

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**LOK SABHA**  
**UN-STARRED QUESTION NO: 2285**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23.09.2020

**Reduction in Forest Cover**

2285. SHRIMATI SARMISTHA SETHI:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware of reduction in forest cover across the country as a result of which climate is adversely affected;
- (b) if so, steps that have been taken/are being taken to improve the forest cover;
- (c) whether there is any proposal to develop specific forest zones for growth of medicinal plants; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE**  
**(SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO)**

- (a) There is no reduction of forest cover in the country. As per the latest India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2019, total forest and tree cover of the country is 8,07,276 square kilometre which is 24.56% of the geographical area of the country. The current assessment shows an increase of 5,188 square kilometre of forest and tree cover at the national level as compared to the previous assessment i.e. ISFR 2017.
- (b) To improve the forest cover, afforestation programmes are being taken up under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as National Afforestation Programme and Green India Mission being implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. Afforestation activities are also taken up under various programmes/funding sources such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana, Compensatory Afforestation Funds and under concerned State/UT schemes/plans.
- (c) & (d) All forest types have potential for growth of medicinal plants. In order to sustainably manage, conserve and utilize the forest resources and to bring uniformity in forest management planning across the country, the National Working Plan Code 2014, suggests inventory and mapping of the entire vegetation including herbs, shrubs, grasses and climbers along with trees, medicinal and aromatic plants to be brought within the ambit of the forest resource assessment in order to ultimately help to prepare the livelihood plans for the local communities in a more effective manner.

Further, the National Biodiversity Authority has also been following a consultative process with the Ministry of AYUSH to address issues pertaining to the conservation, protection and production of medicinal plants.

\*\*\*\*\*