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## Board to set up 34 silk clusters in Karnataka, AP

**India is under obligation to cut down tobacco production by 2020**

November 17, 2015 12:00 am | Updated 05:48 am IST - MYSURU:

SHANKAR BENNUR

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In its bid to cheer tobacco growers to shift to sericulture, the Central Silk Board (CSB) has developed 34 silk clusters in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, the two prime tobacco growing States in the country.

The clusters have been formed in areas dominated by tobacco cultivation. The Board formed the clusters only after ascertaining suitability of the soil for sericulture.

While 14 clusters have been developed in Karnataka, 20 clusters have been set up in Andhra Pradesh.

Board Member Secretary H. Nagesh Prabhu said in Mysuru on Monday that the Board had developed over 174 silk clusters in the country to promote sericulture in its resolve to make the country a world leader in silk ahead of China, which is at present ranked first in the world.

He said over 14 silk clusters have also been developed in districts like Belagavi, Haveri, Raichur and other districts in North Karnataka and Hyderabad Karnataka regions to introduce sericulture and boost silk production.

India is a signatory to the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) and it is under commitment to reduce tobacco cultivation by 2020. India is among the 150 countries that are signatories to the FCTC, sponsored by the World Health Organisation.

Karnataka, which is the top silk producer, is also the second-largest producer of tobacco after Andhra Pradesh.

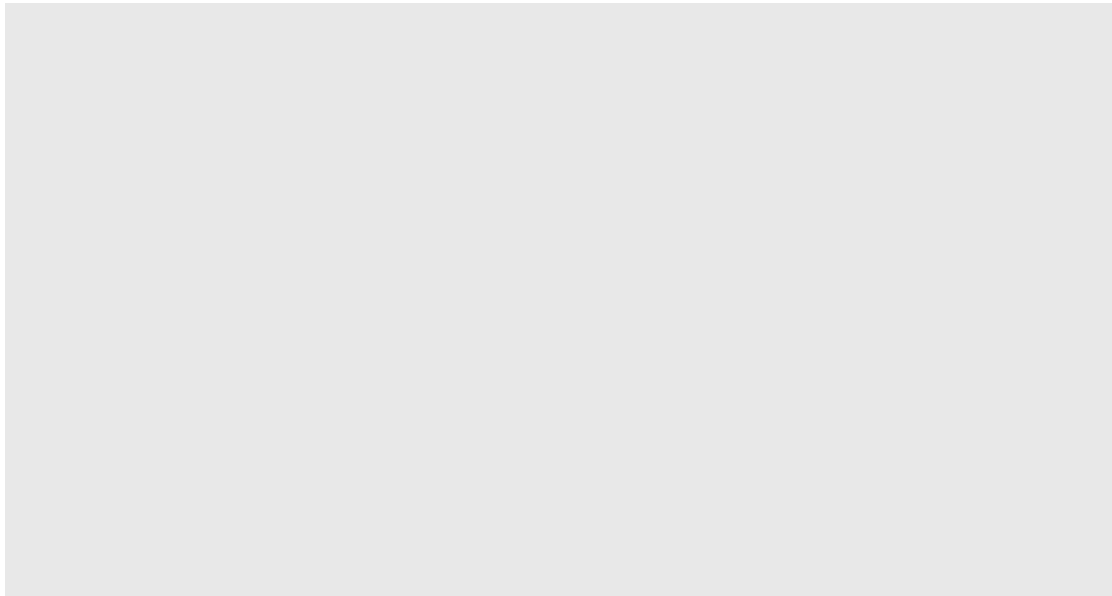
### Alternative crops

Over the years, tobacco growers in Karnataka have been requested to shift to alternative crops so that the area under tobacco cultivation, which is over two lakh acres, is reduced by at least one lakh acre by 2020.


VFC tobacco or cigarette tobacco produced in Karnataka comprise around one-third of the total VFC tobacco produced in the country. VFC tobacco production is largely concentrated in Mysuru and Hassan districts.

*Tobacco growers being persuaded to shift to sericulture*

*Clusters only after ascertaining suitability of soil for sericulture*



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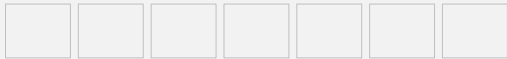
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