

(c) and (d) The steps taken by the Government to protect and increase the population of wildlife, *inter alia*, include the following:

1. Threatened species of wildlife, including lions are placed in the Schedules of the Wildlife (Protection), Act, 1972, thereby according them the highest degree of protection.
2. The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 has been amended from time to time and made more stringent against wildlife related offences.
3. A network of Protected Areas has been established to conserve wildlife and their habitats including rare animals.
4. Wildlife Crime Control Bureau has been set up to check illegal trade in wildlife and its products.
5. The State/ UT Governments have been requested to strengthen the field formations and intensify patrolling in and around wildlife rich areas.
6. Financial and technical assistance is extended to the State/UT Governments under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes, viz, 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats', 'Project Tigers and 'Project Elephant' for providing better protection and conservation of wildlife.
7. Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme - 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats', a new component has been added for initiating 'Recovery Programme for critically endangered species and their habitats' during the 11th Five Year plan period.
8. India is a signatory to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) that regulates international trade, in wildlife and its derivatives.
9. India has bilateral arrangements with China and Nepal on combating wildlife crime.

Decrease in population of tigers

2450.SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether tiger population has been decreasing over the years;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether it is proposed to set up new tiger reserves in the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) As per the findings of the recent All India tiger estimation in 2008 using the refined methodology, the total country-level population of tiger is 1411 (mid value); the

lower and upper limits being 1165 and 1657 respectively, as indicated in the Statement (*See below*). The new findings are based on spatial occupancy of tigers and sampling such forests using camera traps in a statistical framework, which are not comparable to the earlier total count using pugmarks. The said findings indicate a poor status of tiger population in areas outside tiger reserves and protected areas. The tiger population, by and large, in tiger reserves and protected areas of the 17 tiger States are viable, while requiring ongoing conservation efforts.

(c) and (d) The National Tiger Conservation Authority has accorded 'in-principle' approval for creation of four new Tiger Reserves namely, Pilibhit in Uttar Pradesh, Sunabeda in Orissa, Sahyadri in Maharashtra and Ratapani in Madhya Pradesh.

(e) Question does not arise.

Statement

Forest occupancy and population estimates of tiger as per the refined methodology

State	Tiger km ²	No.	Tiger Numbers	
			Lower limit	Upper limit
1	2	3	4	5
<i>Shivalik-Gangetic Plain Landscape Complex</i>				
Uttarakhand	1901	178	161	195
Uttar Pradesh	2766	109	91	127
Bihar	510	10	7	13
Shivalik- Gangetic	5177	297	259	335
<i>Central Indian Landscape Complex and Eastern Ghats Landscape Complex</i>				
Andhra Pradesh	14126	95	84	107
Chhattisgarh	3609	26	23	28
Madhya Pradesh	15614	300	236	364
Maharashtra	4273	103	76	131
Orissa	9144	45	37	53
Rajasthan	356	32	30	35
Jharkhand**	1488		Not Assessed	
Central Indian	48610	601	486	718

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Western Ghats Landscape Complex</i>				
Karnataka	18715	290	241	339
Kerala	6168	46	39	53
Tamil Nadu	9211	76	56	95
Western Ghats	34094	412	336	487
<i>North East Hills and Brahmaputra Flood Plains</i>				
Assam *	1164	70	60	80
Arunachal Pradesh *	1685	14	12	18
Mizoram *	785	6	4	8
Northern West Bengal *	596	10	8	12
North East Hills, and Brahmaputra	4230	100	84	118
Sunderbans	1586		Not Assessed	
Total Tiger Population		1411	1165	1657

* Population estimates are based on possible density of tiger occupied landscape in the area, not assessed by double sampling.

** Data was not amenable to population estimation of tiger. However, available information about the landscape indicates low densities of tiger in the area ranging from 0.5 to 1.5 per 100 km².

Arbitrary exploitation of mineral resources

□2451. SHRI GANGA CHARAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is formulating any policy to maintain environmental balance in view of arbitrary exploitation of minerals from hills and rivers, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) if not, whether Government is not sensitive towards environmental balance due to which we are facing drought-like situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) As per the provisions of Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006, mining projects with lease area of 5 ha and above are also required to obtain prior

□Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.