

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2221
ANSWERED ON:29.07.2002
PROTECTION OF DOLPHINS
MONI KUMAR SUBBA

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

- (a) whether the population of highly endangered aquatic mammal called Dolphins has been declining alarmingly particularly in Assam for a quite long time;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the steps taken and programmes implemented for their promotion, protection and preservation?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU)

(a) & (b) The population of Dolphins has been under decline throughout its range due to illegal hunting, habitat destruction, over exploitation of the fishes those are utilised by dolphin, reduced availability of water in the river due to diversion for irrigation and other purposes, etc.

(c) The steps taken for promotion, protection and preservation of dolphins include-

- River dolphin is included in the Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, thereby getting the highest protection. Hunting and dealing in the products of dolphin is banned.
- Export-Import Policy of Government of India puts total ban on the export of all species of wild animals and their products.
- The trade of dolphin is regulated by the provisions of CITES (Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of flora and fauna) to which India is a signatory.
- State governments have notified important habitats of dolphin as National Parks and Sanctuaries. The Government of India provides 100% funding for both recurring and non-recurring expenditure (other than salary of the staff) for such protected areas.