

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3218
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.12.2019

Conservation of Lakes

3218. SHRI THOMAS CHAZHIKADAN:

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

- (a) whether the Government has any plan to allocate more funds for the conservation of lakes in Kerala;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has noticed that the ecological balance of Vembanad lake in Kerala has been severely affected due to the recent floods;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the details of schemes to be implemented in Vembanad lake as part of its conservation during the next three years?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI BABUL SUPRIYO)

(a) & (b) Funds under the centrally sponsored scheme of NPCA are allotted to States based on their requirements and the proposals received. So far, an amount of Rs. 917.272 lakh has been released to the Government of Kerala for conservation and management of wetlands which includes Rs. 184.042 lakh for Ashtamudi, Rs. 88.855 lakh for Sasthamkotta, Rs. 60.00 lakh for Kottuli, Rs. 69.925 lakh for Kuttanad, Rs. 84.45 lakh Vembanad-Kol and Rs. 430.00 lakh for Veli Akkulam.

(c) & (d) On the basis of information received from Government of Kerala, Preliminary Post-flood Assessment of Wetland Ecosystem with special focus on Ramsar Site in Kerala was done by a team from Directorate of Environment & Climate Change. The brief report reveals that,

- In the Vembanad wetland the damage to the wetlands/coastal resources was noticed in entire area especially Thottappalli, Kochi Bar Mouth and Munambam Bar Mouth.
- The Ecological changes like decrease in native fish diversity and catch, appearance of the fish disease - Epizootic Ulcerative Syndrome, sudden increase catch of exotic/cultured fish species like Red Belly Pacu (*Piaractus* sp., Catla, Rohu, Koorivala (*Pangasius* sp.); solid waste accumulation especially plastic in the spawning and feeding grounds was observed.
- Along 11 locations such as Mulavukad, Vallarpadam, Vypin, Mangalavanam, Kumbalam, Nettoor-Valanthakkad, Pallippuram, Chenganda, Cheranallur, Vechur

north, Kumarakom damage occurred to all stretches of mangroves due to plastic/other solid waste accumulation as a result of flooding.

- Shelterbelt plantations damaged / submerged / lost: Along 2 locations such as Thottapally and Veeyapuram Shore trees like 'Aattuvanchi' (*Ochreinauclea missionis*) got uprooted.

(e) An integrated Management Action Plan for Vembanad was received from Government of Kerala during the financial year 2017-18. Ministry has sanctioned an amount of Rs. 140.75 lakh to the Government of Kerala on 60:40 cost sharing basis which includes Rs. 84.45 lakh as Central share and Rs. 56.30 lakh as State share in 2017-18.

The goal of management planning for Vembanad-Kol is to conserve its rich biological diversity and maintain full range of ecosystem services derived from the wetland complex. The purpose is to put in place effective management practices which enable integration of biological diversity and ecosystem service values in river-basin and coastal zone level conservation and developmental planning which focuses on 1) Sustainability of backwater tourism 2) Monitoring and evaluation for ecological character change 3) Capacity building 4) Sustaining wetland agriculture 5) Ensuring appropriate balance of estuarine and coastal processes and hydrological connectivity and 6) Adaptive management.

The action plan is envisaged under three components namely institutional arrangements, ecosystem conservation and sustainable resource development and community livelihoods.
