

FOREST COVER

The state of West Bengal extends from the Himalayas in the north to the Bay of Bengal in the south. It lies between 20 31 ' N and 27 12' N latitude and 85 50' E and 89 52' E longitude covering a geographic area of 88,752 sq.km. Five States (Sikkim, Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand and Orissa) and three countries (Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh) surround West Bengal – Sikkim to the North, Bhutan to the North-East, Assam and Bangladesh to the East, Nepal, Bihar and Jharkhand to the West and Jharkhand and Orissa to the South-West. The extreme south end touches the Bay of Bengal.

Total recorded forest land in the state is 11,879 sq.km, of which 7,054 sq.km is Reserved Forest, 3,772 sq.km is Protected Forest and 1,053 sq.km is Unclassed State Forest, thus constituting 13.38% of the geographical area of the state.

Forest Cover as per the standard definition includes all the land more than one hectare in area and with tree canopy more than 10%. The lands may be under private or public ownership inclusive of orchards, bamboos and palms and are easily measured by the satellite.

Based on the tree canopy the forest cover can be, Very Dense Forest (VDF), Medium Dense Forest (MDF), Open Forest (OF), Scrub and Non-Forest Land. **However, sum of VDF, MDF and OF is counted as 'FOREST COVER'**

Tree Cover includes all the land less than one hectare in area, especially surrounding villages and woodlands. Such areas need Satellite and Manual Field Verification.

The forest cover including the tree cover is 21.31% of the States geographical area as per the India State of Forests Report, 2015 published by Forest Survey of India, Dehradun.