

Danger to wildlife corridor in Rajasthan

646. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the canal project to connect Kushalipuranalla to the Mansarovar Dam in the Ranthambhor National Park threatens to destroy the crucial corridor that links the Ranthambhor National Park to the Sawai Mansingh Sanctuary and is in violation of the Wildlife and Forest Act;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the details of action Ministry has taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): (a) to (c) The area of the said canal project falls under the core area of the Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve, notified under section 38 V of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, as amended in 2006. The project was placed for consideration before the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife (NBWL), in its meeting held on 14.10.2011. Although the proposal stands recommended by the State Board for Wildlife, Chief Wildlife Warden of the State and the National Tiger Conservation Authority, no final view on the project was taken by the Standing Committee.

Wetlands in the country

647. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of wetlands in the country;

(b) the details of prominent wetlands;

(c) the importance for fishery, climate, environment and ecology;

(d) the commitment of India as a signatory of the Ramsar Convention;

(e) the steps taken to conserve wetlands; and

(f) the above statistics pertaining to mangroves in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): (a) As reported by Space Application Center (SAC), Ahmedabad in their National Wetland Inventory and Assessment Report published in June, 2011, there are 757060 wetlands occupying an area of 15260572 hectares in the country. This also includes 3806 mangroves with an area of 471407 hectares.

(b) Ministry has identified 115 wetlands and 38 Mangroves in the country for conservation and management. The list of these prominent wetlands is given in Statement (*See below*).

(c) Wetlands play a prominent role in acting as nurseries for fisheries, in mitigation of floods, wastewater treatment, recharging of aquifers and acting as filter for nutrients. They also provide niche for aquatic biodiversity and any intervention