

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4955
ANSWERED ON:13.08.2014
FOREST SURVEY
Kushwaha Shri Ram Kumar Sharma

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

- (a) the existing criteria/parameters for identifying and classifying forest areas;
- (b) whether the criteria adopted in the country has been found unscientific by scientists and researchers;
- (c) if so, the facts thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (d) whether plantation of tea, coffee, mango, rubber, coconut, apple and various other plants have been given the status of forests and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the percentage share of such plantations/crops among the total area of forests identified in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) Forest Survey of India, Dehradun carries out mapping and assessment of forest area biennially and for that purpose it defines 'forest cover' as "all lands one hectare or more in area, with a tree canopy density of 10 percent or more irrespective of ownership and legal status." Such lands may not necessarily be a recorded forest area. It also includes areas having orchards, tea garden, rubber plantation, coffee plantation, bamboo, palm etc satisfying the conditions of 10 percent canopy density and one hectare of land extent.

(b)&(c) The Ministry has not received any communication from any scientific institution/ researcher criticizing the approach and methodology followed by Forest Survey of India for assessment of forest cover.

(d)&(e) Forest cover includes area having orchards, tea garden, rubber plantation, coffee plantation, bamboo, palm etc., if such areas satisfy the conditions of having 10 percent canopy density and area more than one hectare. However, Forest Survey of India is not assessing the percentage share of such plantation/crops in specific category.