

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4953

ANSWERED ON:23.12.2014

SURVEY ON WILD ANIMALS

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

- (a) whether the Government has conducted any survey of wild animals in the country recently and if so, the details and outcome thereof, State-wise;
- (b) the number of deaths of wild animals including elephants due to poaching and accidents/natural cause during each of the last three years and the current year, animal and State-wise;
- (c) the number of poachers arrested and the action taken against them during the said period, State-wise;
- (d) whether several eminent environmentalists have expressed concern on the poaching and accidental deaths of elephants and have sought legal protection for their reserves and corridors in the country;
- (e) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (f) the effective measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to protect wild life in the country along with the funds provided and utilized for the said purpose during the said period, State-wise?

Answer

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

(a) No, Sir. The Central Government has not conducted any survey of wild animals recently. However, a country level assessment of population of tigers and lions were conducted in 2010, and elephants in 2012 which has shown an increasing trend in their population.

Comparative estimated population of tigers, elephants and lions in the country, as per the census conducted, is as given below:

Name of the Species	Estimated population
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Tiger	1411 (2006)	1706 (2010)
Elephant	27669-27719 (2007)	29391-30711 (2012)
Lion	359+ 10 (2005)	411 (2010)

(b)&(c) The management and protection of wild animals in the State/ Union Territory is carried out by the concerned State/Union Territory Governments. Details of death of wild animals are not collated in the Ministry. However, the details of death of major species like tiger and elephant due to poaching, poisoning and electrocution, as reported by the State Governments, during last three years and the current year are given in the Annexure-I

Appropriate legal action is taken against the offenders to the State Governments in accordance with the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972. The Act authorizes officers of the States in this regard. The details of number of poachers arrested are not collected in the Ministry.

(d)&(e) The Government has received concerns raised by members of Civil Society on poaching and accidental death of elephants. The Ministry has taken steps in collaboration with State Governments to minimize such deaths.

(f) The Government has taken following steps for protection of wildlife in the country:

i. 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.

ii. 'Project Tiger' and 'Project Elephant' are focused Centrally Sponsored Schemes on conservation of endangered species namely tiger and elephant. A specific component of "Recovery programmes for saving critically endangered species and habitats" is provided in the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats' for focused conservation action on selected critically endangered species.

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

iv. In addition to provision of stringent punishment for the offenders, the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 also provides for forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon that is used for committing wildlife offence(s).

v. Financial and technical assistance is provided to the State/ Union Territory Governments under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes for providing better protection to wildlife including endangered species 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 ensure co-ordination among various officers and State Governments in connection with 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.

The details of fund released under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes of "Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats", "Project Elephant" and "Project Tiger" in the last three years and the current year are given in Annexure-II.