

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1484
TO BE ANSWERED ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2018**

EXTINCTION OF MARINE SPECIES

1484. SHRI K. SOMAPRASAD:

Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether any study has been conducted by any authorities about the extinction of marine species in the Arabian Sea during the last three years, if so, the details of the Indian Ocean study;**
- (b) the number of marine species identified as extinct and critically endangered in India;**
- (c) whether any project is being implemented to protect the marine species wealth of our nation, if so, the details thereof; and**
- (d) the number of marine species identified as extinct and critically endangered in the coastal region of Kerala, the details thereof?**

ANSWER

**MINISTER FOR MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND
MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES
(Dr. HARSH VARDHAN)**

- (a) Yes. Sir. As a part of Census of Marine Life (CoML), a study on the Indian Ocean Biogeographic Information System (IndOBIS) including the Arabian Sea, has been taken up to prepare an inventory of marine species to assess the potential biodiversity loss and thereby protect the marine wealth of our seas. Under the study, over 1,50,000 spatially and taxonomically resolved marine species distribution records from Indian Ocean region has been archived at Centre for Marine Living Resources and Econology (CMLRE), Kochi. So far, about 1,00,000 records of quality controlled have been uploaded on the website which are now accessible at www.iobis.org.**
- (b) The number of critically marine endangered species, identified by the Ministry of Environment and Forest and Climate Change, so far include 4 species of fishes (Pondicherry Shark, Knifetooth Sawfish Large-tooth Sawfish Long-comb Sawfish or Narrow-snout Sawfish), 2 species of turtle, (Hawksbill Turtle Leatherback Turtle) and one species of coral (Fire corals).**

(c) & (d) Yes. Sir. In order to protect the ecologically important areas Government of India initiated action through the state governments to create a network under Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. Currently, 25 Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in peninsular India and 106 Island Marine Protected Areas in islands have been identified for protection, which cover a total area of 627.2 Km² with an average size of 202.1 Km². Recognizing ecological values and importance for biodiversity conservation, the Government of India has notified three Biosphere Reserves in 1989 in marine areas viz: Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserves in Andaman and Nicobar (885 Km²), Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Endangered species associated with Mangrove ecosystems of India Reserve (10,500 Km²) in Tamilnadu and Sundarbans Biosphere Reserve (9,630 Km²) in West Bengal. The number of species are on decline such as marine cat fishes, goat fishes, pomfrets, white fish and sharks are critically declining in the South West Coast of India including Kerala.
