

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6308
ANSWERED ON:06.05.2013
PROTECTION OF ENVIRONMENT IN HIMALAYAN REGION
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) Whether the Government has prepared any policy to protect the environment in the Himalayan region;
- (b) If so, the details of the projects undertaken in the States located in the Himalayan region; and
- (c) the outcome thereof ?

Answer

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

(a) Yes, sir. The policies have been prepared to protect the Environment and Forests in the country including the Himalayan region.

National Forest Policy, 1988 envisages the maintenance of environmental stability through preservation and restoration of the ecological balance and aim to maintain two-thirds of the area in the hills and mountainous regions of the country under forest cover in order to prevent erosion and land degradation and to ensure the stability of the fragile ecosystems.

The National Environment Policy has been adopted in 2006 for protection of environment including the environment of Himalayan Region. The Policy recognises the role of mountain ecosystems in maintaining the ecological balance of the region and emphasizes upon to promote appropriate land use planning and watershed management for sustainable development of mountain ecosystems.

(b)and (c): Several Projects and initiatives have been taken by the Government of India to protect the environment of Indian Himalayan Region(IHR) details of which are given below:-

(i) The National Mission for Green India has been launched under the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) through which 20 landscapes in 6 states in Himalayan Region have been identified to increase and improve quality of forest cover with initial funding of Rs.7.74 crore in the year 2011-12.

(ii) The National Mission on Sustaining Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE) aims at evolving management measures for sustaining and safeguarding the Himalayan glaciers and mountain ecosystem through enhanced monitoring of Himalayan ecosystem through establishment of monitoring network, promotion of community based management, investment in human resource development, and strengthening of regional cooperation with the countries that share the same ecology. The document has been already prepared by the DST on National Mission on Sustaining Himalayan Ecosystem in consultation with MoEF.

(iii) World Bank assisted Project "Biodiversity Conservation and Rural Livelihood Improvement (BCRLI)" is being implemented at biodiversity rich landscapes including Askot Landscape, Uttarakhand with a total outlay of Rs. 30 crore for conservation through enhanced capacity and institution building for mainstreaming conservation outcomes.

(iv) Funds are being provided by Ministry to the States under Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National Afforestation Programme (NAP) Scheme for generation of degraded forests and adjoining areas including Himalayan States in the country through Forest Development Agency(FDA) at state level and Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMC) at village level. As on 31.3.2012. 800 FDA projects have been approved to treat an area of 19.40 lakh ha through 42535 JFMCs in 28 states in the country which also covers 25473 ha area in 3 Himalayan states and 69909 ha in entire north East States.

(v) The 13th Finance Commission has provided Rs. 5000 crore for forest protection & development to different states in this Plan Period. The 12 Himalayan states are the major beneficiaries (allocated approx. 42 %) under this scheme.

(vi) Under National Ganga River Basin Authority, several schemes have been sanctioned in 10 towns which are in core area of Himalayan region in Uttarkahand states for abatement of pollution and conservation of the river Ganga with total cost of Rs.155.61 crores.

(vii) G. B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development (GBPIHED) has been established in August 1988 as an autonomous institute under MOEF acting as a focal agency, to advance scientific knowledge, to evolve integrated management strategies, demonstrate their efficacy for conservation of natural resources and to ensure environmentally sound development in the entire Indian Himalayan Region (IHR). The Institute developed an Action Plan for the sustainable development of the Himalaya (1992).

The MoEF and GBPIHED have also jointly prepared a document on "Governance for Sustaining Himalayan Ecosystem: G-SHE" highlighting the guidelines and best practices followed in different parts of IHR.

(viii) The project of Global Environment Facility (GEF), Government of India and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) entitled 'Mainstreaming Conservation and sustainable Use of Medicinal Plants Diversity in Three Indian States' namely Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand is operational since 2008.

(ix) Setting up of Himalayan Sustainable Development Forum (HSDF) under the Shimla Declaration adopted during the Himalayan Chief Ministers' Conclave held at Shimla on Oct 29-30, 2009. The Declaration includes,

- i) setting-up, in each of the Himalayan States, a Council on Climate Change;
- ii) catalyzing research for policy action;
- iii) ensuring payment for ecosystem services;
- iv) managing water resources for sustainable development;
- v) addressing challenges of urbanization;
- vi) promoting green transportation;
- vii) dealing with impacts of climate change on livelihoods;
- viii) decentralizing energy security;
- ix) managing growth of eco-friendly tourism and pilgrimage;
- x) encouraging green industries; and
- xi) creating green jobs.