

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.4028
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.01.2019

Conservation of Endangered Species

4028. SHRIMATI ANJU BALA:
 SHRI LR. SHIVARAME GOWDA:
 SHRI TEJ PRATAP SINGH YADAV:

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

- (a) Whether a number of species of flora and fauna have been tagged as critically endangered in the Red list of threatened species drawn by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) Whether the Government has any programme for conservation of critically endangered species of animals and birds in the country and if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (c) The other steps / corrective measures taken by the Government for protection of the endangered species?

ANSWER

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

(a) Yes, Madam. As per the Red List of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), 78 faunal species and 41 floral species have been classified as critically endangered.

(b) & (c) Yes, Madam. Towards the protection of these species, the Govt. of India has established a country-wide network of more than 600 protected areas (National Parks, Sanctuaries, Tiger Reserves, Conservation Reserves and Community Reserves) under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to conserve wild animals and their habitats of threatened flora and fauna. Other steps taken by the Government to ensure protection of these species are as under:

- (i) The Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats' has been modified in 2008-09 by including a new component namely 'Recovery of Endangered Species' and 16 species have been identified for recovery. Funds for the recovery of endangered species viz. Snow Leopard, Bustard (including Floricans), Dolphins, Hangul, Nilgiri Tahr, Marine Turtles, Dugong, Edible Nest Swiftlet, Asian Wild Buffalo, Nicobar Megapode, Manipur Brow-antlered Deer, Vultures, Malabar Civet, Indian Rhinoceros, Asiatic Lion, Swamp Deer and Jerdon's Courser.

- (ii) Under the 'Recovery of Endangered Species' component of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats' funds for the recovery of endangered species viz. Hangul in Jammu and Kashmir, Snow Leopard in Jammu and Kashmir and Uttarakhand, Vulture in Punjab, Haryana and Gujarat, Swiftlet in Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Nilgiri Tahr in Tamil Nadu, Sanghai Deer in Manipur and Snow Leopard in Arunachal Pradesh are being provided.
- (iii) Legal protection has been provided to endangered wild animals and plants against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.
- (iv) The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, has been amended and made more stringent. The punishment in cases of offences has been enhanced. The Act also provides for forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon that is used for committing wildlife offence.
- (v) The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.
- (vi) Enhanced financial assistance is provided to the State/ Union Territory (UT) Governments under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats', which *inter-alia*, includes Development of Wildlife Habitats, Project Tiger and Project Elephant, for providing better protection to wildlife and improvement of its habitat.
- (vii) Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has been intensified to gather intelligence about poaching and unlawful trade in wild animals and animal articles, including peacocks, and to achieve inter-state and trans-boundary coordination in enforcement of wildlife laws.
- (viii) The local communities are involved in conservation measures through eco-development activities, who help the forest department in protection of wildlife.
- (ix) Strict vigil is maintained through effective communication system.
- (x) The State Governments have been requested to strengthen the field formations and intensify patrolling in and around the protected areas.
