

&gt;

Title: Need to protect Sundarbans in West Bengal-laid.

**SHRIMATI PRATIMA MONDAL (JAYNAGAR):** The Sundarban eco-region is home to the largest contiguous mangrove forest in the world. Parts of the forest are designated as World Heritage Sites due to their rich biodiversity. The natural areas of the Sundarban are influenced by human use and in recent years by climate change. The natural area was at least twice as large in the 1830s when Dampier and Hodges surveyed the extent of standing forest. This indicates that we are losing parts of our rich nature to climate change. With rising sea levels, islands are disappearing and the increasing salinity in the water and soil has severely threatened the health of mangrove forests and the quality of soil and crops. With every high tide, part of land is consumed and the rest is left even more saline. The area is suffering from numerous problems like coastal flooding, erosion, loss of land to mention a few. Cyclones are the most severe and most frequent in the Sundarban region. Out of 14 global tropical cyclones associated with the highest fatalities in recorded history, nine have occurred in the Bay of Bengal and Sunderbans has protected us all. Now it's our turn to protect Sunderbans, I request the Government to take even more serious steps because the present efforts are not yielding desired results.