

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6385  
ANSWERED ON:06.05.2013  
EXTINCTION OF WILD ANIMALS .  
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**Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Supreme Court has expressed grave concern and regret over poaching of wild animals an extinction of wild animals like Tigers and Panthers in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

**Answer**

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

(a)&(b) Yes, Sir. In a judgment passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India on 20.10.2010 in a Criminal Appeal No.2024 of 2010 , Sansar Chand vs State of Rajasthan, the Hon'ble Supreme Court expressed concern about poaching and has stated that the case has revealed how organized crime has destroyed large parts of the wild life of the country and has brought many animals e.g. tigers, leopard, bison etc almost to the brink of extinction, thereby seriously jeopardizing and destroying the ecological chain and ecological balance of the environment.

(c) The steps taken by the Government for protection of wild animals including tigers and panthers in the country includes:

Legal steps

1. Legal protection to wild animals against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972. According to the conservation and threat status, wild animals are placed in different schedules of the Act. The Act has subsequently been amended to provide for National Tiger Conservation Authority and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau apart from other provisions.
2. The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, provides for punishment of offences for violation of its provisions. The Act also provides for forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon that is used for committing wildlife offence(s).
3. Higher punishment for offence in relation to the core area of a tiger reserve or where the offence relate to hunting in the tiger reserves or altering the boundaries of tiger reserves, etc.
4. Creation of Protected Areas, viz., National Parks, Sanctuaries, Conservation Reserves and Community Reserves covering important wildlife habitats all over the country under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to conserve wild animals and their habitats.
5. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.

Administrative steps

6. Strengthening of antipoaching activities, including special strategy for monsoon patrolling, deployment of antipoaching squads involving ex-army personnel or home guards, apart from workforce comprising of local people, in addition to strengthening of communication and wireless facilities.
7. Constitution of the National Tiger Conservation Authority with effect from the 4th September, 2006, for strengthening tiger conservation.
8. Constitution of Wildlife Crime Control Bureau with effect from the 6th June, 2007 to effectively control illegal trade in wildlife.
9. The revised Project Tiger guidelines have been issued to State Governments for strengthening tiger conservation, which apart from ongoing activities, inter alia, include financial support to States for enhanced village relocation or rehabilitation package.
10. The 17 tiger States have notified the core/critical tiger habitat (35917.445 sq. km.), and the buffer/peripheral area (29365.64

sq.km.) of all the 42 tiger reserves in the country, under section 38V of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, as amended in 2006.

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

12. Strict vigil is maintained by the officials of State Departments of Forests and Wildlife.

#### Financial steps

13. Financial and technical help is provided to the State Governments under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes, such as Project Tiger and Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats for enhancing the capacity and infrastructure of the State Governments for providing effective protection to wild animals.

#### International Cooperation

14. India has a bilateral understanding with Nepal on controlling trans-boundary illegal trade in wildlife and conservation, apart from a protocol on tiger conservation with China.

15. A protocol has been signed in September, 2011 with Bangladesh for conservation of the Royal Bengal Tiger of the Sunderban.

16. A sub-group on tiger and leopard conservation has been constituted for cooperation with the Russian Federation.

17. A Global Tiger Forum of Tiger Range Countries has been created for addressing international issues related to tiger conservation.

18. As a part of active management to rebuild Sariska and Panna Tiger Reserves where tigers have become locally extinct, reintroduction of tigers and tigresses have been done. The successful reintroduction of wild tigers in Sariska is a unique exercise and is the first of its kind in the world. A reintroduced tigress has recently given birth to two cubs. The tiger reintroduction initiative at Panna (MP) has also been very successful and reintroduced tigers are breeding.

#### Creation of Special Tiger Protection Force (STPF)

19. The proposal for creation of Special Tiger Protection Force (STPF) has been approved in respect of 13 tiger reserves. The States of Karnataka and Maharashtra have already created and deployed the STPF.

#### Recent initiatives

20. Steps taken for modernizing the infrastructure and field protection, besides launching 'Monitoring system for Tigers' Intensive Protection and Ecological Status (M-STrIPES)' for effective field patrolling and monitoring.

21. Steps taken for involvement of Non-Governmental Experts in the ongoing all India tiger estimation.

22. The second round of country level tiger status assessment completed in 2010, with the findings indicating an increase with a tiger population estimate of 1706, lower and upper limits being 1520 and 1909 respectively, as compared to the last country level estimation of 2006, with an estimate of 1411, lower and upper limits being 1165 and 1657, respectively. At present, India has the maximum number of tigers and its source areas amongst the 13 tiger range countries in the world, owing to its long history of conserving the species through Project Tiger (2% of country's geographical area spread out in 42 tiger reserves in 17 States).

23. A report on Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE) of Tiger Reserves was released on 28th July, 2011, containing the second round of independent assessment based on refined criteria done in 2010-11 for 39 tiger reserves. Out of 39 tiger reserves, 15 were rated as 'very good', 12 as 'good', 8 as 'satisfactory' and 4 as 'poor'.

24. Providing special assistance for mitigation of human-tiger conflicts in problematic areas.

25. Regional Offices of the National Tiger Conservation Authority sanctioned at Nagpur, Bengaluru and Guwahati.

26. A 'Standard Operating Procedure' for dealing with tiger deaths has been issued, based on advisories of Project Tiger / National Tiger Conservation Authority, with inputs from Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, State officials and experts, fine tuned to meet the present challenges.

27. A 'Standard Operating Procedure' for dealing with straying tigers in human dominated landscape has been issued.

28. Launching the creation of a national repository of camera trap photo IDs of individual tigers.

29. Field level workshops for capacity building of field officers to deal with straying tigers have been organized at Tadoba and Dudhwa Tiger Reserves (2013).