

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3404
ANSWERED ON:17.03.2015
TIGER CENSUS METHODOLOGY
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Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether according to an Oxford study India's methodology for tiger census is flawed;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether it is true that many other wildlife experts have also questioned the methodology adopted by the Government of India regarding tiger census in the country; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE. (SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) & (b) An Oxford study has critiqued the methodology of All India Tiger Estimation, 2014. The study has raised doubts on the index calibration method wherein value of the regression coefficient has been questioned as a predictor.

(c) & (d) No Sir. Barring the Oxford study, there has been no critique of the methodology, used by the Government of India. The current method used for tiger estimation is a refinement over the 2006 and 2010 exercise, wherein robust spatially explicit capture recapture protocols using joint models have been employed. The method is peer reviewed in both national and international fora and has been published in an international scientific journal. The Oxford study however, is a theoretical iteration on old data whose precision is questionable as it is based on artificial replications done by software rather than extensive search efforts in the field. This national assessment has been conducted by the National Tiger Conservation Authority in collaboration with the State Forest Departments, Wildlife Institute of India and Non Governmental Organisations.