

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4996

ANSWERED ON:07.05.2012

PROTECTION TO ANIMALS

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken note that a number of animals and bird species have been decreasing in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof species-wise including 'Kashmiri stag'; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to protect birds and animals and their habitats in the country?

**Answer**

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

(a)&(b) No decrease in the population of major species like Lions, Tigers, Elephants and Rhinoceros has been reported in the country. Reports have, however, been received from time to time about decrease in the population of some other species. Bustards, Vultures, Jerdon's courser, 'Kashmir stag' (*Cervus elaphus hanglu*) etc. are some of the notable species among them, details of which have, however, not been compiled in the Ministry.

(c) The Government has taken the following steps for protection of wild animals, birds and their habitats across the country:

i) The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, has been amended and made more stringent. The punishments for offences have been enhanced. The Act also provides for forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon that is used for committing wildlife offence(s).

ii) Protected Areas, viz., National Parks, Sanctuaries, Conservation Reserves and Community Reserves covering important wildlife habitats have been created all over the country under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to conserve wild animals and their habitats.

iii) Financial and technical assistance is extended to the State/Union Territory Governments under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes, viz, 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats', 'Project Tiger' and 'Project Elephant' for providing better protection and conservation to wildlife including rare and endangered birds.

iv) The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats' has been modified in 2008-09 by including a new component "Recovery Programmes for Saving Critically Endangered Species and habitats" and 16 species, which include 'Kashmiri stag' (Hangul) and five birds species, viz., Bustards, Vultures, Edible Nest Swiftlets, Nicobar megapods and Jerdon's courser, have been identified for undertaking such recovery programs.

v) Legal protection has been provided to endangered wild animals and plants against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

vi) The State/Union Territory Governments have been requested to strengthen the field formations and intensify patrolling in and around the Protected Areas.

vii) The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau has been set up to strengthen the enforcement of law for control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife and its products.

viii) Strict vigil is maintained by officials of State Departments of Forests and Wildlife.