

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1974

ANSWERED ON:09.03.2010

ARABLE LAND

Anuragi Shri Ghansyam ;Munda Shri Arjun ;Swamygowda Shri N Cheluvaraya Swamy

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the total area of waste, desert and hilly land in the country including Jharkhand separately indicating the percentage of waste land, State-wise;
- (b) the details of such area converted into agricultural land during each of the last three years and the current year;
- (c) whether any target fixed for conversion of wasteland into cultivable land during the 11th Plan;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether there is any proposal to cultivate Jatropha, a hydro-carbon plant which yields bio-fuel on waste land; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

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): Wastelands is described as "degraded land which can be brought under vegetative cover with reasonable effort, and which is currently under-utilised and land which is deteriorating for lack of appropriate water and soil management or on account of natural causes". State-wise details of wastelands and its percentage over total geographical area of the country including Jharkhand is annexed.

(b): Ministry of Agriculture does not maintain data on the area of wastelands converted to agricultural land. However, under various Watershed Development Programmes, an area of 4.06 million ha. , which also includes wastelands has been developed during last three years (2006-2009) and upto December,2009 of the current year.

(c) & (d): There is no specific scheme/programme for conversion of wastelands into cultivable land.

(e) & (f): At present there is no specific scheme in the Ministry of Agriculture to promote cultivation of Jatropha on wastelands.