

Statement-II

*Number of incidents of poaching/number of animals
killed in Himachal Pradesh*

Year	Incidents of poaching	Wild animals killed
2007	6	Leopard-6
2008	10	Leopard-7 Ghoral-1 Wild Boar-1 Sambhar-1
2009	8	Leopard-2 Sambhar-2 Wild Boar-1 Cheetal-1 Ghoral-1 Civet-1
2010	3	Leopard-2 Wild Boar-1

Environmental clearance to irrigation projects of Maharashtra

2046. DR. BHARATKUMAR RAUT: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposals of four irrigation projects of Nagpur, Chandrapur, Bhandara and Hingoli districts of Maharashtra are pending with the Ministry for long;

(b) what is the response of the Central Government to the proposals submitted by the State Government; and

(c) by when the approval to the proposals are likely to be accorded?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) No irrigation projects located in Nagpur, Chandrapur and Bhandara

districts of Maharashtra are pending for environmental clearance. Sapli dam project located in Hingoli and Nanded district was submitted for environmental clearance during December, 2009, without conducting public hearing in Nanded district. The proponent was requested to conduct the public hearing in Nanded district, which was held on 18.6.2010. The discrepancies in the project features mentioned in the public hearing proceeding and original proposal have been corrected and the documents have been received recently.

(c) As per EIA Notification, 2006, the decision on the proposal is required to be taken within 105 days from the date of receipt of the complete information.

Slaughter of owl

2047. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of large scale slaughter/sacrifice of owl for black magic/good luck etc. during festivals;

(b) if so, whether Government has taken any steps to curb this illegal practice; and

(c) the fresh measures taken/proposed to be taken by Government to save owls before they become extinct?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) A study report titled 'Imperilled Custodians of the Night: A Study on Illegal Trade, Trapping and Use of Owls in India' released by TRAFFIC - India, an International NGO, during November, 2010 indicates that owls are ironically associated with a wide range of myths, folklore and superstitions concerning black magic and witchcraft, etc. The report also suggests that domestic trade in owls is highly lucrative and the owls remain a key target of several tribes connected with the bird trade.

(b) and (c) The important steps taken by the Government to curb the illegal practice and save owls include:

- (i) Forest Spotted Owlet (*Athene blewitti*), a critically endangered species of Owl, is listed under the Schedule-I, and other species of Owls are listed under Schedule-IV of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, thereby according adequate legal protection to the species.
- (ii) Stringent penalties have been prescribed for violation of any provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.