

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1241
TO BE ANSWERED ON 01.08.2024

Conservation of marine species

1241. SMT. GEETA ALIAS CHANDRAPRABHA:

DR. K. LAXMAN:

SHRI NARAYANA KORAGAPPA:

DR. MEDHA VISHRAM KULKARNI:

SHRI SANT BALBIR SINGH:

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

- (a) the details of the steps taken for conservation of marine species;
- (b) whether Government provides financial assistance for the protection of marine species, if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether Government has taken any steps to preserve the ecosystem of fresh water, especially in the State of Punjab?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

- (a) and (b) The important steps taken by the Government of conservation of marine species include:
 - i. A network of protected areas across the Coastal States and Islands of the country under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 has been created for the conservation of marine species.
 - ii. 106 coastal and marine sites have been identified and prioritized as Important Coastal and Marine Biodiversity Areas (ICMBAs) to take care of marine species conservation.
 - iii. Many threatened marine species have been listed Schedule I and II of the Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972 according them protection against hunting.
 - iv. The Ministry has amended Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to empower Indian Coast Guards for entry, search, arrest and detention in case of contravention of provisions of the Act.
 - v. The Ministry has released a National Marine Turtle Action Plan with the aim to conserve marine turtles and their habitats in India.
 - vi. The Ministry has released 'Marine Megafauna Stranding Management Guidelines' in 2021 for management of stranding and entanglement of

marine mega fauna.

- vii. The Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification, 2019, promulgated under Environment (Protection) Act 1986, has specific focus on conservation and management plans of Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESAs), like Mangroves, Seagrasses, Sand dunes, Corals and Coral reefs, Biologically active mudflats, Turtle nesting grounds, and Horse shoe crabs' habitats.
- viii. The Ministry is granting funds under the centrally sponsored schemes to maritime States for the conservation of Corals and Mangroves.
- ix. The Ministry provides financial assistance to States/UTs under the Centrally sponsored Scheme 'Development of Wildlife habitats' for conservation of wildlife and its habitat, including marine fauna.
- x. The Ministry under the National Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority provided funding support for project for conservation of Dugongs and their habitats.
- xi. The Government also provides financial assistances to Universities / Research Institutes through research projects that are aimed at conservation of marine species.

(c) The important steps taken by the Government to preserve the ecosystem of fresh water across different States/UTs including the State of Punjab are as follows:

- i. Several fresh water wetlands have been notified as protected areas under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.
- ii. The Ministry has notified Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules 2017 for notification, conservation and management of wetlands.
- iii. The Ministry has published comprehensive guidelines for implementing Wetlands (Conservation & Management) Rules, 2017. The above-said guidelines recommend the management of each notified wetland to be guided by an Integrated Management Plan (IMP) which inter-alia describes monitoring requirements for detecting changes in ecological character and for measuring the effectiveness of management.
- iv. The Ministry is implementing a centrally sponsored scheme namely, National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Eco-systems (NPCA), for conservation and management of identified wetlands (includes lakes) in the country on cost sharing basis between Central Government and respective State Governments / Union Territories.
- v. The Ministry has launched "Wetlands of India Portal" (indianwetlands.in), in order to facilitate knowledge sharing, information dissemination on wetland.
- vi. As on June, 2024, there are 82 wetlands which have been designated as Ramsar Sites of international importance in the country, out of which 6 are in the State of Punjab.
- vii. Celebration of World Wetlands Day at National level on 2nd February of each year in collaboration with states, for awareness creation among all sections of the society about values and functions of wetlands and utilization of their resources.
