

Uttarakhand to develop 6 city forests to increase green cover in urban spaces

The forest department has identified land for city forests in Haldwani (Nanital) and US Nagar.

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Ankur Sharma

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According to the last two surveys conducted by the Forest Survey of India over a period of four years from 2015 to 2019, Uttarakhand has not managed to report even an increase of even 1% forest cover in the state. (HT PHOTO.)

The Uttarakhand forest department will develop six city forests in Kumaon region, including two in the plains and four in hilly districts, said forest officials. The forest department has also started searching for land in municipal areas, said officials.

Tejaswini Patil, chief conservator forests (CCF) Kumaon region said six city forests will be developed in Kumaon region.

“Two will be developed in the plains and four in hilly districts. Each forest will be created in around 10 hectares land. These city forests will be developed in civic areas” she said.

Patil said the purpose of city forests is to increase the green cover in urban areas and thus help in creating a green and clean environment in such spaces. “Also, its purpose is to connect people with

greenery and clean environment through the city forests. We hope it will also motivate people to plant trees to compensate for the loss of greenery due to concretization in the city areas,” she said

The forest department has identified land for city forests in Haldwani (Nainital) and US Nagar. However, forest officials said it is comparatively challenging to identify 10-hectare land in hilly districts (Almora, Bageshwar, Pithoragarh and Champawat). “So the forest department has sent a proposal for only one-hectare city forests in hilly districts,” said a senior forest official.

“Ten 10 hectares of land is being acquired in the municipal areas in plain districts. But it is not easy to find 10 hectares of land at one place in hilly districts. So we have sent a proposal to the Central government to make provision for city forests over one hectare of land in the hilly districts of Uttarakhand,” said Patil.

She said if the Centre approves the proposal, then city forests will be developed over a hectare of land in hilly districts. Uttarakhand’s first city forest is being developed in Dehradun, she added.

According to the last two surveys conducted by the Forest Survey of India over a period of four years from 2015 to 2019, Uttarakhand has not managed to report even an increase of even 1% forest cover in the state.

Uttarakhand reported an increase of a mere 8.04 sq km of forests as per the India State of Forest Report 2019, released by the Forest Survey of India in December last year. The India State of Forest Report 2017, released by the Union ministry of environment and forests in February 2018, showed that only a marginal increase of 23 sq km forest cover was reported in Uttarakhand since 2015.

The report of 2017 showed a meagre increase of 165 sq km in very dense forest and 636 sq km in other forest categories, while the moderate dense forest diminished with a difference of 778 sq km, leaving the total cover in state to 24,295 sq km.

As per the 2019 report the districts of Haridwar, Nainital and Udham Singh Nagar reported a negative result of -2.75 sq km, -6.44 sq km and -4.21sq km decrease in forest area with respect to the assessment done by Forest Survey of India in 2017.

Source: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/uttarakhand-to-develop-6-city-forests-to-increase-green-cover-in-urban-spaces/story-6Wm1MJ9RV78t7A81obppRO.html>