

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5421

ANSWERED ON:28.04.2010

CONSERVATION OF WETLANDS

Shantha J.;Swamygowda Shri N Cheluvarama Swamy

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has estimated 38 percent of fresh water wetlands, which are our national assets have been lost during current decade in the country;
- (b) if so, whether many wetlands are being used for dumping of waste which also causes serious environment threat;
- (c) if so, the details of the action proposed by the Government to protect country's wetlands and prohibit the conversion of wetlands to other use; and
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a)&(b)No authentic data is available regarding the loss of fresh water wetlands in the country. However, many of the wetlands are shrinking in size due to anthropogenic pressures, uncontrolled siltation, weed infestation, discharge of sewage and industrial effluents, surface run-off, chemical pesticides and fertilizers.

(c)&(d)The Ministry has been implementing a 100% centrally sponsored National Wetland Conservation Programme under which 115 wetlands covering 26 States/Union Territories have been identified for undertaking conservation activities to arrest their further degradation. The activities include survey and demarcation, protection, siltation control, pollution abatement, catchment area treatment, de-weeding, biodiversity conservation, supplementary and alternate livelihood support for people dependent on wetlands, community participation, and education and awareness. An amount of Rs. 86.98 crores has been released from 1987-88 to 2009-10 for conservation of identified wetlands in the country for undertaking various conservation activities.