

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2336
ANSWERED ON:27.08.2012
PLAN FOR DEGRADATION AND DESERTIFICATION
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has come out with a report on land degradation and desertification in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the percentage of area in the country which falls under dry land and the area which is undergoing desertification; and
- (d) the steps taken by the Government to address these issues?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN):

(a) & (b) India as a signatory to United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) has submitted four National Reports to UNCCD in the years 2000, 2002, 2006 and 2010. The fourth report was submitted in the year 2010. The National Action Programme for combating desertification was prepared in 2001 to take appropriate action in addressing the problems of desertification.

(c) As per the Desertification and Land Degradation Atlas of India, 2007, the percentage of country under drylands is 69.6%. The total area undergoing the process of land degradation in India is 105.48 million hectares, which constitutes 32.07 percentage of India's total land area.

81.45 million hectares area of the country is under desertification (land degradation within drylands). The details of drylands undergoing desertification are given below:

Arid - 34.89 million hectares
Semi- Arid - 31.99 million hectares
Dry sub-humid - 14.57 million hectares

(d) There are number of programmes, that address issues related to land degradation and desertification. Some of the major programmes, being implemented currently are as follows:

Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP), National Afforestation Programme (NAP), National Mission for Green India (GIM), The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Soil Conservation in the Catchment of River Valley Project and Flood Prone River, National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPR), Fodder and Feed Development Scheme-component of Grassland Development including Grass Reserves, Command Area Development and Water Management (CADWM) programme etc.