

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4735

ANSWERED ON:07.08.2009

LAND EROSION

Ajmal Shri Badruddin;Rajaram Shri Wakchaure Bhausaheb

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Union Government has conducted any study on the loss of land due to land erosion in various States including the North-Eastern States;
- (b) if so, the details and the outcome thereof;
- (c) whether some State Governments have requested the Union Government for providing assistance for rehabilitation of families affected due to land erosion;
- (d) if so, the action taken/being taken by the Union Government in this regard and the central responsibility involved in the matter;
- (e) whether the Union Government also proposes to prepare any policy regarding optimum utilization of land in the country especially in backward and rural areas; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof and the progress made in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SISIR KUMAR ADHIKARI)

(a) to (f): Yes, Sir. As per the study conducted (2005) by the National Bureau of Soil Survey and Land Use Planning (NBSS&LUP)- Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) - Regional Centre, Nagpur, out of country's total geographical area of 328.60 million ha., about 146.82 million ha. area is suffering from various kinds of soil erosion and land degradation. Out of the total degraded area of 146.82 million ha., soil erosion due to water is 93.68 million ha., which is about 63% of the total degraded area. The State-wise and category-wise extent of degraded land including soil erosion caused by flood water and its percentage with respect to State's geographical area are at Annexure.

As per studies conducted by ICAR at different Regional Centres, the average rate of soil erosion is 16.4 tonnes per hectare per year, which is more than the permissible limit of 10.00 tonnes per hectare per annum. Out of total eroded soil, 61% simply moves from one place to another, nearly 29% is lost permanently to the sea and remaining 10% is deposited in the reservoirs.

With a view to prevent soil erosion and land degradation, the Government of India is administering various Watershed Development Programmes viz. the Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP), the National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPR), the Soil Conservation for Enhancing the Productivity of Degraded Lands in the Catchments of River Valley Project and Flood Prone River (RVP&FPR), the Reclamation and Development of Alkali & Acid Soils (RADAS) and the Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSCA) in the country. Funds are released to the States/UTs under these programmes as per the Guidelines for implementation of the Programmes.

Union Government is not administering any scheme for providing assistance to the States for rehabilitation of families affected due to land erosion. However, a National Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy, 2007 has been formulated by the Department of Land Resources, Ministry of Rural Development. The policy was published in the Gazette of India on 31st October, 2007 and covers all cases of involuntary displacement of a permanent nature. The State Governments and Union Territory Administrations have been requested for implementation of the Policy.

Land and its management falls within the legislative and administrative jurisdiction of the State Governments as provided under Seventh Schedule to the Constitution. The role of the Central Government in this field is only of an advisory and coordinating nature. Presently, there is no proposal to prepare a policy regarding optimum utilization of land in the country.