

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3920
ANSWERED ON:18.08.2010
PROTECTION OF WILDLIFE AND FORESTS
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of changes made in the system of safeguarding the wildlife and reserve forests in recent years;
- (b) the details of modernization and upgrading the facilities provided for the Forest Department personnel; and
- (c) the mechanism presently in operation for better co-ordination with the States in matters of serious environmental concerns?

Answer

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

(a)&(b) The measures taken by the Government to strengthen the protection of wildlife and reserve forests are as follows:

- i. The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, has been amended from time to time and made more stringent against wildlife related offences.
- ii. Threatened species of wildlife are placed in the Schedules of the Wildlife (Protection), Act, 1972, thereby according them the highest degree of protection.
- iii. The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of `Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats` was modified in 2008 to accord better protection and conservation to wildlife in the country by adding two new components to the existing components viz `Protection of Wildlife outside Protected Areas` and `Recovery Programme for saving Critically Endangered Species and their Habitats`.
- iv. The Government has created the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau as a multi disciplinary agency to complement the existing state machinery to deal with wildlife crime having ramification beyond state and national borders.
- v. Wildlife staff posted in highly sensitive areas has been provided with arms, wireless sets and vehicles to keep check on wildlife poaching and trade.
- vi. Training and capacity building programmes are organized to improve the skills of wildlife staff to improve the investigation and prosecution of wildlife offences.
- vii. Under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme 'Intensification of Forest Management', financial assistance is being provided to State/Union Territories Governments for strengthening forest protection. The Scheme is being implemented through the respective State Forest Departments.
- viii. The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Integrated Forest Protection Scheme (IFPS) was modified in 2009 by adding four new components and renaming it as Intensification of Forest Management Scheme (IFMS). The scheme supports activities like forest fire control & management, strengthening of infrastructure, survey, demarcation and working plan preparation. The new components of protection and conservation of sacred groves, conservation and restoration of unique vegetation & ecosystem, control and eradication of forest invasive species and preparedness for meeting challenges of bamboo flowering and improving management of bamboo forests have been included to strengthen protection of Reserve Forests.

- (c) Mechanism presently in operation for better co-ordination with States in matters of serious environmental concerns are as follows:
- i. State/Union Territories Governments are made aware of the critical environmental concerns through various means of communications and meetings and are made to address these problems through existing systems.
 - ii. State Governments are empowered to address environmental issues like forest fire, climate change, poaching of wild animals, encroachments of forests, pollution etc through various national programmes and schemes.
 - iii. States are made part of the national legal framework to address these environmental concerns.
 - iv. Regular feedback and monitoring of the measures adopted by the States/Union Territories Governments is done by the Government of India.