

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2444
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.08.2026

Groundwater Recharge through Community Forests

2444. SHRI DHARAMBIR SINGH:

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

- (a) whether the Government has undertaken any initiative to scientifically link afforestation with groundwater recharge and watershed restoration in water-stressed regions of the country, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether any policy has been formulated for developing community recharge forests on degraded Government land through participation of Panchayati Raj Institutions and local communities, if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the steps taken to monitor the environmental and hydrological impact of such plantations using geospatial technology and remote sensing; and
- (d) whether the Government proposes to identify suitable areas in the Bhiwani–Mahendragarh Lok Sabha Constituency for establishment of Community Recharge Forests under the said initiative, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

- (a) The Government promotes afforestation as an integral component of watershed management, river rejuvenation and groundwater recharge through various programmes. Afforestation, soil and moisture conservation, catchment treatment and restoration of degraded landscapes are undertaken in convergence with water conservation initiatives to enhance infiltration, reduce soil erosion and improve hydrological functions in water-stressed areas. The Green India Mission (GIM), one of the Missions under the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC), promotes restoration of degraded forests and ecosystems through afforestation, assisted natural regeneration and soil and moisture conservation measures, which contribute to improved watershed functions and groundwater recharge. These efforts are complemented by the Aravalli Green Wall Initiative through convergence with GIM, CAMPA, MGNREGS and State schemes
- (b) Under GIM, restoration activities are implemented through participatory planning involving Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs), Gram Panchayats and other local institutions, wherever applicable. No separate policy has been formulated for development of "community recharge forests". However, the Mission supports restoration of degraded forests and other eligible lands through community participation.
- (c) GIM envisages the use of remote sensing, geo-tagging and periodic monitoring for planning and assessment of restoration activities, supplemented by independent evaluations undertaken from time to time.

- (d) As per information received from the Government of Haryana, bio-drainage plantations are being raised in waterlogged areas of Bhiwani district. Under the Green India Mission, implementation areas are identified by the respective State Governments/UT Administrations based on ecological priorities, approved Perspective Plans and availability of funds. Bhiwani and Mahendragarh districts fall within the Aravalli Green Wall landscape, where activities are taken up by the State Government through convergence with ongoing schemes, as per approved plans.
