

Punjab records loss of 456 sq km tree cover in just two years

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Punjab is on top among the neighbouring states in the region with respect to forest and tree cover lost since the last forest survey was undertaken in 2019.

The area under forests and tree cover in the state has reduced by 456 sq km as per the India State of Forest Report (ISFR)-2021, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change informed the Lok Sabha today. Himachal Pradesh has lost 145 sq km, while Haryana has lost 139 sq km.

The state has a geographical area of 50,362 sq km, of which 2,985 sq km are covered by forests and trees. The area of Himachal Pradesh and Haryana is 55,673 square km and 44,212 square kms respectively, of which forest and tree cover accounts for 16,118 sq km and 3,028 sq km, respectively. Replying to Rattan Lal Kataria, Ambala MP, Bhupender Yadav, Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, said there has been an increase in the forest cover in some states while some other states have reported a decrease as compared to ISFR-2019.

Overall, there has been an increase of 2,261 sq km in green cover across the country. As many as 16 states and union territories have shown a decline in forest and tree cover.

The ministry's data also showed that from 2019-20 to 2021-22, a total of 529.32 sq km of forestland across the country was approved by the government for non-forest use. This includes 15.01 sq km in Haryana, 13.87 sq km in Punjab and 11.93 sq km in Himachal Pradesh.

Source: <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/punjab/state-records-loss-of-456-sq-km-tree-cover-in-just-two-years-415656>