

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 386
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.02.2025

Death of Olive Ridely Turtles

386. SHRI M. SHANMUGAM:
SHRI VAIKO:

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

- (a) whether Government was aware of lot of carcasses of Olive Ridley Turtles reaching along the shores of Vizag coast in Bay of Bengal in recent months;
- (b) whether concern have been expressed by marine environment experts and the reasons of turtle deaths, if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether any step initiated to enquire into the incident and to take necessary short-term and long-term action?

ANSWER

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

- (a) to (c) As informed by the State Government of Andhra Pradesh, carcasses of Olive Ridley Turtles have been found along the shores of Vizag coast in Bay of Bengal. Enquiry made by the Andhra Pradesh Forest Department indicate entanglement of turtles in trawler nets as the main cause of death of turtles. However, such details are not maintained in the Ministry. The important steps taken by the Government for the conservation and protection of marine turtles include the following:
- i. Five species of marine turtles viz., Olive ridley turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), Green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), Hawks bill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), Leatherback turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*) and Loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*) reported to be found in India are listed in Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 thereby providing them the highest degree of protection.
 - ii. The Ministry provides financial and technical support to the States for conservation and management of wildlife including marine turtles and its habitat under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme-Development of Wildlife Habitats.
 - iii. The Ministry has included marine turtles as one of the 22 species for taking up focused conservation programme for recovery of critically endangered species under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme – Development of Wildlife Habitats.

- iv. The Ministry, through amendment of Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 during 2022 has empowered the India Coast Guard for entry, search and detention in case of any violations in relation to marine species listed in schedules of the Act, including marine turtles.
- v. The Ministry has released a National Marine Turtle Action Plan with the aim of conserving marine turtles and their habitats in India. The Action Plan focusses on reducing threats, conserving critical habitats, exchanging scientific data, increasing public awareness and emphasizes on a participatory approach in conservation of marine turtles and its habitat.
- vi. The Ministry has released 'Marine Megafauna Stranding Management Guidelines' in 2021 for management of stranding and entanglement of marine mega fauna including marine turtles.
- vii. A network of coastal and marine protected areas under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 has been created for the conservation of marine species, including turtles.
