

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1845  
ANSWERED ON:11.08.2011  
CONVERSION OF WASTE LAND  
Thamaraiselvan Shri R.

**Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government has taken special initiatives recently to convert waste land into cultivable land;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the total area of waste land converted into cultivable land during each of the last three years;
- (d) whether the Government has undertaken any survey to reveal the level of farming on the waste land converted into cultivable land; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof;

**Answer**

MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SISHIR KUMAR ADHIKARI)

(a) & (b): The Department of Land Resources has been implementing three area development schemes viz., Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP), Desert Development Programme (DDP) and Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP) on watershed basis since 1995-96. The Technical Committee on DPAP, DDP and IWDP was constituted under the chairmanship of Shri S. Parthasarathy (2006) to address major issues in watershed programmes and recommended viable strategies and mechanisms for effective implementation of these programmes. Based on the suggestions of the Committee, National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA), in coordination with Planning Commission, formulated Common Guidelines for Watershed Development Projects, 2008 to give impetus to watershed development programmes. The provisions in the Common Guidelines and the observations of the Parthasarathy Committee necessitated modifications in the watershed schemes of the Department of Land Resources. Accordingly, DPAP, DDP and IWDP have been integrated and consolidated into a single modified programme called Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) with effect from 26.02.2009 to be implemented under these guidelines. The main features of IWMP include provisions of development of micro-watersheds on cluster basis; reduced number of installments; delegation of power of sanction of projects to the States; dedicated institutions; capacity building of stakeholders; monitoring & evaluation; specific budget provision for detailed project report preparation; livelihood for assetless people; and production system & micro-enterprises. Under the new modified programme of IWMP, watershed projects are implemented on rainfed/ degraded lands in the country.

(c) 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 wastelands 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.

(d) No survey has been undertaken to reveal the level of farming on the waste land converted into cultivable land.

(e) Question does not arise.