepared by the Government to safeguard such land?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE)

- (a) & (b) Forest Survey of India, Dehradun is carrying out the assessment of forest cover of the country biennially and the findings are published in India State of Forest Report. The latest report in the series is India State of Forest Report 2015. As per this report, the total forest cover of the country is 7, 01,673 square kilometers which is 21.34% of the total geographical area of the country. There is a net increase of 3775 square kilometers in the forest cover of the country as compared with India State of Forest Report-2013. The detailed list showing forest cover and change in forest cover States/UTs wise is given in **Annexure I**. The reasons for decline in the forest cover State/UTs wise is given in **Annexure II**.
- (c) As per the information provided by the Ministry of Urban Development, no information on depletion of area under forest is available. However the forest cover of metropolitan cities as per Master Plan of the city concerned is given as under:-

- (i) Mumbai - 86.57 square kilometers
 - (ii) Delhi - 180 square kilometers
 - (iii) Chennai - 24 square kilometers
 - (iv) Kolkata - Not Available
 - (v) Bengaluru - 97 square kilometers
 - (vi) Hyderabad - 88.4 square kilometers
 - (vii) Jaipur (Region)-74.47 square kilometers
 - (viii) Chandigarh - 34.4 square kilometers
- (d) Granting of permission to construct buildings comes within the purview of urban local bodies and urban development authorities which grant permission for change of land use under the provisions of Town and Country Planning Act of the respective states.
- (e) The management and protection of forest area is primarily the responsibility of concerned State/UT Governments. However, there are Central Acts such as Indian Forest Act, 1927, Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and State Acts/Rules to deal with issues related to protection and management of forest areas. Use of forest land for non-forest purpose, including in Metropolitan Areas requires prior approval of Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. Under this Act, in order to safeguard the forest land, guidelines have been issued that the Central Government will not entertain any proposal for diversion of forest land for construction of residential or dwelling houses. However, such diversion may be allowed for defence projects, construction of schools, hospitals/dispensary, community halls, cooperatives, panchayats, tiny rural industrial sheds of the Government etc., which are to be put up for the benefits to the people of that area. Such diversion should be strictly limited to the actually needed area.

**Annexure referred to in reply to part (b) of the Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2635
due for answer on 02.08.2016 regarding 'Depletion in Forest Area/Cover'**

Change in Forest Cover in States/UTs as per India State of Forest Report (ISFR)- 2015

(Area in square Kilometers)

States/UTs	Geographical Area	Total Forest Cover 2015	Total Forest Cover 2013	Change in Forest Cover	Change Percent
Andhra Pradesh	1,60,204	24,424	24,357	67	0.27
Arunachal Pradesh	83,743	67,248	67321	-73	-0.11
Assam	78,438	27,623	27671	-48	-0.17
Bihar	94,163	7,288	7291	-3	-0.04
Chhattisgarh	1,35,191	55,586	55621	-35	-0.06
Delhi	1,483	189	180	9	4.75
Goa	3,702	2,224	2219	5	0.22
Gujarat	1,96,022	14,660	14653	7	0.05
Haryana	44,212	1,584	1586	-2	-0.13
Himachal Pradesh	55,673	14,696	14683	13	0.09
Jammu & Kashmir	2,22,236	22,988	22538	450	1.96
Jharkhand	79,714	23,478	23473	5	0.02
Karnataka	1,91,791	36,421	36132	289	0.79
Kerala	38,863	19,239	17922	1317	6.85
Madhya Pradesh	3,08,245	77,462	77522	-60	-0.08
Maharashtra	3,07,713	50,628	50632	-4	-0.01
Manipur	22,327	16,994	16990	4	0.02
Meghalaya	22,429	17,217	17288	-71	-0.41
Mizoram	21,081	18,748	19054	-306	-1.63
Nagaland	16,579	12,966	13044	-78	-0.60
Odisha	1,55,707	50,354	50347	7	0.01
Punjab	50,362	1,771	1772	-1	-0.06
Rajasthan	3,42,239	16,171	16086	85	0.53
Sikkim	7,096	3,357	3358	-1	-0.03
Tamil Nadu	1,30,058	26,345	23844	2501	9.49
Telangana	114,865	21,591	21759	-168	-0.78
Tripura	10,486	7,811	7866	-55	-0.70
Uttar Pradesh	2,40,928	14,461	14349	112	0.77
Uttarakhand	53,483	24,240	24508	-268	-1.11
West Bengal	88,752	16,828	16805	23	0.14
A&N Islands	8,249	6,751	6711	40	0.59
Chandigarh	114	22,03	17.26	4.77	21.65
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	491	206	213	-7	-3.40
Daman & Diu	112	19.61	9	10.61	52.73
Lakshadweep	32	27.06	27.06	0	0.00
Puducherry	480	55.38	50.06	5.32	9.61
Grand Total	32,87,263	701,673	697898	3775	0.54

Annexure referred to in reply to part (b) of the Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2635 due for answer on 02.08.2016 regarding 'Depletion in Forest Area/Cover'**States showing decline in forest cover and reasons for decline**

Sl. No.	States/UTs	Change (km²)	Reasons for decline
1	Mizoram	-306	Shifting cultivation and other Biotic pressure
2	Uttarakhand	-268	Rotational felling and diversion of forest lands for developmental activities
3	Telangana	-168	Shifting cultivation and other Biotic pressure
4	Nagaland	-78	Shifting cultivation and other Biotic pressure
5	Arunachal Pradesh	-73	Shifting cultivation and diversion of forest lands for development activities
6	Meghalaya	-71	Shifting cultivation and other Biotic pressure
7	Madhya Pradesh	-60	Rotational felling, submergence of forest cover encroachment etc
8	Tripura	-55	Shifting cultivation and encroachment on forest lands
9	Assam	-48	Rotational felling, Shifting cultivation, Biotic pressure etc.
10	Chhattisgarh	-35	Rotational felling, diversion of forest land for other activities etc
11	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	-7	Heavy biotic pressure
12	Maharashtra	-4	Rotational felling, diversion of forest land, encroachment etc.
	Others (4)	-7	
	Total	-1180	

