

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2929
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28.12.2018

Preservation of Wetland

2929. SHRI DUSHYANT CHAUTALA:

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

- (a) whether the Government has notified Wetland (Conservation and Management) Rules 2017 with the aim of prohibiting activities in wetlands across the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the number of wetlands identified by the Government, State/UT-wise;
- (c) whether the Government has also provided financial incentives to States to preserve wetlands; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to restore the past wetlands so as to maintain healthy biodiversity?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) For more effective conservation and management of wetlands in the country, the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) in consultation with the States, Union Territories, Central line Ministries and other stakeholders, have notified the Wetlands (Conservation & Management) Rules, 2017 superseding the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2010.

The 2017 Rules are applicable to wetlands categorised as 'wetlands of international importance' under the Ramsar Convention and wetlands as notified by the Central Government, State Government and Union Territory Administration. These Rules shall not apply to the wetlands falling in areas covered under the Indian Forest Act, 1927, the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, the State Forest Acts, and the Coastal Regulation Zone Notification, 2011 as amended from time to time. Under Rule 4, the prohibited activities within the wetlands have been laid down. Vide these Rules, the State/Union Territories (UT) Wetland Authorities have been constituted and powers for notification of wetlands have been delegated to the State Governments and UT Administrations.

(c) & (d) MoEF&CC is currently implementing a centrally sponsored scheme namely, National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Eco-systems (NPCA) for conservation and management of identified wetlands in the country on cost sharing basis between Central Government and respective State Governments. The scheme covers various activities such as interception, diversion and treatment of wastewater, shoreline protection, lake front development, in-situ cleaning i.e. desilting & dewatering, storm

water management, bioremediation, catchment area treatment, lake beautification, survey & demarcation, biofencing, fisheries development, weed control, biodiversity conservation, education and awareness creation, community participation, etc.

The central assistance is based on the proposals received from the State Governments, conformity with the guidelines and budget availability. Accordingly, so far, MoEF&CC has sanctioned projects for conservation of 150 wetlands in 15 States & 1 UT in the country and released an amount of Rs. 936 crore as central share under the scheme.

Further, works related to water resources development & management are planned, funded, executed and maintained by the State Governments themselves as per their own resources and priorities. In order to supplement the efforts of the State Governments, Government of India (through Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation) provides technical and financial assistance to State Governments to encourage sustainable development and efficient management of water resources through various schemes and programmes such as Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) and scheme for Repair, Renovation and Restoration (RRR) of water bodies etc.

The RRR of water bodies scheme has multiple objectives like comprehensive improvement and restoration of water bodies thereby increasing the tank storage capacity, ground water recharge, increased availability of drinking water, improvement of catchment of tank commands etc.

Under the RRR of water bodies scheme, there are 1964 water bodies with estimated cost of Rs. 1,697.63 crore. Out of these, 664 water bodies were completed upto March, 2018, as reported by States. Total Central Assistance (CA) released upto March, 2018 is Rs. 344.315 crore. In the current financial year, Rs. 22.095 crore has been released as CA under this scheme to 3 states so far. CA released under the scheme depends upon the proposals received from the state governments and availability of the budget at the centre level.
