

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1981

ANSWERED ON:19.08.2013

ENDANGERED SPECIES OF ANIMALS

Bishnoi Shri Kuldeep; Gandhi Shri Feroze Varun; Scindia Smt. Yashodhara Rajee

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

(a) whether the Government has launched a special programme for recovery of critically endangered species of animals and birds in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government for conservation of the said species including a number of species of flora and fauna that are tagged as critically endangered in the Red List of threatened species drawn by the International Union for Conservation of Nature especially in Haryana?

Answer

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

(a)&(b) This Ministry provides financial and technical assistance to the State/Union Territory Governments for protection and conservation of wildlife life and its habitats including critically endangered species of animals and birds, under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats', which inter alia includes a component "Recovery Programmes for Critically Endangered Species".

An amount of Rs. 2280.278 lakh has been released during the last five years for recovery programme of eight critically endangered species of animals and birds viz. Snow Leopard, Hangul, Dugongs, Edible-nest Swiftlets, Asian Wild Buffalo, Manipur Brow-antlered deer, Vultures and Asiatic Lion to fund the proposals received from various State/Union Territory Governments.

(c) The steps taken by the Government for conservation of endangered species of wild flora and fauna in the country include:

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

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

iii. 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.

iv. The Government had launched two programmes, namely, Project Tiger and Project Elephant aimed at protection of endangered species with specific focus on tigers and elephants respectively. As a result of the efforts made in these two programmes, tiger population in the country has shown increasing trend and elephant population has remained steady during last few years.

v. Financial and technical assistance is provided to the State/ Union Territory Governments under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes of 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats', 'Project Tiger' and 'Project Elephant' for providing better protection to wildlife, and improvement of its habitat.

vi. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders.

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

viii. 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.

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

x. The State Government of Haryana has started a Vulture Conservation Breeding Centre at Pinjore for conservation breeding of Vultures in collaboration with Bombay Natural History Society. The Ministry has provided funds to the State Government for this programme under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats'.