

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No.1327
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.12.2021

COP26

1327. SHRI T.R. BAALU:

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

- (a) whether India has refused to endorse the recently adopted Glasgow Declaration on Climate Change in COP 26, pertaining to the containment of deforestation;
- (b) if so, the considerations on which India has decided to take a stand different from that of the international community;
- (c) whether the Government has thought of a crash program to increase the Country's forest cover to 33 per cent of the land area, the target which was fixed about 25 years ago in view of the fact that presently the forest cover remains static at 19 per cent only for several years now;
- (d) whether the Government also has a plan on hand to create a Carbon Sink comprised of Forests and Plantations to absorb 3 billion tons of carbon dioxide; and
- (e) if so, the details of the plan and by when it is to be commenced?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

- (a)&(b) India has not endorsed the Glasgow Leaders Declaration on Forests and Land Use, due to reference to trade as an area in the Declaration.
- (c) As per the National Forest Policy, 1988, the national goal should be to have a minimum of one-third of the total land area of the country under forest or tree cover.

As per the latest India State of Forest Report (ISFR)-2019 published by Forest Survey of India, Dehradun, the total Forest and Tree Cover (FTC) of the country is 8,07,276 Square Kilometres, which is 24.56% of the geographical area of the country. There is an increase of 5,188 Square Kilometres compared to that of FTC in ISFR-2017, and 13,209 Square Kilometres compared to FTC in ISFR, 2015.

The Forest Cover of the country as per ISFR-2019 is 7,12,249 Square Kilometers which is 21.67% of the geographical area of the country whereas the Forest Cover of the country as per ISFR-1989 after the adoption of National Forest Policy, 1988 was 6,38,804 Square Kilometres constituting 19.43% of the geographical area of the

country. There has been an increase of 2.24% in the forest cover of the country since 1989. The trend of Forest Cover in India for the last 5 biennial assessment reported in ISFRs is as under: -

Year	Forest Cover (in sq. km)	Tree Cover (in sq. km)	Forest & Tree Cover (in sq. km)	% of Geographical Area
2011	692,027	90,844	782,871	23.81
2013	697,898	91,266	789,164	24.01
2015	701,673	92,572	794,245	24.16
2017	708,273	93,815	802,088	24.40
2019	712,249	95,027	807,276	24.56

- (d)& (e) India has submitted its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) under Paris Agreement to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). One of the goals under NDC is to create an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent through additional forest and tree cover by 2030 and the Government of India has taken several initiatives for fulfilling its commitment to meet this target. Afforestation and tree plantation activities are carried out by the States and Union Territories (UTs) with people's participation. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change provides financial assistance to States/UTs under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes including, *inter alia*, National Afforestation Programme, Development of Wildlife Habitat and Forest Fire Prevention and Management Scheme for supporting such efforts. Compensatory afforestation is also undertaken by the States/UTs for compensating the diverted forest lands.

Further, the Government of India is implementing National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC), comprising of eight Missions, which provides an overarching policy framework for all climate actions in the country. Under NAPCC, the National Mission for a Green India (GIM) aims at protecting, restoring and enhancing India's forest cover and responding to climate change by means of plantation activities in forest and non-forest areas. GIM was launched in 2015-16 and a total sum of Rs. 492.20 crores has been released under the scheme to fifteen States and one Union Territory for undertaking afforestation activities over an area of 1,84,161 hectares including restoration of wetlands which contribute to achieving India's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) target.
