

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:353
ANSWERED ON:20.11.2001
UTILISATION OF WASTELAND IN THE COUNTRY
TRILOCHAN KANUNGO

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government are aware of the fact that the wasteland lying in every State is not being properly utilised;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government have any proposal for productive utilisation of the vast tract of wasteland in the country; and
- (d) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA)

(a) to (d) As per the recent 'Wastelands Atlas of India-2000', prepared by National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA), Hyderabad, it is estimated that there is a 63.85 mha. of wastelands in the country.

Adequate care is being taken to develop the wastelands through watershed development programmes mainly under Integrated Wastelands Development Programme, Drought Prone Areas Programme and Desert Development Programmes being implemented by the Department of Land Resources. These programmes aim at developing waste and degraded lands, checking land degradation, putting such lands into productive use and increasing the availability of bio-mass specially fuel wood and fodder.

These programmes are being implemented through watershed approach as per Guidelines for Watershed Development w.e.f. 1.4.95. Since then, 298 watershed projects under IWDP to develop an area of 29.24 lakh ha., 11,738 projects under DPAP to develop an area of 58.69 lakh ha. and 5353 projects under DDP to develop an area 26.76 lakh ha. have been sanctioned and are under implementation at various stages as on 31.3.2001. During 2001-2002, the Department has sanctioned 1212 projects under DDP to develop an area of 6.06 lakh hectares and 2043 projects under DPAP to develop an area of 10.21 lakh hectares and proposes to sanction projects covering 8 lakh hectares under IWDP.