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The State Environment and Forest Department informed the Departmentally Related Standing Committee (DRSC) of the Assam Legislative Assembly that the Assam Agro-Forestry Development Board is identifying schemes wherein the use of degraded forest land for agro-forestry and related activities could be taken up.





GUWAHATI: The State Environment and Forest Department informed the Departmentally Related Standing Committee (DRSC) of the Assam Legislative Assembly that the Assam Agro-Forestry Development Board is identifying schemes wherein the use of degraded forest land for agro-forestry and related activities could be taken up.

The DRSC observed huge areas of [forest](#) land lying unutilized for a long time. That prompted the House committee to recommend that the department initiate a joint forest committee with the neighbouring villages to survey the unutilized land and give permission to the local farmers for cultivation purposes to help promote greenery.

In its ATR (Action Taken Report), the department expressed the limitations it has while carrying out such activities. It said the [Assam](#) Agro-Forestry Development Board is the nodal agency to identify areas where agriculture and forestry activities can be taken up together. "The board is in the process of identifying schemes wherein the use of degraded forest land for agro-forestry and related activities could be taken up. Most of the schemes under the Forest Department, which have been centrally sponsored and funded by external agencies, have provisions for engaging joint forest management committees (JFMCs) or Eco-Development Committees (ADCs) for their livelihood development and are being engaged," the department said.



The DRSC also recommended the department take the necessary steps for the removal of encroachments at Teldhala, Manjuri, and Baghpara GP areas in the South Salmara-Mankachar district, a proposed reserved forest (PRF).

In his response to the recommendations, Dhubri DFO said, "Barkona PRF falls in Teldhala GP and Manjuri GP, Chamrasali PRF falls in Manjuri GP, and Baghpara GP. Since the PRFs concerned are not yet notified as reserved forest, the recommendations of the DRSC are to be carried out by the forest settlement officer as authorised by the government."

The DFO further said that the department has already initiated the matter with the ADC (R) and Forest Settlement Officer of the South Salmara-Mankachar district.

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