

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6760

ANSWERED ON:07.05.2015

BARREN LAND

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Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the area of barren and waste land in the country, State/UT-wise;

(b) whether the Government has any estimates or assessment of the likely expenditure on converting one hectare barren land into cultivable land, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to convert barren land into cultivable land and the success achieved in this regard during each of the last three years and the current year, State/UT-wise?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUDARSHAN BHAGAT)

(a) As per the Wastelands Atlas of India-2011, the total area of wasteland in the country is 467021.16 square kilometer. The State /UT-wise details of wasteland are given at Annexure – I. As per the information of Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, the extent of barren and uncultivable land in the country is 17227 thousand hectare. The State /UT-wise details of the barren and uncultivable land are given at Annexure II.

(b) The Department of Land Resources has not done any estimate or assessment of the likely expenditure on converting one hectare barren land into cultivable land. However, the cost norms for development of rainfed/degraded land including wastelands under Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) are Rs. 15,000/- per ha for hilly and difficult area, Rs.12,000/- per ha. for other areas and upto Rs.15,000/- ha for projects in Integrated Action Plan (IAP) districts.

(c) There is no scheme/ programme exclusively to convert barren land into cultivable land. However, the Department of Land Resources, Ministry of Rural Development had been implementing an area development programme namely the Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) with effect from 2009-10 for development of rainfed/degraded areas including wastelands in the country. 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 etc. So far 8214 projects covering an area of 39.07 million ha have been sanctioned and an amount of Rs 11032.20 crore has been released as Central Share to the States till 2014-15 since inception under erstwhile IWMP. The IWMP has been converted as the Watershed Component of the 'Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayi Yojana' (PMKSY) from 2015-16.