

(b) No, Sir. The Ministry has not received any communication opposing the above approvals.

(c) The most serious concern pertaining to field trials of GM crop is likely contamination due to gene flow. All field trials are accordingly subjected to stringent norms such as maintaining (i) a crop specific isolation distance from the periphery of the experimental site; (ii) biological barrier; (iii) submission of a validated event specification test protocol; and (iv) Post harvest restrictions.

(d) The matter related to GM crop field trials is subjudice in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

Poor rain due to low forest cover

3100. SHRI Y.S. CHOWDARY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether land under forest is reducing across the country, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(b) whether low forest cover is also a contributing factor for poor rains across the country and if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR): (a) As per India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2013, there is a net increase of 5,871 square kilometers in the forest cover of the country, as compared to previous assessment *i.e.* India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2011. The details of States/UTs showing increase/decrease in forest cover alongwith reasons are given in Statement-I and II respectively (*See below*).

(b) No such report that low forest cover is also a contributing factor for poor rains across the country has been received in the Ministry.

Statement-I

States/UTs showing gain in forest cover and reasons for gain

Sl. No.	State/UTs	Change (in square kilometer)	Reasons for gain
1.	West Bengal	3,810	Coppice growth and afforestation inside Recorded Forest Areas (RFA); plantations outside forests etc.

Sl. No.	State/UTs	Change (in square kilometer)	Reasons for gain
2.	Odisha	1,444	Main reason for the change in forest cover is due to conservation initiatives by State Forest Department and through Van Sanrakshan Samiti (VSS). Better availability of better quality satellite data.
3.	Kerala	622	Afforestation and conservation activities, inclusion of Trees Outside Forests (TOF) area.
4.	Jharkhand	496	Plantation, inclusion of Trees Outside Forests areas
5.	Bihar	446	Afforestation activities within and outside forests, inclusion of Trees Outside Forests (TOF).
6.	Tamil Nadu	219	Main reason for increase in forest cover is better protection and conservation of forests leading to increase in Medium density Forests (MDF) and Open Forests areas, Inclusion of Trees Outside Forests (TOF).
7.	Gujarat	34	Change in forest cover is attributed to conservation efforts and afforestation within and outside recorded forest areas.
8.	Meghalaya	13	Conservation leading to regeneration and afforestation activities
9.	Uttarakhand	12	Conservation and afforestation activities
10.	Uttar Pradesh	11	Plantation and conservation initiatives
11.	Others	21	Plantation and conservation activities
TOTAL		7,128	

Statement-II*States/UTs showing loss in forest cover and reasons for loss*

Sl. No.	State/UTs	Change (in square kilometer)	Reasons for gain
1.	Nagaland	-274	Main reason for decrease in forest cover is biotic pressure, particularly the shortening of shifting cultivation cycle.
2.	Andhra Pradesh	-273	Main reason for decrease in forest cover has been the open cast coal mining, rotational felling of fast growing species, and encroachment on forest lands.
3.	Madhya Pradesh	-178	Submerge of area, mining, encroachments
4.	Tripura	-111	Shifting cultivation practices.
5.	Manipur	-100	Decrease in forest cover of the state is due to Shifting cultivation practices and biotic pressure in major parts of the state.
6.	Arunachal Pradesh	-89	Decrease in forest cover of the state is due to shifting cultivation practices and biotic pressure in many of the districts.
7.	Mizoram	-63	Shifting cultivation practices, soil erosion and biotic pressure.
8.	Karnataka	-62	Rotational felling
9.	Chhattisgarh	-53	Developmental activities, mining, encroachments
10.	Haryana	-22	Developmental activities, Rotational felling in agro forestry area
11.	Maharashtra	-14	Encroachments etc.
12.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	-13	Loss of mangroves vegetation.
13.	Others	-5	
TOTAL		-1,257	