

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:130

ANSWERED ON:09.08.2011

SOIL HEALTH

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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the health of soil is degenerating in the wake of the indiscriminate use of chemical fertilisers and insecticides in the country;
- (b) if so, whether the Union Government has made any assessment in this regard;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government is aware that some of the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) have commissioned a survey on the state of soil health in the country and suggested ways and means to improve soil health;
- (e) if so, the details alongwith the findings thereof; and
- (f) the steps being taken to improve soil health?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE(SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

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

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 130 DUE FOR REPLY ON 9TH AUGUST, 2011.

(a) to (c): Imbalanced use of fertilizers, low addition of organic matter and non- replacement of depleted micro and secondary nutrients over the years; has resulted in nutrient deficiency and deterioration of soil health in some parts of the country, particularly in intensively cultivated Indo-Gangetic plains. However, balanced and judicious use of fertilizers and registered pesticides does not affect soil adversely.

(d) & (e): `Greenpeace India` launched a `Living Soils Campaign` which involved social audit of soil health management policies and schemes in selected districts of Assam, Orissa, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Punjab. The recommendations, inter-alia, include need for convergence of policies at grassroot level, need for an umbrella policy for ecological fertilization, launching of mission on ecological fertilization, support to various components of ecological fertilization practices such as in-situ and ex-situ bio-mass generation, on-farm and off-farm composting, bio- fertilizers and farm made liquid manure, eco-bonus to farmers for maintaining soil health and institutional support for ensuring soil health.

Most of these recommendations have already been included in schemes and programmes being implemented by Government.

(f): The schemes being implemented by the Government promote soil test based balanced and judicious use of fertilizers for improving soil health and its productivity, setting up / strengthening of static / mobile soil testing laboratories, training of soil testing laboratory staff / extension officers / farmers, field demonstrations on balanced use of fertilizers, including use of organic manure, soil amendments and micro-nutrients.