

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:7
ANSWERED ON:24.07.2006
DEGRADED FOREST LAND
Jindal Shri Naveen

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) the total area of the degraded forest land in the country at present;
- (b) the States which have the maximum degraded forest land;
- (c) the steps being taken to develop such land;
- (d) the financial assistance given to the States for this purpose during the last three years;
- (e) whether it is proposed to involve private agencies to restore the degraded forest land; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

(a) to (f) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 7 FOR REPLY ON 24.7.2006 RAISED BY SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL REGARDING DEGRADED FOREST LAND.

(a) Separate assessment of degraded forest land in the country as a classification has not been undertaken by the Ministry of Environment and Forests. However, as per the latest State of Forest Report, 2003 (SFR, 2003) published by the Forest Survey of India, the 'Open Forest' and 'Scrub Forest' of the country constitutes an area of 287,769 Sq. Km. and 40,269 Sq. Km. respectively, totaling upto 328,038 Sq. Km., which may be categorized as degraded forest.

(b) The State-wise 'Open Forest' and 'Scrub Forest' which together constitute degraded forest, as per SFR, 2003, are provided in the table given in Annexure. First three States having the maximum Open plus Scrub Forests are Madhya Pradesh (36,964 Sq. Km.), Andhra Pradesh (29,788 Sq. Km.) and Orissa (25,542 Sq. Km.).

(c) and (d) The Ministry of Environment and Forests is implementing National Afforestation Programme (NAP) scheme for regeneration of degraded forests and adjoining areas. The scheme is being implemented through a two – tier decentralized set-up of Forest Development Agency (FDA) at the Forest Division level and Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) at the village level. As on 31.3.2006, 715 FDA projects have been operationalised to treat an area of 9,240 Sq. Km. through 23,750 JFMCs. A sum of Rs. 689.56 crores has been released to the FDAs in different States during the last three years (2003-04 to 2005-06). In addition, various State Governments are also implementing schemes for improvement of degraded forests utilising State funds and externally-aided projects.

(e) and (f) A Multi-Stakeholder Partnership framework for forestation of degraded lands has been envisaged to involve land owning agency, the local village community and the sponsor who may be a company, firm, user group, trust, society or organization in public or private sector, providing for benefit sharing among partners.