

Forest Cover

- ❖ The State of West Bengal, located in the eastern part of India has a geographical area of 88,752 sq km, which is 2.70% of the geographical area of the country. The State lies between 21°29'N to 27°13'N latitude and 85°50'E to 89°52' E longitude and shares international border with Bangladesh in the east, Nepal in the northwest and Bhutan in the northeast. The State is also bordered by Sikkim in the north, Assam in the east, Bihar & Jharkhand in the west and Odisha and the Bay of Bengal in the south. The State has two natural divisions viz the North Himalayan and the south Alluvial Gangetic Plains. The three main rivers of the State viz Teesta, Torsa and Jaldhaka are tributaries of river Brahmaputra. The rivers Ganga and Hooghly flowing through the central part of the State drain into the Bay of Bengal forming the famous Sunderbans.

- ❖ Based on the interpretation of IRS Resourcesat-2 LISS III satellite data of the period Nov 2017 to Feb 2018, the Forest Cover in the State is 16,901.51 sq km. which is 19.04% of the State's geographical area. In terms of forest canopy density classes, the State has 3,018.52 sq km under Very Dense Forest (VDF), 4,160.26 sq km under Moderately Dense Forest (MDF) and 9,722.73 sq km under Open Forest (OF). Forest Cover in the State has increased by 54.51 sq km as compared to the previous assessment reported in ISFR 2019.

- ❖ Forest cover accounts for tree patches of size 1 ha and more having canopy density more than 10%. However, trees occurring in patches of size less than 1 ha including scattered trees are assessed through sampling based methodology. Tree cover in West Bengal has been estimated as 2,006 sq km.

- ❖ The Forest cover including tree cover is 18907.51 sq km (21.30%) of the state's geographical area as per the India State of Forests Report, 2019 published by Forest Survey of India, Dehradun.