

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2107

ANSWERED ON:10.03.2010

DECREASING FOREST COVER

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

- (a) whether the Government proposes to formulate an Integrated Forest Protection Scheme to increase forest cover in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the targets fixed for afforestation during Tenth Five Year Plan have been achieved;
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor including the funds spent during the said period;
- (e) the targets fixed for afforestation during Eleventh Five Year Plan; and
- (f) the measures taken or proposed to be taken to achieve this target?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) & (b) No, Sir. The "Integrated Forest Protection Scheme", since renamed as "Intensification of Forest Management Scheme" aims primarily at protection of forests in the country and not at increasing the forest cover.

(c), (d) & (e) The targets for afforestation/tree planting are fixed annually and monitored under 20 Point Programme. The targets and achievements for the year 2002-03 to 2006-07 in 10th Five Year Plan and from 2007-08 to 2009-10 upto October 2009 in 11th Five Year Plan are as given below:

Area in million ha.

Five Year Plan Year Target Achievement

Tenth 2002-03 1.53 1.14

2003-04 1.50 1.22

2004-05 2.12 1.58

2005-06 2.26 1.99

2006-07 2.61 2.32

Eleventh 2007-08 1.86 1.54

2008-09 1.77 1.67

2009-10 1.81 1.05 #

Achievement upto October 2009

Few states have not achieved the targets. Some of the reasons for less achievement of targets as reported by the States/UTs are:

(i) Inadequate funds available with the State Forest Departments/other agencies

(ii) Poor infrastructure and capacity of the Department including staff shortage

(f) The following steps have been taken by the Government for Afforestation/Tree Planting:

(i) The Ministry of Environment and Forests is implementing a major scheme namely: National Afforestation Programme (NAP), a

Centrally Sponsored Scheme for regeneration of degraded forests and adjoining areas in the country. As on 18-02-2010, 800 FDA projects have been approved in 28 States to cover a project area of 1.69 million ha. Rs.2231.10 crore has been released so far under NAP Scheme.

(ii) Two new Eco- Task Force (ETF) Battalions have been operationalised by the Ministry for ecorestoration of degraded areas in Assam, in addition to supporting the existing four ETF battalions in the country.

(iii) A new scheme for afforestation involving Panchayati Raj Institution, Gram/ Panchayat Van Yojana has been mooted by the Ministry.

(iv) Tree planting is a permissible activity under a number of schemes of other Ministries of Government of India, notably NREGS, Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture etc.

(v) Under National Action Plan on Climate Change announced by the Prime Minister, National Mission for a Green India is included as one of the eight missions.

(vi) A new state plan scheme of 'Additional Central Assistance for Accelerated Programme of Restoration and Regeneration of Forest Cover' has been introduced during 2009-10.