

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5390
ANSWERED ON:29.04.2013
INCREASE IN PRODUCTIVITY OF FOREST
Ahmed Shri Sultan

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether due to lack of trained personnel and scientific research, the productivity of the Forest is hampered in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to increase the productivity of Forests;
- (d) whether deforestation in hilly forest is continuing in the country;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) The forest personnel in the country are adequately trained in various central, state and autonomous institutions namely Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy (IGNFA), Dehradun; Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE), Dehradun; Directorate of Forest Education (DFE), Dehradun; Indian Institute of Forest Management (IIFM), Bhopal and State Forest Training Institutes etc. There are also schemes for capacity building at central and state level for upgradation of skills of forest personnel. ICFRE, IIFM and various state level research institutions are carrying out scientific research for improvement of productivity of forests including wide spectrum of economic, sociological, climate change related research keeping in view the new global developments and demands.

(c) The central and state governments have made serious efforts to increase the productivity of forests by enhancing peoples' participation in forest management, saving the biological diversity through in-situ and ex-situ conservation, rehabilitation of degraded lands, effective conservation and management of existing forest resources, genetic improvement of planting stock including production of high quality clones etc.

(d) & (e) The National Forest policy, 1988 aims at maintaining two-third of the geographical area in the hills of the country under forest and tree cover. The Forest Survey of India, Dehradun carries out forest cover assessment in the country by digital image processing of the remote sensing data. The forest cover in the 124 identified hill districts of the country has shown a net decrease of 548 Km² between 2009 and 2011 assessment as per the India State of Forest Report 2011. The main reasons for decrease in forest cover in hill districts are shifting cultivation, biotic pressure and encroachments etc. The details are given in Annexure-I.

(f) The Ministry of Environment & Forests is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National Afforestation Programme (NAP) for regeneration of degraded forests and adjoining areas including in hill districts of the country. The scheme is implemented through a decentralized mechanism of State Forest Development Agency (SFDA) at the state level, Forest Development Agency (FDA) at the forest division level and Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) at the village level. An area of 19.40 lakh hectares has been approved for plantation under the scheme since its inception in 2002. Further, XIIIth Finance Commission has recommended Rs. 5000 Crore for 5 years starting from 2010-11 for conservation and development of forests in the country including in the hill districts. Tree planting is also an approved activity under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Integrated Water Management Programme (IWMP) and other schemes of central and state Governments. Further, Government of India has formulated National Mission for a Green India to increase the forest cover and also to improve the quality of forest cover besides increasing various co-benefits.