

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**LOK SABHA**  
**STARRED QUESTION NO: 100**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29.07.2024

**Forest cover in Kerala**

\*100. SHRI SHAFI PARAMBIL:

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

- (a) the details of the forest cover in the State of Kerala as of 31st March 2024;
- (b) the details of increase or decrease in the forest cover in the said State during the last five years and the reasons therefor;
- (c) the measures taken by the Government for the protection of forest cover in the said State; and
- (d) whether there is any monitoring mechanism to oversee the changes in forest cover in the said State and if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE  
(SHRI BHUPENDER YADAV)

(a) to (d) The statement is laid on the table of the House.

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**Statement refer to in reply to part (a) to (d) of Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 100 due for reply on 29.07.2024 regarding ‘Forest cover in Kerala’ by Shri Shafi Parambil:**

- (a) The Forest Survey of India (FSI), Dehradun, an organization under the Ministry assesses forest cover of the country biennially since 1987 and the findings are published in India State of Forest Report (ISFR). The wall-to-wall forest cover mapping exercise is carried out using remote sensing supported by intensive ground verification and field data from the National Forest Inventory. As per the latest ISFR 2021, the total forest cover in the State of Kerala is 21,253 square kilometers.
- (b) The details of change in the forest cover in the State of Kerala during the last five years are as follows: -

<b>ISFR year</b>	<b>Total Forest Cover (in sq km)</b>	<b>Change wrt previous Assessment (in sq km)</b>
2017	20,321	-
2019	21,144	823
2021	21,253	109

There is an increase of 932 square kilometers in forest cover in the State of Kerala between ISFR 2017 and ISFR 2021. The increase in forest cover in the State may be attributed to better conservation measures, protection, afforestation activities, tree plantation drives, and agroforestry.

- (c) The protection and management of forests is primarily the responsibility of the State Government. The Government has formulated adequate legal and regulatory frameworks at national and state levels in the country, which regulate the protection, conservation, and management of the forests of the country. The major central level policy and acts concerning the management and conservation of forests include the National Forest Policy, 1988, Indian Forest Act, 1927, Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam 1980, and Biological Diversity Act, 2002, etc.

Further, the following protection measures have also been taken by the State of Kerala.

- i. Consolidation of Forest Boundary: Survey of forest boundaries including the construction of boundary pillars has been completed in most of the forest divisions.
- ii. Protection measures: Earnest efforts are made by the State Government to protect the forest from encroachments, illegal trespassing, and other biotic interferences. Strict vigil by the various wings of the State Forest Department through regular patrolling and perambulations is done including booking offenses for any violation of Forest Laws and Rules.
- iii. Habitat improvement measures: Habitat improvement activities are undertaken to sustain the quality and ecosystem services of the forest, as envisaged in the approved Working plan/Management plan of each forest division/Protected Area.

- (d) The change in forest cover in the country is measured through forest and tree cover assessment, which is biennially done by the Forest Survey of India, Dehradun based on remote sensing supported by intensive ground verification. The results are published in the India State of Forest Report. Further, the State Government monitors the forests through perambulation and patrolling to ensure protection of forest areas. Participatory Forest Management (PFM) is implemented to actively engage public in the protection and monitoring of forests and forest resources of the State.

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