

- (i) The Ministry of Environment and Forests is implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National Afforestation Programme (NAP) for regeneration of degraded forests and adjoining areas in the country. The Scheme is implemented through a decentralized mechanism of State Forest Development Agency (SFDA) at State level, Forest Development Agency (FDA) at Forest Division level and Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) at Village levels. As on 31.03.2012, 800 FDA projects have been approved in 28 States in the country to treat an area of 18.86 lakh hectares since inception of the Scheme in 2002.
- (ii) The Ministry release funds under the Intensification of Forest Management Scheme (IIFMS), for strengthening of forest protection such as infrastructure, fire protection, demarcation of forest boundaries, construction of facilities for frontline staff and communication which has contributed towards increase in the forest cover.
- (iii) Under the National Action Plan on Climate Change announced by the Central Government, a National Mission for a 'Green India' has been mooted in which quality to improve the degraded forests along with afforestation are major objectives.
- (iv) Under the award of 13<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission, a grant of Rs. 5000 crores has been allocated as "Forest Grants" to the states on the basis of their forest cover in the State in relation to the national average. It has been further weighted by the quality of the forests in each state as measured by density.
- (v) Afforestation activities are undertaken under various External Aided Projects by 12 States.

#### **Notification of Critical Wildlife Habitats in Odisha**

3439. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state : whether Government has approved the proposal of the State Government of Odisha to declare 15.33 km. area of Chilkanalaban sanctuary, entire Gahirmath sanctuary and Chandaka sanctuary as critical wildlife habitats?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN) : The Government of Odisha had forwarded proposals to the Central Level Committee for notification of Chilka Nalaban Sanctuary, Gahirmatha Sanctuary and Chandaka Sanctuary as Critical Wildlife Habitats under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of

Forest Rights) Act, 2006. These proposals were considered by the Central Level Committee and were found to be incomplete. Therefore, the State Government was requested to submit revised proposal, which has not been received in the Ministry of Environment and Forests so far.

### **Conservation of Elephants and Tigers**

†3440. SHRI MOHAMMED ADEEB : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether Government has any proposal to set up National Elephant Conservation Authority;
- (b) if so, the time by when; and
- (c) the details of measures taken to check the decreasing number of tigers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN) : (a) and (b) The Task Force on Project Elephant constituted by the Ministry during 2010 has recommended in its report that Project Elephant should be converted into a statutory agency on the lines of National Tiger Conservation Authority for a more effective conservation and management regime for the elephant in India. It has suggested relevant amendments in the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 for the purpose. The Government has not taken a final decision in the matter.

- (c) The details of important measures taken by the Government for protection of tigers and other wildlife are given in statement.

### ***Statement***

*Important initiatives taken by the Government of India for protection of tigers and other wildlife*

### **Legal steps**

1. Amendment of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 for providing enabling provisions towards constituting the National Tiger Conservation Authority and the Tiger and Other Endangered Species Crime Control Bureau.
2. Enhancement of punishment in cases of offence relating to a tiger reserve or its core area.

### **Administrative steps**

3. Strengthening of antipoaching activities, including special strategy for monsoon patrolling, by providing funding support to Tiger Reserve States,

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.