

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1709  
ANSWERED ON:16.12.2013  
CENSUS OF WILD ANIMALS .  
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**Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the census of the wild animals has been carried out at national level during the last four years including previous year;
- (b) if so, the details of the census carried in the States;
- (c) whether the health of the forests is indicated solely on the basis of the census as only dense forests can provide healthy living environment to the wild animals;
- (d) if so whether the forests are degarding;
- (e) if so, the schemes introduced to maintain the required level and density of the forests including the afforestation in the banks of rivers and lakes; and
- (f) the extent to which the success has been achieved as a result thereof?

**Answer**

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

(a)&(b) While census of tiger is done at the National level once in every four years, census of other major flagship species is conducted at the State level by the respective State/Union Territory Governments.

The details of census carried out for the flagship species in terms of year and population, as available in the Ministry of Environment and Forests, are as follows:

Species	Population (Year)	
Tiger	1411 (2006)	1706 (2010)
Elephant	26373 (2002)	27657-27682 (2007) 29391-30711 (2012)
Lion	304 (1995)	332 (2001) 359+10 (2005) 411 (2010)
Rhino	1855 (2006)	2048 (2009)

(c)&(d) The census is not the sole indicator of the health of the forests. The health of the forest is a complex mix of diversity and density of plant and animal species, diversity of habitat within the landscape to suit different animals, availability of food resources for the wildlife and status of soil etc. and is to be assessed keeping in mind the bio-geographic zone of the area. It is also not necessary that only dense forest can provide healthy living environment to wild animals, as the suitability of the habitat depends upon the requirement of the wild animals found in the area.

(e)&(f) Financial 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 improvement of forest and wildlife areas like the national parks and sanctuaries to inter alia improve the habitats of the wildlife. The increasing trend in the population of major wild animals indicates the success of the programmes.