

Implementation of Forest Rights Act

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Replying to the un-starred questions of Shri Selvaganapathi T. M , the Union Minister of State for Tribal Affairs Shri Durgadas Uikey informed lok sabha today that the 'India State of Forest Report' 2023 has been published by Forest Survey of India (FSI) under the Ministry for Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC). The report contains information on forest cover, tree cover, mangrove cover, growing stock, carbon stock in India's forests, instances of forest fire, Agro forestry, etc. The said report mentions that the negative changes in the forest cover may be due to - Harvesting of short rotation plantations or other forms of logging, Shifting cultivation practices, Human activities, such as encroachment, Natural Calamities like storms, floods, and landslides, Titles given to beneficiaries under the Forest Rights Act (2006). In this regard, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has raised concerns about the scientific validity of this claim with MoEFCC.

Forest Rights Act (FRA) was enacted to recognize and vest forest rights in legitimate claimants who were present in forest areas before December 13, 2005. Furthermore, FRA does not deal/lead to the regularization of encroachments. Instead, it acknowledges pre-existing rights that are already being exercised by eligible individuals and communities dwelling in forest areas, including national parks and sanctuaries as per the provisions of the FRA.

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