

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2131
TO BE ANSWERED ON 21.12.2023

Status on the endangered animal species

2131. SHRI S. SELVAGANABATHY:

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

- (a) whether a number of endangered animal species in the country, including Puducherry, are on the verge of extinction and if so, the details thereof, including the total number of such species;
- (b) the details of species that have been saved from endangerment and extinction during the last ten years;
- (c) the steps taken by Government to raise awareness among the public about the endangered species of flora and fauna; and
- (d) the details of the plans or policies formulated to save endangered, vulnerable, and threatened species in the country?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

- (a) and (b) There are no reports in the Ministry indicating animal species on the verge of extinction in the country, including from Puducherry. The populations of species like Tiger, Asiatic Lion, Asian Elephant, Greater One horned Rhinoceros, Vultures, etc. have shown increase due to the concerted efforts taken by the Government.
- (c) The important actions taken by Government for raising awareness among people on endangered species of flora and fauna include:
 - i. Financial assistance is provided to States/UTs for development of wildlife and management of habitat, including for activities related to awareness generation, under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes of 'Development of Wildlife Habitats' and 'Project Tiger and Elephant'.
 - ii. The local communities are involved in conservation measures through Eco development activities, which help the forest department in protection of wildlife.
 - iii. The Government of India has initiated Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) programme, that aims to generate public awareness about the environment, and conservation.

- iv. Important days such as World Wildlife Day, Lion Day, Tiger Day, Elephant Day, Wetlands Day, Biodiversity Day, etc. and Wildlife Week are celebrated to bring in more awareness on wildlife and biodiversity among the public.
 - v. Environment protection and nature education are made part of curricula in the schools.
- (d) The important plans and policies of the Government to save endangered, vulnerable, and threatened species in the country include:
- i. The National Wildlife Action Plan (2017-2031) released by the Ministry in October 2017 provides for specific Chapters and priority actions on various aspects of wildlife conservation like, conservation of threatened species, mitigating human wildlife conflict, conservation of inland and coastal and marine ecosystems, landscape level conservation, etc.
 - ii. A network of Protected Areas (National Parks, Sanctuaries, Conservation Reserves and Community Reserves) has been created in the country for conservation and protection of the wildlife.
 - iii. In order to further strengthen conservation of wildlife, Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs) are notified around National Parks and Sanctuaries under the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
 - iv. Legal protection has been provided to wild animals and plants against hunting, commercial exploitation, etc. under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.
 - v. The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, has been amended from time to time and made more stringent. The punishment in cases of offences has been enhanced.
 - vi. Wild Life Crime Control Bureau coordinates with State/UTs and other enforcement agencies to gather intelligence about poaching and unlawful trade in wild animals and animal articles.
 - vii. In accordance with provisions contained under Section 33 of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, the Ministry has issued guidelines for the process of management planning for Protected Areas and other landscape elements.
 - viii. Financial assistance is also provided to States/UTs for species recovery programme of 22 identified critically endangered species viz Snow Leopard, Bustard including floricans, Dolphin, Hangul, NilgiriTahr, Marine Turtles, Dugong, Andaman Edible- nest Swiftlet, Wild Buffalo, Nicobar Megapode, Sangai, Vultures, Malabar Civet, Great Indian one-horned Rhinoceros, Asiatic Lion, Swamp deer, Jerdon's Courser, Batagur Baska, Clouded Leopard, Arabian Sea Humpback whale, Red Panda and Caracal, under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Development of Wildlife Habitats'.
