

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
AGRICULTURE  
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:270

ANSWERED ON:15.03.2011

ARABLE LAND

Gaikwad Shri Eknath Mahadeo;Kashinath Shri Taware Suresh

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

- (a) whether large tracts of arable land in the country including Orissa are affected by degradation and natural disasters leading to fall in agricultural production and productivity;
- (b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the details of arable land available in the country and the percentage of such land susceptible to natural disasters, State-wise;
- (c) whether the Government has any plan for protection, reclamation and expansion of such arable land; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the funds allocated in this regard during each of the last three years and the current year, State-wise?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 270 DUE FOR REPLY ON 15TH MARCH, 2011.

(a) & (b): Study by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) in 2005 indicates that out of a total geographical area of 328.73 million hectare in the country, 146.82 million hectare is affected by various kinds of land degradations. As per available estimates in 2010-11, about 8.81 million hectare of arable land was affected by various types of natural disasters viz. flood/ cyclonic storms/ landslides/ cloudburst and drought, across the country including Orissa upto 31.01.2011. State-wise details of degraded land, arable land and area affected by natural calamities is at Annexure-I. However, Government of India is implementing various Watershed Development Programmes for development of degraded lands. It is because of these programmes that the net area sown remains largely unchanged at 141.00 million hectare. Due to various technological advances in agricultural sector, despite natural calamities, (as per available/advance estimates), production of foodgrains has increased from 217.28 million tonnes in 2006-07 to 232.07 million tonnes in 2010-11. During the same period, production of horticultural crops has also increased from 191.81 million tonnes to 233.81 million tonnes.

(c) & (d): Agriculture and Disaster Management are subject matters of State Governments. Government of India coordinates and supplements efforts of State Governments for providing relief assistance in wake of natural calamity. State Governments have readily available State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF), to provide necessary assistance. In case of calamity of 'severe nature', when available resources under SDRF account are inadequate, additional assistance is extended from National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) after following laid down procedures which includes visit of Inter-Ministerial Central Team for assessment of damages. State-wise details of allocation of fund and releases under SDRF and NDRF including Orissa in each of the last three years (2007-08 to 2009-10) and current year are at Annexure-II.

For protection, reclamation of arable land and to maintain balance in various types of land uses, Government of India is implementing various Watershed Development Programmes(WDPs), namely; National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPR), Soil Conservation in Catchments of River Valley Project and Flood Prone River (RVP & FPR), Reclamation and Development of Alkali & Acid Soils (RADAS), Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSCA) and Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) across the country. State-wise details of fund allocated under these WDPs in each of the last three years (2007-08 to 2009-10) and current year are at Annexure-III.