

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3130
ANSWERED ON:29.11.2010
CONVERSION OF BARREN LAND INTO ARABLE LAND
Singh Shri Jagada Nand

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether any assessment of fallow land has been made at the National level;
- (b) if so, the details of fallow and barren land, State-wise;
- (c) whether any survey have been made for conversion of fallow and barren lands into arable lands in the States particularly in Bihar;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) the total area of such land converted into arable land in Bihar including other States during the last three years and the current year and details of the total expenses incurred thereon;
- (f) whether any targets has been fixed so far for conversion of such lands into arable lands keeping in view the increasing foodgrains demand at the national level; and
- (g) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SISIR KUMAR ADHIKARI)

(a) & (b) As per the information published in Agricultural Statistics at a Glance 2010 by the Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, fallow lands in the country is 25.15 million hectares. The State-wise extent of fallow lands in the country is given at Annexure-I.

National Remote Sensing Centre, Department of Space has been sponsored by the Department of Land Resources to prepare Wastelands Atlas of India and the latest such study brought out in 2010 shows that estimated wasteland in the country is 47.23 million ha. The State-wise extent of wastelands in the country is at Annexure-II.

(c) No Sir.

(d) Question does not arise.

(e) to (g) A project on Wasteland Change Analysis between 2005-06 and 2008-09 has been given by the Department of Land Resources to National Remote Sensing Centre, Hyderabad to understand the dynamics of wasteland through comparison of spatial statistics. This study will enable the Department to assess the extent of wastelands converted to cultivable land between these two periods. However, the assessment of yearwise acreage of wasteland converted to cultivable land is not feasible through this study.

Department of Land Resources is implementing area development programmes namely Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP), Desert Development Programme (DDP) and Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP) on watershed basis. These three programmes have now been integrated and consolidated into a single modified programme called Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) on 26.02.2009. IWMP is being implemented as per Common Guidelines for Watershed Development Projects, 2008. The objective of watershed development programme is not confined to converting wasteland to agriculture land but also it is to promote prevention of soil run-off, regeneration of vegetation, rain-water harvesting, recharging of ground water, enable multi cropping and promote livelihoods.

A total amount of Rs. 6104.16 crore has been released under the above schemes to all the States during last three years and the current year (upto 24.11.2010), out of which Rs. 15.05 crore has been released to Bihar.