

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE & FARMERS' WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & FARMERS' WELFARE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1316
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 30TH JULY, 2024

EFFECTS OF WATER RESOURCES DEPLETION ON AGRICULTURE

1316. SHRI E T MOHAMMED BASHEER:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS' WELFARE कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण मंत्री be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government realise that water resources depletion and biodiversity loss is affecting the agricultural sector in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the details of the corrective steps that the Government proposes to introduce in this regard?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

कृषि एवं किसान कल्याण राज्य मंत्री (SHRI RAMNATH THAKUR)

(a) to (c): It is a fact that the loss of biodiversity and depletion of water resources affect the agriculture sector. However, Government of India is undertaking various initiatives for ensuring the sustainable agriculture in the country. To promote sustainable agriculture and good agricultural practices with environment concern, Government is implementing National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) which is one of the National Missions under National Action Plan on Climate Change. NMSA aims to evolve and implement strategies to make Indian agriculture more resilient to the changing climate. NMSA was approved for three major components i.e. Rainfed Area Development, On Farm Water Management and Soil Health Management. Subsequently, new programmes such as Soil Health Card, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana, Mission Organic Value Chain Development in North Eastern Region and Agroforestry, National Bamboo Mission, Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) etc. were also included under NMSA.

Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW) is also implementing Crop Diversification Programme (CDP) in original green revolution States viz. Punjab, Haryana

and in Western Uttar Pradesh to divert the area of water intensive paddy crop to alternative crops like oilseeds, pulses, coarse cereal, nutri cereals, cotton etc. PDMC Scheme focuses on enhancing water use efficiency at farm level through use of Micro Irrigation technologies, namely, Drip and Sprinkler Irrigation systems. In order to ensure sustainable management of water resources for agricultural purposes, Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) suggests rainwater harvesting measures, groundwater recharge and conjunctive use of surface and groundwater resources besides use of micro-irrigation and resource conservation technologies. ICAR also suggests diversifying cropping pattern from water intensive crops to pulses, oilseeds, maize and agroforestry alongwith other agronomic practices like raised bed sowing, alternate furrow irrigation, mulching, Direct Seeded Rice (DSR) through seed drills and drum seeders, System of Rice Intensification (SRI), alternate wetting & drying method, laser land leveling, adoption of varieties for judicious use of water. The Council also imparts training on these aspects to educate farmers.

Government of India is committed to accord high priority to water conservation and its management. To this effect, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) is being implemented in the country with an aim to enhance physical access of water on farm and expand cultivable area under assured irrigation, improve on farm water use efficiency, introduce sustainable water conservation practices etc. PMKSY is being implemented by Ministry of Jal Shakti and Department of Land Resources. The Jal Shakti Abhiyan is being organised every year with the primary aim to effectively harvest the monsoon rainfall through creation of artificial recharge structures, watershed management, recharge and reuse structures, intensive afforestation and awareness generation etc. Government of India also supports construction of water harvesting and conservation works such as farm ponds, dug wells, check dams and community ponds, etc. through Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.
