

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:79

ANSWERED ON:19.03.2012

PROTECTION OF MIGRATORY BIRDS

Gandhi Smt. Maneka Sanjay;Shekhawat Shri Gopal Singh

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

- (a) the names of the birds sanctuaries and other places where migratory birds visit, State-wise;
- (b) whether there has been a steep decline in the number of migratory birds arriving in the country and if so, the details of such bird species;
- (c) whether any financial and technical assistance is extended to the specialised institutions for conducting birds specific study;
- (d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the aid extended to them during the last three years and the current year; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government to attract and protect the migratory birds in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN)

(a), (b), (c), (d) and (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a), (b) (c), (d) and (e) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 79 REGARDING 'PROTECTION OF MIGRATORY BIRDS' BY SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI AND SHRI GOPAL SINGH SHEKHAWAT DUE FOR REPLY ON 19. 03.2012.

(a) Migratory birds visit most part of the country and are not confined to a few areas. However, some of the important areas visited by migratory birds in the country, which include some wetlands and areas notified as wildlife sanctuaries, are given in Annexure-1.

(b) About 370 species of migratory birds have been reported in India. Of these, 175 species undertake long distance migration using the Central Asian Flyway (CAF) area, which includes central Siberia, Mongolia, the Central Asian Republics, Iran and Afghanistan, the Gulf States and Oman, and the Indian sub-continent. Select scientific institutions funded by the Central/State Governments, State Forest Department(s) and NGOs working for wetlands and migratory birds have been monitoring the status of these long distance migratory birds in India. According to the latest 'Asian Water bird census' coordinated by the 'Wetlands International', the populations of threatened migratory birds in the region are either decreasing or stable.

The CAF Action Plan covers 175 species of divers, grebes, pelicans, cormorants, herons, storks, ibises, flamingoes, anatids, cranes, rails, sungrebes, jacanas, crab plovers, oystercatchers, ibis bills, stilts and avocets, pratincoes, plovers, scolopacids, gulls and terns, of which Egyptian vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*), Baer's Pochard (*Atheyya baeri*), Yellow breasted bunting (*Emberiza aureola*), White tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*), Imperial Eagle (*Aquila helical*), Marbled Teal (*Marmaronetta angustirostris*), Ferruginous Pochard (*Aythya nyroca*), Dalmatian Pelican (*Pelicanus crispus*), Sociable Plover (*Vanellus gregarius*), Spoonbill Sandpiper (*Eurynohynchus pygmeus*), Baikal Teal (*Anas formosa*), Nordmann's Greenshank (*Tringa guttifer*), Sociable lapwing (*Vanellus gregarius*), White headed Duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*), Pallas's Fishing Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucoryphus*), are endangered migratory birds of India listed in the Appendix-I of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS). Except Nordmann's Greenshank, all other species have been observed to be declining in Asia including in India.

(c) and (d) The Government of India is providing financial and technical assistance to specialized institutions like Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON), Wildlife Institute of India (WII), Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), etc. for conducting various studies for monitoring populations of important bird species and their habitat. The details of financial assistance provided by the Government of India to scientific institutions, NGOs, etc for important bird specific studies in India, during the last three years and current year is at Annexure-2.

(e) The important steps taken to protect and continue to attract migratory birds in India, are given below:

(i) Rare and endangered birds including migratory birds are included in Schedule-I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 thereby according them highest degree of protection.

(ii) Stringent punishments have been provided for in the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 for violation of provisions of the Act.

(iii) Important habitats of birds, including migratory birds have been notified as Protected Areas under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 for better conservation and protection of birds and their habitats.

(iv) Financial and technical assistance is provided to the State/UT Governments for protection and management of Protected Areas.

(v) Wildlife Crime Control Bureau has been established for control of illegal trade in wildlife and its parts and products.

(vi) India is a contracting Party to the Ramsar Convention (Convention on Wetlands) and 25 wetlands in India have been notified as Ramsar sites.

(vii) Ministry of Environment and Forests has notified the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2010, for better protection of wetlands in the country.