

(f) Waste Management Rules, 2016 of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has provisions that promote recycling of materials from solid wastes, which supports resource efficiency. To promote availability of steel scrap for the steel sector, Ministry of Steel has formulated Steel Scrap Recycling Policy which was notified on November 7, 2019. The policy provides a framework to facilitate and promote establishment of metal scrapping centres in India for scientific processing and recycling of ferrous scrap generated from various sources. The policy framework provides standard guidelines for collection, dismantling and shredding activities in an organized, safe and environmentally sound manner.

Toxic lead in paints

†828 SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the latest research report published by an institute working on environmental pollution according to which the paints used in house holds contain thousand times more toxic lead than the prescribed limit;

(b) whether the containers marked as 'No Added Lead' or 'Less than 90 PPM' are found to have five hundred times more lead than the specified limits; and

(c) if so, the action taken against such companies and steps taken by Government to compensate consumers for the health related harm caused to them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): (a) to (c) The Government is aware of such study, which is referred to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) for verification. CPCB is the nodal agency for implementation of the provisions of 'Regulation of Lead Contents in Household and Decorative Paints Rules, 2016'. The CPCB has also issued "Compliance and Testing Procedure for Measurement of Lead Content in Household and Decorative Paints" for effective implementation of the rules.

Increase in forest cover

†829. MS. SAROJ PANDEY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

- (a) the current percentage of forest area in the country;
- (b) whether Government has implemented any scheme to enhance the forest area and help reduce the carbon emissions during the last three years; and
- (c) if so, the percentage of increase in the forest area and reduction in carbon emission recorded after implementing the said scheme in last three years and current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): (a) As per the latest India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2017, the total forest and tree cover is 24.39% of the total geographical area of the country. There is an increase of 8,021 square kilometre (forest cover 6,778 square kilometre, tree cover 1,243 square kilometre) of total forest and tree cover compared to that of ISFR-2015.

(b) To further increase the forest cover in the country, afforestation programmes are being taken up under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as National Afforestation Programme and Green India Mission 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 and under concerned State/UT schemes/plans.

Green India Mission is one of the eight missions outlined under the National Action Plan on Climate Change. It aims at protecting restoring and enhancing India's forest cover and responding to Climate Change by means of plantation activities in forest and non-forest areas. GIM activities were started in the Financial Year 2015-16. A sum of ₹ 282.12 crore have been released to twelve States namely Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur, Mizoram, Odisha, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Sikkim so far for undertaking the afforestation activities over an area of 109722.156 hectare.

(c) As per ISFR-2017, the total forest and tree cover of the country is 24.39% of total geographical area of the country compared to 24.16% as per the assessment in ISFR 2015. The carbon stock in forest as per the latest ISFR 2017 is estimated to be 7,082 million tons which is an increase of 38 million tons (0.53%) as compared to the

carbon stock reported in ISFR-2015. Hence, the capacity of absorbing CO₂ has gone up with increase in forest cover.

Pollution due to development projects

830. SHRI OM PRAKASH MATHUR: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a regular evaluation of the loss caused by pollution due to development projects is being undertaken by Government and whether the approval for the development projects is being granted on the basis of evaluation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether many projects have not been granted approval in the past on the basis of evaluation of loss caused by pollution; and

(d) if so, the details of the last decade, in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): (a) and (b) Detailed Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) study and Environment Management Plan (EMP) arising out of such studies are mandated to be carried out for projects seeking clearance under the provisions of EIA Notification, 2006. The EIA studies/EMP, *inter alia*, address all issues of environmental concerns including the potential pollution load of the project on air/water/land environment including various mitigation measures. The Ministry has prescribed standards for different categories of industries and project activities related to emissions/effluents in the atmosphere, water bodies and land. The potential pollution load and the remedial measures are duly assessed by the Expert Appraisal Committee before recommending the project for grant of Environmental Clearance.

(c) and (d) The assessment of pollution levels likely to be caused by the project activities and the remedial measures, if not found satisfactory, are referred back to the project proponent for supplementing the efforts and revising the plan of action so as to conform to the prescribed standards. Clearance is accorded only after satisfying that the project would be capable of meeting the prescribed standards. Presently about 33 nos. of such developmental projects have been deferred for want of supplementary inputs/information/action plan to mitigate the anticipated pollution load owing to such project activities. The respective Pollution Control Boards issue the 'Consent to Operate'