

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4975

ANSWERED ON:13.08.2014

WETLAND CONSERVATION

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

- (a) the aims and objectives of the National Wetland Conservation Programme (NWCP) implemented by the Government;
- (b) the details of the Wetlands identified till date for conservation and management, State/year-wise including Kerala and the criteria adopted for the same;
- (c) the list of Ramsar sites in India and the special action taken by the Government for the conservation of such sites;
- (d) whether spreading of Cabomba weeds in wetlands of Kerala is seriously affecting many river systems; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

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

(a) The National Wetlands Conservation Programme (NWCP) has been implemented with the following objectives:

- to lay down policy guidelines for implementation of programmes of conservation and management of wetlands in the country
- to undertake priority wetlands for intensive conservation measures
- to monitor implementation of the programme of conservation, management and research relating to wetlands
- to prepare an inventory of Indian wetlands.

(b) So far, 115 wetlands in 24 States, including Kerala and two Union Territories are identified for conservation and management under the NWCP. The State-wise list of these wetlands is given in Annexure-I.

The criteria adopted for identification of wetlands under the NWCP are:

- sites containing representative, rare or unique wetland types
- criteria based on species and ecological communities
- specific criteria based on water birds
- specific criteria based on fish
- specific criteria based on water/life and culture

(c) The State-wise list of 26 wetlands designated as Ramsar sites in India is given in Annexure-II. For conservation and management of identified wetlands including Ramsar sites in the country, the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National Wetlands Conservation Programme (NWCP) was implemented till the year 2012-13. To have better synergy and to avoid overlap, the NWCP has been merged in February, 2013 with another scheme called National Lake Conservation Plan (NLCP) into a new integrated scheme of 'National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Eco-systems' (NPCA) for holistic conservation of lakes and wetlands. Financial assistance has been provided to the State Governments for undertaking wetland conservation activities like survey & demarcation, catchment area treatment, desilting & dredging, bio-fencing, fisheries development, weed control, biodiversity conservation, pollution abatement, education & awareness and community participation etc. So far, an amount of Rs 133.64 crores has been released to the concerned State Governments for undertaking the various conservation activities for wetlands. Further, to regulate the certain activities within the listed wetlands, the Government of India has notified the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules in December, 2010.

(d) & (e) As per information provided by the Government of Kerala, Cabomba weed (Cabomba Caroliniana), also known as Fanwort plant, has been observed in the tributaries of Pamba and is affecting the Pamba river system. However, now due to availability of salt water growth of this weed has reportedly been significantly reduced. Kerala State Biodiversity Board (KSBB) has conducted a study on Cabomba weed intrusion in river Pamba and identified this weed as an alien species. So far, for eradication of this weed the KSBB has undertaken awareness programme at Panchayat level through the Biodiversity Management Committee.

