

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 5133
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.04.2022

Combating the Climate Crisis

5133. SHRI K. NAVASKANI:

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

- (a) whether the Government agrees with the view that while the efforts to combat the climate crisis are gathering traction slowly, the pace isn't nearly fast enough as our ecosystems are collapsing and species are becoming extinct at an unprecedented rate;
- (b) if so, what remedial steps have been taken/being taken by the Government keeping in mind that deforestation and forest degradation continue unabated, leading to significant nature and biodiversity loss; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a) Government is seized of the matter. Climate change is a global collective action problem. India with more than 17% of the global population has contributed only about 4% of the global cumulative greenhouse gas emissions between 1850 and 2017. Reports from various sources, including Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, highlight that the challenges faced due to global warming are mainly due to cumulative historical and current greenhouse gas emissions of the developed countries. Even though, we are not part of the problem, India is part of the solution and is doing more than its fair share.

The Government of India through its various Ministries and Departments continues to assess the impact of climate change keeping with new data and increased scientific knowledge on the subject. Such data and analyses are routinely carried out in the regular work of Ministries and Departments and incorporated in further schemes, plans and initiatives of the Government. While impacts of climate change are felt in various sectors of the economy, such changes take place overtime-spans of several decades to centuries and there are no such studies in India which directly correlate and attribute extinction of species and collapse of ecosystems with climate change. Some negative impacts have now been scientifically documented but neither species loss nor ecosystem collapse due to climate change has been recorded in India. Unchecked global warming may lead to negative impacts on ecosystems in the future, which, however, governments of the world are pledged to limit to the temperature goals set by the Paris Agreement.

(b) and (c) Does not arise. The forest and tree cover in India are on an ascendance. India's forest and tree cover has increased by 14,571 km² between the 2015 and 2021 assessments of the Forest Survey of India. However, in select locations and areas, whenever deforestation does occur it is dealt with in accordance with extant procedure, both administrative and legal.

Further, the Government is addressing the environmental issues and problems like degradation of forests, biodiversity loss, and land/soil degradation through both promotional and legal measures. Government has enacted the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 in pursuance to the Convention on Biological Diversity to which India is a Party. The Biological Diversity Act, 2002 is aimed at conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of its components, and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of these resources, also known as access and benefit sharing (ABS).

Furthermore, various schemes are being implemented by the Central and State Governments for increase in forest cover of the country. These include National Afforestation Programme (NAP) and Green India Mission (GIM) being implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. Afforestation activities are also taken up under various programmes/funding sources such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana, Compensatory Afforestation Funds under Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA). Afforestation activities are also taken up under various schemes of State Government/UT Administration.
