

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UN-STARRED QUESTION NO. 2970
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.08.2018

Environmental Performance Index

2970. SHRI A.P. JITHENDER REDDY:
SHRIMATI MAUSAM NOOR:

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

- (a) the reasons for slipping from 41 in the year 2016 to 177 in 2018 in the Environmental Performance Index;
- (b) whether the Government has taken note and has analyzed the reasons for such performance and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the details of the performance indicators in which India fared the worst and the reasons for such a performance in these particular indicators; and
- (d) the details of the proposed plan and steps, if any, aimed at improving India's performance parameters in these particular indicators?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

- (a) to (c) The World Economic Forum ranked 180 countries on their performance across 24 metrics aggregated into ten issue categories including environmental health, air quality, water resource management, biodiversity and habitat, forestry, fisheries, agriculture, and climate change. As per the Environmental Performance Index (EPI) of World Economic Forum, India was ranked at 141st in 2016 and 177th position in 2018. An assessment indicates that the weightages given to the parameters at the three hierarchical levels (policy objectives, issue categories and indicators) are different in 2016 and 2018 iterations. The changes made have not been explained or backed by scientific arguments, and seem to be arbitrary. In 2016, the two policy objectives Environmental health and Ecosystem vitality had a weightage of 0.5 (or 50%) each; whereas in EPI 2018, it is 0.4 and 0.6 respectively. Further, for the category Air quality, the weightage given in EPI 2016 was 0.3, which has been increased by over 100% to 0.65 in EPI 2018. In EPI 2016, Air quality figured as a category only under Environmental health. However, in EPI 2018, Air quality figures under Environmental health, and there is a category Air pollution under Ecosystem vitality, which seems misplaced. Different weightages and difference in methodology used implies that rankings arrived at are not comparable and has its limitations. Under the category Water resources, the only indicator shown is Waste water treatment, which puts developed countries on the top since it is a measure of the capacity to address a

problem. The report relied on data gathered by NASA Satellite in place of actual monitored data. Report has not been peer reviewed. Countries can be ranked on the basis of different criteria pollutants with different results.

- (d) The Government has taken several steps to address air pollution which *inter alia*, include notification of National Ambient Air Quality Standards; setting up of monitoring network for assessment of ambient air quality; introduction of cleaner / alternate fuels like gaseous fuel (CNG, LPG etc.), ethanol blending, launching of National Air Quality index; universalization of BS-IV since 2017; leapfrogging from BS-IV to BS-VI fuel standards by 1st April, 2020; notification of Construction and Demolition Waste Management Rules; banning of burning of biomass; promotion of public transport network; streamlining the issuance of Pollution Under Control Certificate; issuance of directions under Section 18(1)(b) of Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 and under Section 5 of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986; installation of on-line continuous (24x7) monitoring devices by major industries; etc.

In reference to Water Pollution, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) is implementing a nationwide water quality monitoring under National Water Quality Monitoring Programme (NWMP) at 3500 locations including Surface and Ground water in association with State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) & Pollution control Committees (PCCs) to fulfill the mandate of Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974.
