

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5965
ANSWERED ON:02.05.2013
WATERSHED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES
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Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether despite introduction of integrated barren land development programme, drought prone areas programme and desert development programme a large area of land in the country is still lying non-arable;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has brought down the target of converting non-arable land into arable land;
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the details of the steps taken/being taken by the Government to convert non-arable land into arable land in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI LALCHAND KATARIA)

(a)& (b) The Department of Land Resources in collaboration with National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA), Hyderabad commissioned the project entitled 'Identification of Wastelands in India?'. The results of the project were published as Wastelands Atlas of India- 2000. Subsequently, the Department of Land Resources in collaboration with National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), Hyderabad brought out Wastelands Atlas of India in 2005, 2010 and 2011. As per the Wastelands Atlas of India-2000, 2005, 2010 and 2011, the extent of wastelands in the country was 63.85 million hectare, 55.64 million hectare, 47.23 million hectare and 46.70 million hectare respectively.

(c) to (e) There is no specific scheme in the Department of Land Resources for converting non arable land into arable land in the country. However, the Department has been implementing three area development programmes viz. Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP), Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP) and Desert Development Programme (DDP) since 1995-96 on watershed basis. The above three programmes have been integrated into a single modified programme called Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) w.e.f. 26.02.2009, for development of rainfed/degraded areas. The major activities taken up under IWMP inter alia include ridge area treatment, drainage line treatment, soil and moisture conservation, rain water harvesting, nursery raising, afforestation, horticulture, pasture development, livelihoods for asset less persons. Against the target of 27.65 million hectares, an area of 29.21 million hectare has been sanctioned under IWMP from 2009-10 to 2012-13 and central assistance of Rs. 6584.76 crore has been released to States.