

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3594
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10.08.2026

Removal of Invasive Foreign Species in Reserved Forests

3594. PROF. SOUGATA RAY:

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

- (a) whether the Government has identified invasive/foreign plant species in Reserved Forests that are adversely affecting native biodiversity, groundwater recharge and water availability and if so, the details thereof, State-wise;
- (b) whether any programme has been launched for the removal of such invasive species and restoration of native vegetation in Reserved Forests and other protected forest areas and if so, the details and present status thereof;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to promote the cultivation and regeneration of indigenous/native plant species, grasses, shrubs and other ecologically suitable species to improve soil moisture, groundwater recharge and water retention in forest ecosystems and, if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the funds allocated and utilised during the last five years for invasive species management, ecological restoration and watershed development in Reserved Forests, State-wise?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) to (d) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and its line institutions, actively identify and monitor Invasive Alien Plant Species (IAPS). For identification of invasive species, a separate album of 45 major invasive species has been prepared by Forest Survey of India (FSI). According to FSI, invasive plants show a very dense to a moderate-to-dense and scanty occurrence in the Reserved Forest Areas. Botanical Survey of India (BSI) has recently prepared and submitted a comprehensive, state-wise inventory of potential invasive species spreading across forest and non-forest areas to the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) to facilitate preparation of the National Management Plan of Invasive Species.

The management and removal of invasive plant species and cultivation of indigenous plant species in Reserved Forests and other protected forest areas are undertaken by the respective State Governments/Union Territory Administrations and concerned agencies, in accordance with local requirements and the provisions of the approved forest and wildlife management plans.

The Government promotes conservation, regeneration and enrichment of indigenous/native tree species through sustainable forest management practices. The National Forest Policy, 1988 envisages maintenance of environmental stability, restoration of ecological balance and increasing forest/tree

cover through afforestation and regeneration using native/indigenous species. Further, the National Working Plan Code, 2023 provides for ecosystem-based forest management, including invasive species management restoration of degraded forest landscapes, soil and moisture conservation measures, watershed management and preference for site-specific indigenous/native species in regeneration and restoration activities, taking into account local ecological conditions. These measures contribute to improving soil moisture, groundwater recharge, water retention and overall ecosystem resilience.
