

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2984
ANSWERED ON:08.12.2009
DESERT AND BARREN LAND
Gawali Patil Smt. Bhavana Pundlikrao

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of desert, dry and barren land in the country including Maharashtra, State-wise;
- (b) whether there has been an expansion of such lands;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (d) the extent to which the agricultural production has declined as a result of increase in the said lands;
- (e) whether any scheme has been devised to promote agricultural production in these areas and to contain soil erosion and desertification; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS)

(a): Desert, dry and barren land come under the category of barren and unculturable lands. State-wise details of barren and unculturable lands including Maharashtra is Annexed.

(b) to (d): No, Madam . Barren & unculturable lands in the country has decreased from 38.16 million ha. in 1950-51 to 17.44 million ha. in 2006-07.

(e) & (f): Government is implementing various Watershed Development Programmes namely

- (i) National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas(NWDPRA);
- (ii) Soil Conservation in the Catchments of River Valley Project and Flood Prone River (RVP & FPR);
- (iii) Reclamation and Development of Alkali and Acid Soils (RDAAS);
- (iv) Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas(WDPSCA);
- (v) Watershed Development Fund(WDF);
- (vi) Externally Aided Projects (EAPs);
- (vii) Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP); and
- (viii) National Afforestation & Eco-Development Project(NAEP) through different Ministries in the country for management and development of the degraded lands.

Govt is also implementing National Food Security Mission (NFSM), Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) and National Horticulture Mission (NHM) for boosting the agricultural production in the country including such areas.