

Status of forest cover in Gujarat

1268. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) the present status of forest cover in the State of Gujarat;
- (b) how it compares with the forest cover of ten years back in the State; and
- (c) what strategy Government proposes to adopt to increase the forest cover substantially in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) and (b) The forest cover in the State of Gujarat as per India State of Forest Report-2013 is 14653 square kilometres and forest cover of Gujarat as per State of Forest Report (SFR)-2003 was 14,946 square kilometres. Therefore, there is a marginal decrease of 293 square kilometres in forest cover of Gujarat over a period of 10 years from 2003 to 2013.

(c) To improve and increase the forest cover, afforestation in the country including Gujarat is taken up under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as National Afforestation Programme (NAP), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP), National Bamboo Mission (NBM) and under Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA), 13th Finance Commission Grant, different State Plan/Non- Plan Schemes including externally aided projects. National Afforestation Programme (NAP) of the Ministry of Environment and Forests is a 100% Centrally Sponsored Scheme for afforestation and tree plantation and eco-restoration of degraded forests and adjoining areas in the country. The Scheme is being implemented through a decentralized mechanism of State Forest Development Agency (SFDA) at State level, Forest Development Agency (FDA) at Forest Division level and Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) at Village levels. An amount of ₹ 220.29 crores has been released to the State of Gujarat under the above scheme since its inception in 2002.

Further, under Green India Mission, an amount of ₹ 133.80 lakh was sanctioned as grants to Government of Gujarat during the financial year 2011-12 for undertaking enabling activities such as institutional strengthening, training, identification of landscapes and preparation of Perspective Plan.