

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
AGRICULTURE  
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:110

ANSWERED ON:13.08.2013

DECLINING CULTIVABLE LAND

Agarwal Shri Jai Prakash;Chavan Shri Harischandra Deoram

**Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government proposes to assess the adverse impact on agricultural production due to diversion of cultivable land for non-agricultural purposes such as industrial, housing and power projects etc. in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the decline in the area of cultivable land in the country during the last three years and the current year, State/UT-wise;
- (c) whether there has been a sharp decline in the per capita availability of land and several farmers/people have become landless across the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the corrective measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to check the use of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes and to increase the area of cultivable land in the country?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

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

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 110 DUE FOR REPLY ON 13TH AUGUST, 2013.

(a) & (b): Though the cultivable land in the country has marginally declined from 182.4 million hectares in 2007-08 to 182.0 million hectares in 2010-11, yet the production of foodgrains has increased from 230.8 million tonnes in 2007-08 to 255.4 million tonnes in 2012-13 (4th Advance Estimates). The State-wise details of the change in cultivable land during 2007-08 to 2010-11 are at Annexure.

(c) & (d): As per the Agriculture Census, the average size of operational land holdings/per capita availability of land decreased from 1.23 hectares in 2005-06 to 1.16 hectares in 2010-11 due to increase in population, fragmentation of land holdings, etc.

(e): Government has taken several measures to check the diversion of cultivable land for non-agricultural purposes, and to develop degraded land to make it cultivable.

Under the National Policy for Farmers 2007 (NPF 2007), State Governments have been advised to earmark lands with low biological potential such as uncultivable land, land affected by salinity, acidity, etc., for non-agricultural development activities, including industrial and construction activities.

National Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy, 2007 (NRRP, 2007) has recommended that, as far as possible, projects may be set up on wastelands, degraded land or un-irrigated land. Acquisition of agricultural land for non agricultural use in projects may be kept to the minimum; multi-cropped land may be avoided to the extent possible for such purposes, and acquisition of irrigated land, if unavoidable, may be kept to the minimum.

Further, to increase cultivable land, Government is implementing various Programmes/Schemes, such as, (i) National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPA), (ii) Soil Conservation in the Catchments of River Valley Projects and Flood Prone Rivers (RVP & FPR), (iii) Reclamation & Development of Alkali and Acid Soils (RADAS) and (iv) Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSCA).