

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 965
TO BE ANSWERED ON THURSDAY, MARCH 09, 2017
Damage to Marine Ecosystem**

**965 Dr. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY
SMT. AMBIKA SONI**

Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether marine eco-systems in Indian seas and sea coasts have been damaged due to Sea-warming, acidification, oil spills and other factors;**
- (b) if so, the details thereof with its impact on the marine life system; and**
- (c) the steps taken to safeguard the natural habitat for marine species and to protect fragile eco-system including coral reefs, salt marshes, seagrass beds, etc.?**

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF STATE FOR MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND
MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES
(SHRI Y. S. CHOWDARY)**

- (a) Yes Sir. Although there is no significant damage reported, research studies indicate that there were disturbances in marine ecosystems in the seas around India which are sporadic and episodic in nature. These changes are due to warming of sea water, coastal pollution, mass bleaching of Indian corals etc. These are caused both by anthropogenic and natural variability viz., human activities, oceanic processes, climate events like Indian Ocean Dipole El Nino, Southern Oscillation.**
- (b) The Ministry has been implementing a program for assessment of health of the coastal waters of India by periodically monitoring the pollutant levels in the seawaters of India. There were occasionally marginal increases in the levels of pollutants in few locations in the Indian coast. The increase in marine pollution was specific to a few locations and increasing trend is localized in nature primarily relating to nutrient flux like nitrate and microbial activity due to discharge of untreated domestic sewage in coastal waters. The data on coastal pollution is being provided to the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change to minimize pollution load into the coastal waters.**
- (c) A massive sewage treatment scheme has been implemented for treatment sewage of Mumbai by the State Government. Incentives have been provided to the industries for installation of pollution control equipment by the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change. Common Effluent treatment plants have been installed in several industrial estates for treatment of wastes from small and medium scale industries. The Ministry of Earth Sciences is also undertaking satellite based Indian Coral Watch studies and issuing their monthly status bulletins. The Ministry of Environment & Forests and Climate Change is also performing studies to manage and conserve these fragile ecosystems. NCSCM has mapped the boundaries of coastal ecologically sensitive areas (ESAs) (CRZ I areas) areas which include mangroves, coral reefs, salt marshes, seagrass beds, turtle nesting grounds, etc., for the entire country as per the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) 2011 notification, issued under the Environment Protection Act, 1986. Besides, the National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan (NOS-DCP) has been developed for implementation to deal with the oil spills around the coast of India. The Indian Coast Guard, responsible for implementation of this plan which was revised in 2015 incorporating the international requirements and standard practices.**
