

- (vii) Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme - 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats', a new component has been added titled 'Recovery Programme for critically endangered species and their habitats' during the 11th Five Year Plan period.
- (viii) India is 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.

Poaching of dolphins

†1277. SHRI KAPTAN SINGH SOLANKI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether instances of poaching of national aquatic animals, Ganges dolphins, is constantly increasing;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government has formulated any policy or fixed any responsibility in this regard; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) There are no reports in the Ministry indicating increase in poaching incidents of the Gangetic dolphin, which has recently been notified as National Aquatic Animal. However, there is decline in population of dolphins in India due to various reasons including habitat degradation, increase in pollution and siltation in the river systems, construction of barrages on rivers causing physical barriers to the movement of this migratory species and unintended entrapment of dolphins in fishing nets.

(c) and (d) Gangetic dolphin is placed in the Schedule-I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, thereby accorded the highest degree of protection. The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 provides for stringent punishment for poaching of wild animals including dolphins.

Creation of Eco Sensitive Zone

†1278. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.