

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
AGRICULTURE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:248  
ANSWERED ON:27.07.2010  
DESERT AND BARREN LAND  
Swamygowda Shri N Cheluvarya Swamy

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

- (a) the details of desert, arid and barren land in the country, State-wise;
- (b) whether there is an increase in desert, arid and barren land during the last three years;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (d) the steps taken by the Government to check degradation/desertification of land;and
- (e) the extent to which agricultural production has decreased due to increase in the said land?

**Answer**

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

- (a): Desert land (mostly arid) and barren land comes under category of barren and unculturable land. As per the available estimates (2008), an area of about 17.30 million ha. is categorized as barren and unculturable land in the country. State-wise details are annexed.
- (b) & (c): No, Madam. Barren & unculturable land has decreased from 17.58 million ha. in 2003-04 to 17.30 million ha. in 2007-08.
- (d): With a view to prevent soil erosion and land degradation, the Government of India. Ministry of Agriculture is implementing various Watershed Development Programmes, namely; National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPA), Soil Conservation in the Catchments of River Valley Project and Flood Prone River (RVP & FPR), Reclamation and Development of Alkali and Acid Soils (RADAS) and Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSCA) across the country.
- (e): As per the available estimates Agricultural production has increased from 213.19 million tonnes in 2003-04 to 234.47 million tonnes in 2008-09.