

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2311
TO BE ANSWERED ON 09.03.2018

World Wetland Day

2311. SHRI KUNDARIYA MOHAN BHAI KALYANJI BHAI:

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

- (a) whether the World Wetland Day was organised in Gujarat recently;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the activities undertaken thereunder in the State;
- (c) the details of locations identified under RAMSAR convention in the State;
- (d) whether any steps have been taken to conserve and revive wetlands in the State; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the success achieved therein?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

(a) & (b) As per information provided by Government of Gujarat, World Wetlands Day (WWD) was celebrated on 02-02-2018 in Porbandar based on theme 'Wetlands for a Sustainable Urban Future' selected by the RAMSAR Convention on Wetlands. The programme was attended by 300 participants including students, State Government officials and other stakeholders. Under the programme various activities were organized, which included speeches by Experts covering importance of wetlands, ecological services and Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017 and participants were also given hands on information in the field regarding identification of wetland birds, soil & water parameters and zooplankton & phytoplankton, etc while visiting Bird sanctuary.

As a part of World Wetlands Day celebrations, two days Wetland Workshop was organized on "Plankton and Wetland Invertebrates – A Food base for Water birds" on 31-01-2018 and 01-02-2018 in Porbandar, which was attended by 170 participants from Universities, Forest department, Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and related Government departments. World Wetlands Day was also celebrated at three identified wetlands namely Nalsarovar in Surendranagar district, Thol in Ahmedabad district and Wadhvana in Vadodara district, which was attended by students, NGOs and Eco clubs working in the field of wetland conservation.

(c) Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary in Ahmedabad and Surendranagar districts, having an area of 120.8 sq. km area, has been designated as Ramsar site in 2012 under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

(d) & (e) Ministry has identified 8 wetlands viz. Nalsarovar, Great Rann of Katchh, Thol Bird Sanctuary, Khijadiya Bird Sanctuary, Little Rann of Katchh, Pariej, Wadhvana and Nanikakrad from Gujarat for conservation and management under the scheme of National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Ecosystems (NPCA). Under the scheme of NPCA financial assistance is provided to concerned State Government on cost sharing basis for undertaking various activities covered like interception, diversion and treatment of waste water, shore line protection, lake front development, de-silting, bioremediation, catchment area treatment, lake beautification, survey & demarcation, bio-fencing, fisheries development, weed control, biodiversity conservation, education and awareness creation, community participation, etc. So far, an amount of Rs. 7.37 crore has been released to Government of Gujarat for conservation and management of Nalsarovar, Thol Bird Sanctuary, Khijadiya Bird Sanctuary, Pariej, Wadhvana and Nanikakrad in Gujarat.

For holistic conservation and management of wetlands in Gujarat, State Wetland Authority has been constituted under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister of Forests. All the 8 identified wetlands have been declared as Protected Areas and one wetland viz. Chharidhund as Conservation Reserve by the State. These wetlands are managed as per the prescriptions of management plan. Various activities undertaken for conservation and management of these wetlands include periodical removal of weed and scum, establishing small islands and breeding ground, construction of mounds for birds, regulation of tourists, diversion of sewerage and effluent etc., This has resulted in arresting the degradation of wetlands to large extent and protection has given a boost in the revival of wetland and enhancement in birds population in State.
