

(b) and (c) The Global Forest Resources Assessments (GFRA) was recently launched in September, 2015. GFRA 2015 shows a very encouraging tendency towards reduction in the rates of deforestation and carbon emissions from forests and increases in capacity for sustainable forest management. As per the report, India is one of the top ten countries in world by forest area.

(d) and (e) The Ministry has not conducted any study for assessment of the adverse effect caused by the fast depletion of forest area. However, as per India State of Forest Report-2015, the forest cover of the country has been increased by 3775 square kilometers as compared to 2013 assessment.

(f) To increase forest cover in the country, afforestation in the country is taken up under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as National Afforestation Programme (NAP), Green India Mission (GIM), 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 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. Since inception of this programme an amount of ₹ 3545 crore has been invested to treat an area of 20.99 lakh hectare till 2014-15.

#### **Proposal for transfer of forest land for Almora-Ghat motorway**

†1628. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has received a proposal for transfer of forest land for widening of Almora-Ghat motorway in Almora district of Uttarakhand;
- (b) if so, at which level and since when the proposal is pending;
- (c) the reasons for not clearing the proposal till now; and
- (d) by when the proposal is expected to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JVADEKAR): (a) to (d) A proposal to

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

obtain prior approval of Central Government under Section-2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for use of 6.1863 hectares of forest land for construction of Almora Ghat to Kalauta Motor Road was submitted by the Government of Uttarakhand to the Regional Office (North Eastern Zone) of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change located at Dehradun on 26.06.2015. The Regional Office, after scrutiny of the proposal observed certain shortcomings in the proposal. The Regional Office *vide* letter dated 03.07.2015 communicated the shortcomings to the Government of Uttarakhand. After receipt of reply from the State Government *vide* their letter dated 19.08.2015, the proposal was placed before the Regional Empowered Committee (REC) in its meeting held on 27.08.2015. The REC after examination of the proposal decided to accord in-principle approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of the said forest land subject to submission of documents/information on four points. The State Government *vide* letter dated 18.09.2015 submitted the information/documents sought by the REC. A copy of these documents was however uploaded on the web portal on 03.11.2015. After scrutiny of the information/documents received from the State Government, it was found that the enclosures of the certificate regarding settlement of rights in accordance with the provisions of the Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 on the forest land proposed to be diverted submitted by the State Government do not pertain to the afore mentioned project but for some other road. Regional Office, Dehradun *vide* letter dated 20.11.2015 requested the Government of Uttarakhand to submit a copy of these enclosures for the afore mentioned road. In-principle approval for, diversion of the said forest land will be accorded by the Regional Office after afore mentioned enclosures are received by them from the Government of Uttarakhand.

#### **Emission level of Volkswagen cars**

1629. SHRI DEVENDER GOUD T.: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Automotive Research Association of India has found variations in on-road emission levels in several diesel and petrol models of Volkswagen cars;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a notice has been issued to the company to explain the reasons behind such variations; and

(c) if so, the details of reasons explained by the company and to what extent they are in compliance with emission norms of the country?