

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2479

ANSWERED ON:08.12.2006

Increase in Desert Land

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Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

:

- (a) Whether the Government is aware that the area of the desert land is increasing day by day in the country ;
- (b) If so, the State-wise details for the last three years and current year along with the reasons therefor ;
- (c) The steps taken by the Government to check such extension of the desert land; and
- (d) The success achieved thereafter ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU)

(a) Under a project of this Ministry, Department of Space, Government of India had published a Wasteland Atlas in 2000 and estimated desert land area of about 10.58 million hectares. Again National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA) has published Wasteland Atlas in 2005 and estimated desert land area of about

8.83 million hectare. Thus from the above data, desert land area has decreased by 1.75 million hectare.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) Ministry of Rural Development has been implementing Desert Development Programme (DDP) on watershed approach since 1995-96 to combat desertification in 235 blocks of 40 districts in 7 states of the country through activities like soil-moisture conservation, water resources development, crop protection, afforestation, pasture development etc.

(d) So far 15746 projects have been sanctioned under Desert Development Programme (DDP), out of which 2674 projects have completed covering an area of 13.37 lakh hectare.