

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
AGRICULTURE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:701  
ANSWERED ON:02.03.2010  
DIVERSION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND  
Choudhry Smt. Shruti

**Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether large scale diversion of agriculture land has led to shrinking of arable land in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to check such diversion in view of lurking food crisis on this account?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a): As per the available estimates, the agricultural land has marginally decreased from 182.74 million ha. in 2005-06 to 182.44 million ha. in 2007-08 across the country.

(b): State-wise data on the extent of agricultural land in each of last three years (2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08) is annexed.

(c): With a view to prevent the use of agriculture land for non-agricultural purposes and sustaining food security of the country, the National Policy for Farmers 2007 has recommended that prime farmland must be conserved for agriculture except under exceptional circumstances, provided that the agencies that are provided with agricultural land for non-agricultural projects should compensate for treatment and full development of equivalent degraded/wastelands elsewhere. For non-agricultural purposes, as far as possible, land with low biological potential for farming would be earmarked and allocated. State Governments have been advised to earmark lands with low biological potential such as uncultivable land, land affected by salinity, acidity, etc., for non-agricultural development activities, including industrial and construction activities.

In addition, the National Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy, 2007 formulated by Ministry of Rural Development, Department of Land Resources came into effect on 31.10.2007. The policy provides that only the minimum area of land commensurate with the purpose of a project may be acquired. Also, as far as possible, projects may be set up on wasteland, degraded land or un-irrigated land. Further, acquisition of agricultural land for non-agricultural use in the project may be kept to the minimum; multi-cropped land may be avoided to the extent possible for such purposes and acquisition of irrigated land, if unavoidable, may be kept to the minimum. The Policy has been sent to the States/UTs for implementation.

Government of India, Ministry of Agriculture has also intensified programmes implemented under the National Food Security Mission (NFSM), National Horticulture Mission (NHM) and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) with a view to increase the productivity of agricultural land and also to sustain the foodgrain production across the country.