

QUESTION DETAILS

MINISTRY OF : ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO 2763

TO BE ANSWERED ON 07.01.2019

Impact of oil spill

2763. Shri G.C. Chandrashekhar

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

- (a) whether oil spill has polluted fragile coastal ecology and marine biodiversity;
- (b) if so, the details along with ecological environmental impacts thereof and steps taken to clean up the damaged coast;
- (c) whether oil spillage also affect mangroves and the fishermen;
- (d) if so, whether there is a need to provide the compensation to affected fishermen;
- (e) whether there is an urgent need to update the existing protocols to ensure better coordination among various agencies for on and off-shore impacts of oil spills; and
- (f) if so, the steps being taken by Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

(a)&(b) Oil spills adversely impact intertidal flora and fauna and coastal environment leading to mass mortality of flora and fauna, choking of highly mobile species like crabs, clogging of water canals, loss of foraging grounds for shore birds and loss of nesting grounds for turtles. The residual oil from spills can settle down vertically in the sea-bed for prolonged durations causing long-term effects on the benthic environment. Similarly, oil spills also adversely affect port infrastructure, harbours, beaches, wildlife, fisheries etc. The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) is nodal agency for dealing with incidents of oil spills within territorial limits of India. The ICG has developed a National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan (NOS-DCP) for responding to Oil Spill accidents. The NOS-DCP is a comprehensive tool which provides framework of co-ordination of integrated response by various governmental departments and agencies to protect the environment from the deleterious effects of pollution by oil spillage.

(c)&(d) Mangroves and fishermen community are affected by near-shore large scale oil spills. Oil spills can reach estuaries by water currents leading to poor growth or death of mangroves. The presence of tar balls on beaches affect the fishing space as well as the market price of fish stocks thereby affecting the livelihood and economic interests of the fishermen. The State Fisheries Department can seek compensation for oil spills from polluters. Further, the Ministry of Agriculture and Family Welfare vide F.No.21001/05/2014-FY(Ind) Vol. V dated 28.04.2017 has notified the National Policy on Marine Fisheries, 2017 to ensure the health and ecological integrity of marine living resources in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of India. Oil spills are considered as manmade calamities affecting fishing communities. Support/assistance are admissible to fishing communities for restoration of their livelihoods as part of strategy on 'Fisher Welfare, Social Security Nets & Institutional Credits'.

(e)&(f) The roles and responsibilities of all agencies are defined in the National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan (NOS-DCP). The last revision of NOS-DCP was done in 2015 incorporating the international requirements and standard practices. Indian Coast Guard (ICG), being the Competent National Authority, revises NOS-DCP regularly in coordination with concerned stakeholders.

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