

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2799
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28.12.2018

Gangetic River Dolphins

2799. DR. GOKARAJU GANGA RAJU:

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

- (a) whether scientists and wildlife conservationists are seeing red over the threat posed to Gangetic river dolphins by the National Waterways Project, if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor;
- (b) whether the development of the Ganga for shipping is seen by wildlife conservationists as the single-largest threat to the survival of the species, whose numbers are declining in most parts of their natural habitat and if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether the Government has launched the Endangered Species Recovery Plans for four species of global importance to tackle the threat to dolphins and three other species including dolphins and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

- (a) Some wildlife conservationists have expressed their concerns over the threats posed to Gangetic river dolphins by the National Waterways Project, impact of river traffic, irrigation canals and depletion of prey base on Dolphin population.
- (b) The Population of Gangetic river dolphin is impacted due to a number of factors including river degradation, mortality in fishing net, poaching, large scale increase in the river traffic, direct hit by propellers etc. Unplanned developmental works on the waterways may impact the population of these species.
- (c) The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India has identified 21 Critically Endangered species for focused conservation programme under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitat'.

From amongst the 21 species, conservation and recovery programme for four species, viz., Gangetic River Dolphins, Manipur's Brow Antlered Deer (Sangai), Dugong and the Great Indian Bustard are also being taken up with financial assistance under CAMPA and in collaboration with the concerned State Governments with assistance from Wildlife Institute of India.
