

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1327**  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 14.12.2023

**Loss of biodiversity in Pulicat Lake ecosystem**

1327. SHRI PRABHAKAR REDDY VEMIREDDY:

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that Pulicat Lake ecosystem, located in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, reported increasing salinity and biodiversity loss;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that water bird habitat has reduced due to reduced flow of freshwater from upstream areas;
- (c) if so, the manner in which Ministry looks at this important freshwater lake which, as per experts, will soon become inhabitable; and
- (d) the efforts being made by the Ministry, in coordination with Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, to open mouth at Rayadoruvu and also steady upstream and downstream water flow?

**ANSWER**

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

(a) to (d) The Pulicat Lake, a brackish water wetland ecosystem, is situated at the geographical boundary of the States of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. The primary source of freshwater comes from land runoff through three seasonal rivers (Arani, Kalangi and Swarnamukhi) that discharges into the lake. There are concerns of salinity characteristics of the lake and loss of biodiversity including waterbird habitat, due to reduced flow of freshwater from upstream areas, clogging of bar mouth of the lake and reduction in monsoonal precipitation over the years.

The lake is currently managed under active management plan of the Pulicat Bird Sanctuary as reported by the State Government of Tamil Nadu. Further, both the State Governments are taking necessary measures to overcome the threats, which inter-alia include formulation of Integrated Management Plan (IMP), study of both upstream and downstream water flow, opening of mouth at Rayadoruvu, etc.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has assigned a study for preparation of Lagoon Management Plan to the National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM) under National Coastal Mission Scheme. The study includes comprehensive assessment of various threats to the lake environment, its biodiversity and the livelihood dependence on the goods and services provided by the lake. The Lagoon Management Plan is envisaged to address various trans-boundary challenges in the

conservation and management of Pulicat Lake for the well-being of the dependent coastal communities and tribes.

Further, MoEF&CC under its ongoing National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Ecosystems (NPCA), a centrally sponsored scheme, has advised all the State Governments to submit IMPs for conservation and management of wetlands in their respective states on cost sharing basis between Central Government and respective State Governments.

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