

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 851
TO BE ANSWERED ON 09.02.2023

Marine pollution in the Indian ocean

851. SHRI MASTHAN RAO BEEDA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware that as per the World Bank data, over 15 million tons of contamination enter the Indian Ocean, making it the world's second most polluted ocean after the North Pacific;
- (b) if so, the steps being taken by Government to curb pollution in the Indian Ocean; and
- (c) the measures taken by Government for monitoring the water quality of coastal aquatic resources?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a) & (b): There are varying estimates of the amount of waste/litter in the ocean from different sources. Steps taken by Government to curb pollution in the Indian Ocean are at Annexure.

(c): The Ministry of Earth Science (MoES) under the umbrella Scheme 'Ocean Services, Modelling, Applications, Resources and Technology (O-SMART)' has a component on coastal Research. Under this component, activities such as Marine Pollution Monitoring, Prediction, Development of Standards, Marine Litter and Micro-plastics are covered for generating data and developing action plans for the abatement and control of coastal pollution in consultation with the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) and the Pollution Control Committees (PCCs).

NCCR has taken several measures for monitoring the water quality of coastal aquatic resources. Under the National Programme of Seawater Quality Monitoring, coastal water quality monitoring is being done at 50 locations along the Indian coast including the islands using dedicated Research Vessels Sagar Tara and Sagar Anveshika. In addition to ship based observations, a network of water quality buoys is being deployed along the Indian coast to get real-time information on coastal water quality.

The Central Pollution Control Board under National Water Quality Monitoring Programme (NWMP) is monitoring the water quality of creeks/sea water/marine water at 194 locations in eight states (Andhra Pradesh-12, Goa-14, Gujarat-3, Kerala- 6, Maharashtra-34, Odisha-90, West Bengal-1 and Tamil Nadu-34) on monthly basis in collaboration with State Pollution Control Boards and the Pollution Control Committees.

Annexure referred to in reply to part (a) to (b) of Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question no. 851 for 9th February, 2023 by Shri. Masthan Rao Beeda

- i. The prevention and control of marine pollution from land based sources and from sea based sources up to 5 Km are covered under the provision of The Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974. The State Pollution Control Board (SPCBs) / Pollution Control Committee (PCCs) are implementing the provisions of The Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 for regulation of discharge of pollution from respective sources through consent mechanism and through policy guidelines issued by coastal states.
- ii. Central Pollution Control Board has issued directions to 9 Coastal State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/4 Pollution Control Committees (Andhra Pradesh, Andaman & Nicobar, Daman, Diu & Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Lakshwadeep, Maharashtra, Odisha, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu & West Bengal) under Section 18(1)(b) of Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, regarding treatment of untreated sewage and Industrial effluent and disposal in coastal towns of India.
- iii. Most of the industries located in coastal area are allowed to dispose their pre-treated effluent in Common Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP) and treated effluent from CETP is allowed to discharge into sea through pipeline. The existing shore discharge shall be converted to Marine Outfalls. In cases where the marine outfall provides a minimum initial dilution 1500 times at the point of discharge and a minimum dilution of 1500 times at a point 100 meter away from discharge point, then the State Board may relax the Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD) limit, provided that the maximum permissible value for COD in treated effluent shall be 500 milligrams /liter.
- iv. Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016, as amended, provide the statutory framework for management of plastic waste in the country. Identified single use plastic items, which have low utility and high littering potential, have already been prohibited, with effect from 1st July, 2022, vide Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021, notified on 12th August 2021. The notification also prohibits manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of plastic carry bags having thickness less than seventy-five microns with effect from 30th September 2021, and having thickness less than one hundred and twenty microns with effect from the 31st December, 2022.
- v. The Ministry of Environment Forest & Climate Change notified the Guidelines on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for plastic packing vide Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2022 on 16th February 2022. The Guidelines stipulate mandatory targets on EPR, recycling of plastic packaging waste, reuse of rigid plastic packaging and use of recycled plastic content. The guidelines provide for moving towards sustainable plastic packaging and reducing the plastic foot print. The implementation of ban on identified single use plastic items coupled with extended producer responsibility on plastic packaging will reduce pollution caused by littered and unmanaged plastic waste.
- vi. Clean coast campaigns are taken up regularly to create awareness among the public and stakeholders to keep the beaches clean. A cleanliness campaign “Swachh Sagar, Surakshit

Sagar/Clean Coast Safe Sea” along the India’s entire coastline was conducted for 75 days from 3rd July 2022 to 17th September 2022.

- vii. The Indian Coast Guard is functioning as the Central Coordinating Authority for Oil-Spill response in the maritime Zone of India and is authorized to take necessary action against polluters.
- viii. National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR), an attached office of Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) works in close association with South Asia Cooperative Environment Program (SACEP) under the South Asia Seas Program to combat marine pollution including marine debris in this region. MoES have prepared a regional action plan on marine litter in association with SACEP.
- ix. A Marine Plastic Debris Workshop under the East Asia Summit was organized by NCCR on 14th - 15th February 2022. During the Summit, India, Australia and Singapore came together to address marine pollution with focus on plastic debris.
- x. MoEFCC through National Task Force, comprising of Union Ministries and State / UT Governments, is taking measures to eliminate identified single use plastic items and effective implementation of Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016.