

level strategy aiming to reduce PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentrations by 20% to 30% by 2024 keeping 2017 as the base year for the comparison of concentration.

(c) and (d) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), notified CSIR-National Physical Laboratory (CSIR NPL) as national verification agency for certifying equipment and instruments for monitoring emissions and ambient air.

India State of Forest Report

1176. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI VAIKO:

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

- (a) whether the India State of Forest Report, 2019 was released recently;
- (b) if so, the highlights of the report;
- (c) whether the forest cover has risen as compared to previous year, if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the definition of forest is ambiguous and if so, whether any Committee has been constituted to define the term "forest"; and
- (e) if not, the reasoning behind the conclusion that the forest cover has increased in terms of quality aspects and age of forests?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO): (a) and (b) The India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2019 was released on 30th December, 2019 by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. The highlights of the report are given in Statement-I (*See* below).

(c) The ISFR 2019 shows an increase of 5,188 km² in the forest and tree cover of the country over that of ISFR 2017. As per ISFR 2019, forest cover has increased in most of the States and Union Territories (UTs) due to plantation and conservation activities. State/UT-wise change in forest cover is given in Statement-II (*See* below).

(d) and (e) For the purpose of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, as per the Hon'ble Supreme Court Order dated 12.12.1996, the word 'forest' is understood according to its

dictionary meaning. This description covers all statutorily recognized forests, whether designated as reserved, protected or otherwise for the purpose of Section 2(i) of the Forest (Conservation) Act. The term "forest land", occurring in Section 2 of the Act, not only includes "forest" as understood in the dictionary sense, but also any area recorded as forest in the Government record irrespective of the ownership.

For assessment and mapping of forest areas, the term "forest cover" is used in ISFR. It is defined as any land having more than one hectare area and with a tree canopy density of more than 10% irrespective of ownership and legal status.

Forest cover of the country has increased in quality, which is evident from the assessments of ISFR. As per the ISFR-2019, Very Dense Forests (VDF) have increased by 1120 km² compared to that of ISFR-2017. During the same period Medium Dense Forests (MDF) have increased by 154 km².

Statement-I

Highlights of ISFR 2019

- The Total forest cover of the country is 7,12,249 sq km which is 21.67% of the geographical area of the country. The tree cover of the country is estimated at 95,027 sq km, which is 2.89% of the geographical area.
- The Total forest and tree cover of the country is 8,07,276 sq km which is 24.56% of the geographical area of the country.
- There has been an increase of 3,976 sq km (0.56%) in forest cover, 1,212 sq km (1.29%) in tree cover and 5,188 sq km (0.65%) in forest and tree cover put together at the national level as compared to the previous assessment *i.e.* ISFR 2017.
- The top five States in terms of increase in forest cover are Karnataka (1,025 sq km), Andhra Pradesh (990 sq km), Kerala (823 sq km), Jammu and Kashmir (371 sq km) and Himachal Pradesh (334 sq km).
- The Total forest cover in the hill districts of the country is 2,84,006 sq km, which is 40.30% of the Total geographical area of these districts.
- The Total forest cover in the tribal districts is 4,22,351 sq km, which is 37.54% of the geographical area of these districts.

- Mangrove cover in the country has increased by 54 sq km (1.10%) as compared to the previous assessment.
- Total bamboo bearing area of the country is estimated as 1,60,037 sq km. There is an increase of 3,229 sq km in bamboo bearing area as compared to the estimate of ISFR 2017

Statement-II*Change in Forest Cover in the States/UTs as per ISFR-2019*

(Area in square kilometre)

Sl. No.	State/UT	Geographical Area	Total Forest Cover	Percentage of forest cover to the Total geographical area	Change in Forest Cover w.r.t. ISFR 2017
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1,62,968	29,137	17.88	990
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	83,743	66,688	79.63	-276
3.	Assam	78,438	28,327	36.11	222
4.	Bihar	94,163	7,306	7.76	7
5.	Chhattisgarh	1,35,192	55,611	41.13	64
6.	Delhi	1,483	195.44	13.18	3.03
7.	Goa	3,702	2,237	60.43	8
8.	Gujarat	1,96,244	14,857	7.57	100
9.	Haryana	44,212	1,602	3.62	14
10.	Himachal Pradesh	55,673	15,434	27.72	334
11.	Jammu and Kashmir#				
	UT of J&K	53,258*	21,122	39.66	348
	UT of Ladakh	1,69,421*	2,490	1.47	23
	TOTAL (J&K)	2,22,236	23,612	10.62	371
12.	Jharkhand	79,716	23,611	29.62	58

1	2	3	4	5	6
13.	Karnataka	1,91,791	38,575	20.11	1,025
14.	Kerala	38,852	21,144	54.42	823
15.	Madhya Pradesh	3,08,252	77,482	25.14	68
16.	Maharashtra	3,07,713	50,778	16.50	96
17.	Manipur	22,327	16,847	75.46	-499
18.	Meghalaya	22,429	17,119	76.33	-27
19.	Mizoram	21,081	18,006	85.41	-180
20.	Nagaland	16,579	12,486	75.31	-3
21.	Odisha	1,55,707	51,619	33.15	274
22.	Punjab	50,362	1,849	3.67	12
23.	Rajasthan	3,42,239	16,630	4.86	58
24.	Sikkim	7,096	3,342	47.10	-2
25.	Tamil Nadu	1,30,060	26,364	20.27	83
26.	Telangana	1,12,077	20,582	18.36	163
27.	Tripura	10,486	7,726	73.68	0
28.	Uttar Pradesh	2,40,928	14,806	6.15	127
29.	Uttarakhand	53,483	24,303	45.44	8
30.	West Bengal	88,752	16,902	19.04	55
31.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	8,249	6,743	81.74	1
32.	Chandigarh	114	22.03	19.32	0.47
33.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	491	207	42.16	0
34.	Daman and Diu	111	20.49	18.46	0
35.	Lakshadweep	30	27.10	90.33	0
36.	Puducherry	490	52.41	10.70	-1.26
TOTAL		32,87,469	7,12,249	21.67	3,976

* Area of shape file provided by Survey of India (December, 2019). Notified geographical area from SOI awaited.

#Includes Jammu and Kashmir area outside LoC that is under illegal occupation of Pakistan and China.