

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1018
TO BE ANSWERED ON 13.02.2025

Tiger and Leopard populations in Maharashtra

1018 SHRI SANJAY RAUT:

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

- (a) the measures Government is implementing to manage the increasing incidents of tiger and leopard attacks, particularly in Maharashtra;
- (b) the manner in which Government plans to create and maintain sustainable habitats for tigers and leopards to prevent them from entering human settlements;
- (c) whether Government can provide details on the proposed sterilization plan for controlling the leopard population; and
- (d) the global best practices Government is considering to manage forest fires and improve wildlife conservation efforts?

ANSWER

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

- (a) The Government of India through the National Tiger Conservation Authority has institutionalized a 3 pronged strategy to manage human-tiger / leopard conflict as at **Annexure-I**.
- (b) The National Tiger Conservation Authority as per enabling provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 approves a statutory Tiger Conservation Plan which mandates tiger reserves to calculate the carrying capacity for tigers based on prey availability in order to ensure sustainable habitat condition in source areas which ensures the human-tiger interface is minimized.
- (c) There is no such proposal.
- (d) Forest fires are managed as per site specific conditions which form part of the prescription of the statutory Tiger Conservation Plan. From employing ground based activities like firelines, to deploying extra work force and fire fighting equipment during sensitive periods besides using remotely sensed information for prevention and control of fires, form part of management interventions to improve wildlife conservation efforts.

ANNEXURE REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) OF THE OF THE RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1018 ON TIGER AND LEOPARD POPULATIONS IN MAHARASHTRA DUE FOR REPLY ON 13.02.2025

The Government of India through the National Tiger Conservation Authority has institutionalized a 3 pronged strategy to manage human-tiger / leopard conflict, which is as under:

- (i) **Material and logistical support:** Funding support through the ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Project Tiger, is provided to tiger reserves for acquiring capacity in terms of infrastructure and material, to deal with tigers dispersing out of source areas. These are solicited by tiger reserves through an Annual Plan of Operation (APO) every year which stems out from an overarching Tiger Conservation Plan (TCP), mandated under Section 38 V of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. *Inter alia*, activities such as payment of ex-gratia and compensation, periodic awareness campaigns to sensitize, guide and advise the general populace on man-animal conflict, dissemination of information through various forms of media, procurement of immobilization equipment, drugs, training and capacity building of forest staff to deal with conflict events are generally solicited.
- (ii) **Restricting habitat interventions:** Based on the carrying capacity of tigers in a tiger reserve, habitat interventions are restricted through an overarching TCP. In case tiger numbers are at carrying capacity levels, it is advised that habitat interventions should be limited so that there is no excessive spill over of wildlife including tigers thereby minimizing man-animal conflict. Further, in buffer areas around tiger reserves, habitat interventions are restricted such that they are sub-optimal vis-à-vis the core/critical tiger habitat areas, judicious enough to facilitate dispersal to other rich habitat areas only.
- (iii) **Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs):** The National Tiger Conservation Authority has issued following three SOPs to deal with human-animal conflict, which are available in public domain:
 - i. To deal with emergency arising due to straying of tigers in human dominated landscapes
 - ii. To deal with tiger depredation on livestock
 - iii. For active management towards rehabilitation of tigers from source areas at the landscape level.

The three SOPs *inter alia* include the issue of managing dispersing tigers, managing livestock kills so as to reduce conflict as well as relocating tigers from source areas to areas where density of tiger is low, so that conflict in rich source areas does not occur.

Also as per Tiger Conservation Plans need based and site-specific management interventions are undertaken by the tiger reserves for improving the quality of wildlife habitat and funding support for these activities is provided under the Project Tiger Component of the ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats.