

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2704

ANSWERED ON:29.03.2012

AREA UNDER DESERT AND BARREN LAND

Chauhan Shri Dara Singh;Choudhary Shri Harish

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

- (a) the area under desert and barren land in the country as on date, State-wise;
- (b) the increase or decrease in the said areas during the last three years and the current year, State-wise;
- (c) the reasons behind land becoming barren or desert; and
- (d) the steps taken by the Government to prevent the increase of barren/desert land?

**Answer**

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

(a) to (c) As per the information furnished by the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, desert land and barren land come under category of barren and unculturable land. As per the available estimates, the total area of barren & unculturable land was about 17.40 million ha in 2006-07 which has reduced to 17.02 million ha in 2008-09. Thus there was a decrease of 0.38 million ha over a period of 3 years. State-wise extent of barren & unculturable land during 2006-07 to 2008-09 is given in Annexure-I.

(d) Department of Land Resources is not implementing any scheme/ programme exclusively for prevention of barren/desert land. However, the Department of Land Resources has been implementing three area development programmes viz. Desert Development Programme (DDP), Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP) and Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP) on watershed basis since 1995-96. These programmes 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 as per the Common Guidelines for Watershed Development Projects, 2008. Under IWMP, major activities taken up are soil & moisture conservation measures, rain water harvesting measures, afforestation, horticulture and pasture development, livelihood activities including production system & micro-enterprises, capacity building and awareness generation.