

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4096
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28.03.2022

Programme on Seagrasses

4096. DR. ARVIND KUMAR SHARMA:

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

- (a) whether the Government is considering any program on Seagrasses as they are very efficient for their CO₂ sequestration and ecosystem stabilization capabilities; and
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)

(a) and (b) Seagrasses are flowering plants which are found in our sea beds and ocean floors. The major seagrass beds exist along our coastline of Gulf of Mannar and Palk Bay regions on the east coast, Gulf of Kachchh region on the west coast, the lagoons of islands in Lakshadweep in the Arabian Sea and Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal. Seagrass ecosystems are recognized globally for their ability to sequester carbon, nurture fish communities and support marine mammals such as sea cows or dugongs.

Seagrasses have been studied for over two decades with the financial support of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and the State/UT Governments. Academic and research institutions have been actively involved in seagrass research pertaining to seagrass mapping, species diversity and its transplantation.

Based on field surveys and satellite data, the National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management has estimated the total extent of seagrass ecosystem in India to be 516.59 km². The CO₂ sequestration rate of seagrass ecosystem is estimated to be up to 434.9 tonnes/km²/year with an annual net CO₂ sink of 0.75 million tonnes for an area of 517 km².

Further, the Government has also initiated a project across the States of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Odisha on enhancing climate resilience of India's coastal communities at a total cost of US \$130.269 million which includes a grant of US\$ 43.419 million by Global Climate Fund (GCF) covering 24 ecosystems in these selected States which aims to strengthen the climate resilience of coastal communities by protecting and restoring India's natural ecosystems such as mangroves and seagrasses.
