

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 579
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.07.2018

Marine Varieties in Rivers

579. SHRI DUSHYANT SINGH:

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

- (a) whether the Government has data of the drop in the availability of marine varieties in rivers across the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; river-wise;
- (c) whether the Government has taken steps to preserve the variety of marine life in rivers across the country; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) Marine species are generally not found in rivers but in estuaries, which are semi-enclosed water bodies where fresh water from coastal streams and rivers mixes with sea water. The Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) has carried out various studies to assess the faunal diversity of estuarine ecosystems in the states of Odisha, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. Besides, ZSI has recently brought out a publication on 'Current Status of Estuarine Biodiversity of India' which covers the existing status of all estuarine fauna from phytoplankton, mangroves, protozoans to mammals. The publication depicts the faunal diversity of 20 major estuaries on the eastern and western coasts of India and also highlights the threats as well as conservation of estuarine fauna viz. Irrawady and Gangetic dolphins, shore and aquatic as well as migratory birds, Olive Ridley and Batagur turtles, and estuarine crocodiles. However, data on drop in the availability of marine species across the country, river/estuary -wise has not been analysed by ZSI.

(c) & (d) Under the provisions of Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, various steps taken by the Government to preserve marine life in estuaries include notification of Coastal Regulation Zone and the Island Protection Zone, 2011 for preservation of coastal ecology, livelihoods of folk communities and promotion of economic activity that have necessarily to be located in the coastal regions; constitution of National and State Coastal Zone Management Authorities; notification of Eco-sensitive zones/ Areas for protection of wildlife, including marine life, at and near estuaries; directions by Central Pollution Control Board to State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)/Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) in coastal States for treatment of untreated sewage and industrial effluents from coastal towns; consent management for compliance of effluent standards by industries enforced by SPCBs/PCCs to improve the water quality of rivers, including estuaries, etc.

In addition, to regulate coastal aquaculture activities for sustainable development without causing damage to environment, Coastal Aquaculture Authority has been established under the Coastal Aquaculture Authority Act, 2005.
