

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:283

ANSWERED ON:30.08.2012

BARREN LAND DEVELOPMENT

Alagiri Shri S. ;Vasava Shri Mansukhbhai D.

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the cultivable land in the coastal areas is being converted into barren land due to the saline water of the sea;
- (b) if so, the reaction of the Government in this regard;
- (c) whether the Government has been implementing the Integrated Watershed Management Programme for development of land in this regard;
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the funds sanctioned and utilised during the last three years, State-wise; and
- (e) the progress made in the implementation of the programme?

Answer

MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (JAIRAM RAMESH)

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

Statement referred to in reply to part (a) to (e) of the Lok Sabha Starred Question No.283 due for reply on 30.08.2012

(a) & (b) As per the information of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), Department of Agricultural Research and Education, Ministry of Agriculture, coastal salinity is widespread all along the coastal areas in a strip of land ranging from a few kilometers to about 50 km from the coast. Seasonal intrusion of sea water leads to salinisation of large inland areas, which in turn reduces productivity, especially in rabi season. ICAR has developed following technologies to boost the productivity of coastal agriculture:-

An economically viable land-use package on rice cum sweet water fish during kharif followed by brackish water fish during rabi/summer has been developed.

Doruvu technology for skimming fresh water floating over saline aquifers in coastal sandy soils has been developed.

For flood control in low-lying areas, suitable designs of brick-pitched earthen embankments have been suggested.

Several varieties of rice have been identified for coastal saline soils,

A few important cultivars of sugar beet, cotton, barley, tomato, chilli and linseed have been identified for cultivation during rabi under moisture and salinity stress.

Usefulness of mulching with amendments like rice-husk, sand etc. has been demonstrated to reduce salt accumulation at the soil surface.

Suitable mangrove forest species have been identified for non-tidal coastal saline soils.

(c)&(d) Under Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP), which is being implemented from 2009-10, areas are prioritized based on certain criteria for taking up projects for development. Any area including coastal area, satisfying the criteria of prioritization, qualifies for development under IWMP. The state-wise details of the funds released and utilised during the last three years and current year is at Annexure-I.

(e) State Level Nodal Agency (SLNA), a dedicated institution with professional support for implementation of IWMP has been established in all 28 States. Similarly Watershed Cell cum Data Centre (WCDC) with professional support for implementation of IWMP at District level has been established in programme districts. From 2009-10 to 2011-12, a total of 5,087 projects covering an area of 24.213 million hectare have been sanctioned under IWMP. The project period of these projects is 4 to 7 years. At present most of the projects are in the Preparatory Phase of implementation.