

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1343**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 09.12.2021

**Impact on environment due to oil palm**

1343. SHRI ANAND SHARMA:

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

- (a) the reasons for selecting the North-Eastern Region and Andaman and Nicobar Islands for the National Mission on Edible Oils-Oil Palm;
- (b) whether Government has conducted an environmental impact assessment of the proposed increase in plantation area;
- (c) whether Government has assessed the adverse impact of oil palm plantations on biodiversity;
- (d) if so, the details thereof, and if not the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether Government has or intends to implement measures to mitigate the adverse effects of oil palm plantations; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof, and if not the reasons therefor?

**ANSWER**

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

- (a) to (f) The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare informed that in the year 2020, the Reassessment Committee of Indian Council of Agricultural Research- Indian Institute of Oil Palm Research (ICAR-IIOPR) has conducted a study to assess the potential area of Oil Palm cultivation in the country including North-Eastern States and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. As per the report of Reassessment Committee, a total 22 States have been identified with 27.99 lakh ha as having a potential area for Oil Palm cultivation in India.

The Reassessment Committee of ICAR-IIOPR, 2020 identified land suitable for oil palm cultivation under irrigated and rainfed condition keeping the various parameters such as Remote Sensing (RS), Geographical Information Systems (GIS). Under irrigated condition, ground water level, rainfall (annual), minimum temperature, Double/Triple cropped areas were taken as key parameters. In case of rainfed category, the five parameters viz; rainfall, minimum temperature, elevation, slope, soil depth, and length of continuous dry period were identified to delineate potential regions.

Under rainfed conditions, oil palm requires around 1800 mm of rainfall at the rate of 150 mm per month. Even under irrigated conditions, rainfall is considered as an important parameter with 7% weightage since it contributes water supply in lieu of ground water at least during rainy period. As per ICAR-IIOPR, rainfall suitability classes have been categorized as >1000 mm (highly suitable), 601–1000 (moderately suitable) and <600 mm (Not suitable) based on the IMD rainfall data

collected from historical normal (1950-2000) and minimum temperature data of ICAR-CRIDA for the period 1969-2000.

The National Mission on Edible Oils - Oil Palm (NMEO-OP) has been launched with the aim to augment the availability of edible oil in the country by harnessing area expansion, increasing crude palm oil production with the aim to reduce the import burden. The salient features of NMEO-Oil palm include assistance for planting material, inputs for intercropping upto gestation period of 4 years and for maintenance, establishment of seed gardens, nurseries, micro irrigation, bore well/pumpset/water harvesting structure, vermi compost units, solar pumps, harvesting tools, custom hiring centre cum harvester Groups, farmers and officers training, and for replanting of old oil palm gardens etc.

The total approved cost of the NMEO (Oil Palm) Scheme is ₹ 11,040 crore, out of which ₹ 8844 crore is Central share and ₹ 2196 crore state share. For the year 2021-22, a total of Rs.10422.69 lakh has been approved for various state annual action plans.

The cultivation of Oil Palm as monoculture on forest land is a non-forestry activity and will require prior approval of the Central Government under Forest (Conservation) Act. No such proposal has been received by the Central Government regarding seeking approval for cultivation of oil palm on forest land.

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