

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 296
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27.03.2025

Critically endangered species

296*. SHRI DEREK O' BRIEN:

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

- (a) the number of critically endangered species of various animals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, etc. in the country at present;
- (b) the number of critically endangered species in the last five years, year-wise;
- (c) the reasons for the increase/decrease in the number of critically endangered species over the specified timeline;
- (d) whether any species that was considered critically endangered has gone extinct in the last two decades; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI BHUPENDER YADAV)

(a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF THE RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. *296 REGARDING 'CRITICALLY ENDANGERED SPECIES' BY SHRIDEREK O' BRIEN DUE FOR REPLY ON 27.03.2025

- (a) to (c) The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, as amended in 2022, lists wild animals in Schedule I and Schedule II appended to the Act. The number of animals listed in two Schedules of the Act are as follows:

| S.No. | Category | Schedule I | Schedule II |
|-------|---------------------------------|--|---|
| 1 | Mammals | 2 Genus and 181 species | All species of infraorder <i>Cetacea</i> and 33 species |
| 2 | Birds | 208 species | 1134 species |
| 3 | Reptiles | 4 Genus and 58 species | 9 families and 13 species |
| 4 | Amphibians | 4 species | 32 species |
| 5 | Fishes | 20 species | 10 species |
| 6 | Echinodermata | All species of Class <i>Holothuroidea</i> | - |
| 7 | Mollusca | 8 species | 15 species |
| 8 | Arthropods (other than insects) | 1 species | 10 species |
| 9 | Butterflies | 96 species | 294 species |
| 10 | Dragonflies | 1 species | - |
| 11 | Corals | 5 orders; 44 families; 1 Genus and 1 species | - |
| 12 | Porifera | - | All species of Class <i>Calcarea</i> |

Prior to the amendment of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 in 2022, the wild animals were listed under four Schedules under the Act.

The Ministry in collaboration with the respective State Governments is undertaking the population assessment of flagship species like tiger, elephant, leopard, snow leopard and dolphin. In many flagship species, the population has shown an increasing trend primarily due to the protection and management interventions undertaken.

As per available information, the populations of Asiatic lion, tiger, leopard and elephants recorded during estimation exercises are as follows:

| Asiatic Lion | | Tiger | | Leopard | | Elephant | |
|--------------|------------|-------|------------|---------|------------|----------|---------------|
| Year | Population | Year | Population | Year | Population | Year | Population |
| 2010 | 411 | 2014 | 2226 | 2018 | 12,852 | 2007 | 27,669-27,719 |
| 2015 | 523 | 2018 | 2967 | 2022 | 13,874 | 2012 | 29,391-30,711 |
| 2020 | 674 | 2022 | 3682 | | | 2017 | 29,964 |

The first ever scientific assessment report released in 2024 on the status of Snow Leopard in India, estimates a total population of 718 snow leopards in India.

Similarly, the first comprehensive survey carried out in riverine dolphins, estimated 6327 numbers of riverine dolphins in India.

- (d) and (e) As reported by the Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata no species was recorded as extinct in India, during the last two decades.
