

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:268
ANSWERED ON:11.12.2006
DEPLETING FOREST COVER
Owaisi Shri Asaduddin

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a forest report is published by the Forest Survey of India every second year;
- (b) if so, the survey last conducted alongwith the salient features thereof;
- (c) whether the legal and financial measures under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes and the externally aided projects has not been able to protect the declining trend of forest cover in the country; and
- (d) if so, the effective steps proposed to be taken to remedy the situation?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a), (b), (c) & (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 268 BY SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAI SI TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.12.2006 REGARDING DEPLETING FOREST COVER.

(a) Yes, Sir. The Forest Survey of India (FSI) publishes State of Forest Report (SFR) on biennial basis.

(b) The last assessment of forest cover was made in 2003, which is based on the remote sensing satellite data of the year 2002. The forest cover of the country as per the SFR 2003 is 678,333 km² and constitutes 20.64 percent of its geographical area. Of this, the Very Dense Forest (VDF) constitutes 51,285 km² (1.56%) Moderately Dense Forest (MDF) constitutes 339, 279 km² (10.32%) and open forest constitutes 287,769 km² (8.76%). Madhya Pradesh with 76,429 km² of forest cover has the maximum forest cover among all the States/Union Territories, followed by Arunachal Pradesh (68,019 km²) and Chhattisgarh (55,998 km²).

(c)&(d)No, Sir. The forest cover of the country has shown an increasing trend over the last three assessments. The figures for the forest cover of the country as per the last three biennial assessments published in the State of Forest Reports are given below:

(Area in Km²)
1999 2001 2003
637,293 675,538 678,333

However, the Government has taken several steps like setting up of Forest Development Agencies, eliciting people's participation through Joint Forest Management (JFM), implementation of National Afforestation Programme (NAP) Scheme for regeneration of degraded forests for the protection and conservation of forests and to promote tree planting activities in the country.