

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3887
ANSWERED ON:19.12.2005
FOREST AREA
Nambadan Shri Lonappan

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

- (a) whether there are different methods for estimation of forests area;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether discrepancies are found in respective estimation methods; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor?

Answer

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

- (a) Yes, Sir.
- (b) The different methods to estimate forest cover are Remote Sensing, Aerial Photography, Global Positioning System and Ground Survey.
- (c)& (d) The remote sensing technology has limitations of spatial resolution (minimum unit of length discernible), low chlorophyll content in certain species of trees and young plantations, leaflessness during certain periods and clouds and shadows. Aerial photography provides greater details but it is time consuming and further it requires clearances from many agencies including Ministry of Defence. The use of GPS is helpful for rapid assessment of smaller areas as its accuracy is not high unless Differential Global Positioning System is used. The ground survey techniques are accurate but slow and laborious and cannot be used for a large area.