

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO: 3252
TO BE ANSWERED ON: 31.03.2022

Decline of forest cover in the North Eastern Region

3252. SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN:

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

- (a) whether Government is aware that North Eastern Region saw the largest share i.e. 79 per cent of tree cover loss in the country;
- (b) whether Government has conducted any study to understand the reasons behind such large scale deforestation, if so, the details thereof, and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) whether Government is taking any steps to mitigate this ecological crisis and prevent similar shedding in the future?

ANSWER

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

- (a) Forest Survey of India publishes the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) biennially. The Tree Cover of the North Eastern Region is 4574 square kilometre as per the ISFR-2021 showing an increase of 365 square kilometre as compared to the previous assessment in ISFR-2019. As per ISFR-2021, the total Forest Cover in the North Eastern Region of the country is 1,69,521 square kilometre showing an overall decrease of 1,020 square kilometre while the tree cover has increased by 365 square kilometre as compared to the previous assessment in 2019. The details of forest and tree cover in North Eastern States are given in **Annexure**.
- (b) The loss in forest cover in the North Eastern States may be attributed mainly to natural calamities, anthropogenic pressure, developmental activities and shifting cultivation practices.
- (c) Various schemes are being implemented by the Central and State Government/Union Territory Administration for increase in forest and tree cover in the country. These includes the National Afforestation Programme (NAP) and Green India Mission (GIM) being implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. National Afforestation Programme is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for regeneration of degraded forest and adjoining areas in the country. Now NAP scheme has been merged

with Green India Mission. National Mission for a Green India (GIM) is one of the eight Missions outlined under the National Action Plan on Climate Change. It aims at protecting, restoring, and enhancing India's forest cover and responding to Climate Change by means of plantation activities in the forest and non-forest areas.

Afforestation activities are also taken up under various programmes/funding sources such as Compensatory Afforestation Funds under Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA), afforestation activities under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA), National Agro-forestry Policy and Sub-mission on Agro-forestry (SMAF), National Bamboo Mission and National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture.

In addition to above, State and UT Governments have their own afforestation and reforestation programmes. Almost every State has activities under social forestry, which largely focuses on tree planting in the areas outside forests. The State Governments in the North Eastern region also take up awareness programme to educate people against shifting cultivation.

Annexure referred to in reply to part (a) of the Rajya Sabha Starred Question No. 3252 due for answer on 31.03.2022 regarding 'Decline of forest cover in the North Eastern Region'

Change in forest and tree cover in North Eastern States as per ISFR-2021

(Area in square kilometre)

State	Geographical Area	Forest Cover			Tree Cover		
		ISFR- 2019	ISFR - 2021	Change in Forest Cover w.r.t. previous Assessment	ISFR- 2019	ISFR- 2021	Change in Tree Cover w.r.t. previous Assessment
Arunachal Pradesh	83,743	66,688	66,431	-257	848	1,001	153
Assam	78,438	28,327	28,312	-15	1,408	1,630	222
Manipur	22,327	16,847	16,598	-249	173	169	-4
Meghalaya	22,429	17,119	17,046	-73	710	698	-12
Mizoram	21,081	18,006	17,820	-186	441	444	3
Nagaland	16,579	12,486	12,251	-235	362	365	3
Sikkim	7,096	3,342	3,341	-1	36	39	3
Tripura	10,486	7,726	7,722	-4	231	228	-3
Total	2,62,179	1,70,541	1,69,521	-1,020	4,209	4,574	365

As per ISFR 2021, the Forest Cover in the North Eastern region has decreased by 1,020 sq km while the Tree Cover has increased by 365 sq km as compared to the previous assessment i.e. ISFR 2019.

