

BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL

PRINCIPAL BENCH

NEW DELHI

ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO. 555 OF 2024

IN THE MATTER OF

NEWS ITEM TITLED "INDIA LOST 2.33 MILLION HECTARES OF TREE COVER SINCE 2000 GLOBAL FOREST WATCH" APPEARING IN THE INDIAN EXPRESS DATE 13.04.2024.

INDEX

Sl no.	Annexure	Particulars	Page no.
1.		REPORT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE, GOVERNMENT OF BIHAR IN O.A. NO. 555/2024 BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL (PRINCIPAL BENCH), NEW DELHI, with id proof of deponent.	01-06

responsible for loss and action taken for conservation and management of forests.

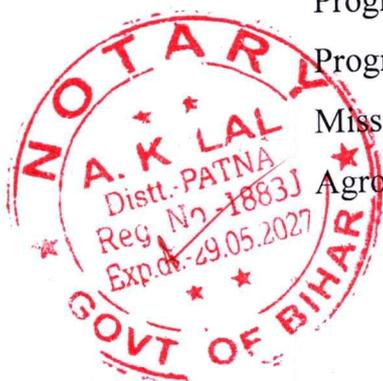
3. As per the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) of the Forest Survey of India (herein after referred to as FSI), the year wise Forest Cover and Tree Cover in the State of Bihar are as follows:-

Information regarding Forest Cover, Tree Cover for the period from the year 2001 to 2023 (LISS III) as published by the FSI:-

India State of Forest Report (Year of publication)	Forest Cover (Sq. Km)	Tree Cover (Sq. Km)	Total Forest Cover including Tree Cover	Percentage (%)
1	2	3	4	5
2001	5720	3693	9413	10.00
2003	5558	1620	7178	7.62
2005	5579	2522	5104	8.60
2009	6804	2495	8237	9.88
2011	6845	2369	8252	9.79
2013	7291	2164	8352	10.04
2015	7288	2182	8368	8.89
2017	7299	2263	9562	10.15
2019	7306	2003	9309	9.89
2021	7381	2341	9722	10.32
2023	7532	2370	9902	10.52*

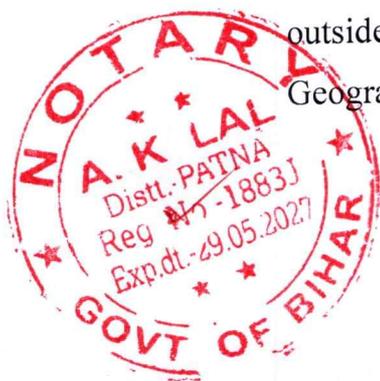
* As per the latest ISFR Report 2023 published by the FSI.

4. The Department of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bihar has been taking up various afforestation activities like compensatory afforestation, tree transplantation policy, National Afforestation Programme, Nagar Van Yojana, Plantations under the Namami Gange Programme; Missions viz., Hariyali Mission, Jal-Jeevan-Hariyali Mission, Mission 2.51, Mission 5.0, all of which encompasses the Agroforestry Schemes, involving women self-help groups, Ek Ped Maa



Ke Naam (One tree in the name of the Mother) campaign, Van Mahotsav, departmental plantations, plantations involving all the stake holder departments, community plantations, plantation by Public Sector Undertakings, Civil Society Organisations, Forest Fringe villagers, School/College students, etc. under which massive plantations is being undertaken on mission mode to increase the green cover both inside and outside the Recorded Forest Area in the State of Bihar.

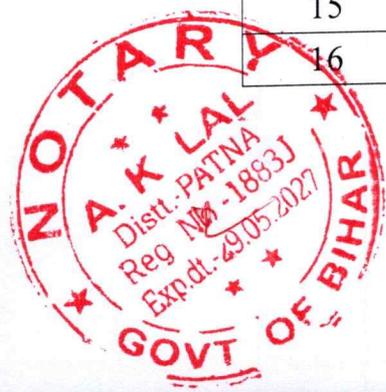
5. It is relevant to mention that the State of Bihar has launched 4th Agriculture Road Map under which the Department of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bihar has been assigned with a target to plant 20 Crores of saplings between the year 2023 to 2028. Bihar is an agriculture prime economy, therefore availability of land is a major challenge to increase the green cover in the State. Considering this the State of Bihar is encouraging agroforestry with an incentive mechanism to encourage the farmers to take up agroforestry.
6. In order to monitor the progress of the above-mentioned mission/campaign/programme to increase the green cover, the Department of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bihar has conducted a detailed mapping of the forest cover in and outside the Recorded Forest Area with high resolution LISS-IV satellite imagery (instead of the commonly used LISS III satellite imagery) through the Forest Survey of India in two phases viz., in the year 2019 and 2024. The FSI has submitted its report for the phase II in the year 2024.
7. As per the said Report, 2024 from the FSI, the forest cover in and outside the Recorded Forest Area in Bihar is 12.55% of the total Geographical Area of the State. Whereas, as per the latest ISFR Report



2023 of the FSI (based on LISS III satellite image), the Tree Cover (Tree Outside Forest) in Bihar is 2.5%. Therefore, presently, in Bihar, putting together the Forest Cover and Tree Cover is 15.05% of the total Geographical Area of the State.

8. In this regard, it is submitted and stated that the reason for the loss of trees is mostly due to forest land diversion under Forest Conservation Act, 1980. However, for maintenance of the tree cover, plantations have been undertaken through various schemes in the state as mentioned in the foregoing paragraphs. A chart with total forest land diversion under the Forest Conservation Act, 1980 and the total plantation for conservation and management of forests is given as follows:-

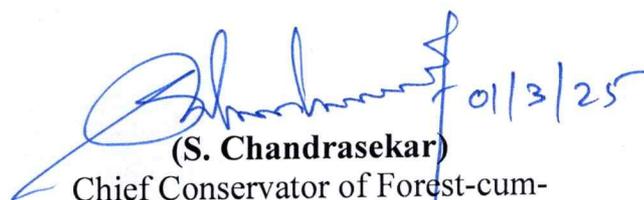
Sl. No.	Year	Total land Diversion (ha.) as per the Forest Conservation Act, 1980	Total plantation for conservation and management of forests (in lakh)
1	2003	2.25	*
2	2004	3.47	*
3	2005	0.55	*
4	2006	667.51	*
5	2007	8.24	*
6	2008	1.56	57.99
7	2009	20.75	45.23
8	2010	626.79	80.45
9	2011	335.92	95.45
10	2012	95.22	216.72
11	2013	264.88	450.81
12	2014	96.95	604.2
13	2015	83.82	269.24
14	2016	187.82	306.21
15	2017	416.01	228
16	2018	461.44	179.9



17	2019	470.21	130.34
18	2020	286.01	397.49
19	2021	311.45	389
20	2022	478.51	320.12
Total		4819.36	3771.15
<i>Note: In respect of Forest (Conservation) Act 1980, total 4819.36 ha. of forest land have been diverted (2003-2022) for various developmental activities.</i>			<i>Note: 3771.15 lakh plantations done for Conservation and Management of Forests.</i>

* Data for the year 2003 to 2007 is not available.

The above report shows that the forest and tree cover (Tree Outside Forest) been increasing steadily in the State of Bihar. The Department of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bihar has been continuing with the plantation drive guided by the targets of the States' policy enunciated in the 4th Agriculture Road Map.

 01/3/25
(S. Chandrasekar)

Chief Conservator of Forest-cum-
State Nodal Officer,
Environment & Climate Change
Dept. of Environment, Forest and Climate Change,
Bihar, Patna.

A. Singh
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