



'India Awarded Certificate of Commendation for Its Effort to Combat Illegal Wildlife Trade": Dr Harsh Vardhan

Posted On: 01 DEC 2017 4:23PM by PIB Delhi

Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Dr. Harsh Vardhan has said that India has been awarded with the Certificate of Commendation for its exemplary enforcement action in its regional and global effort to combat illegal wildlife trade. "The award was given to Wildlife Crime Control Bureau yesterday by the Secretary General of Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) at Geneva, Switzerland", Dr. Harsh Vardhan said in New Delhi today.

The Environment Minister said that the award has been presented to WCCB under the Ministry for its efforts in conducting and coordinating a species specific wildlife enforcement Operation, codenamed "Operation Save Kurma". Dr. Harsh Vardhan said that India is the only recipient of the Certificate of Commendation at the 69th Standing Committee meeting of CITES at Geneva. He added that "Operation Save Kurma" was conducted in the country by the WCCB to combat the proliferating illegal trade in live turtles and its parts from the country to destinations abroad. The Minister pointed out that the operation was also aimed to invite attention of the enforcement agencies towards such illegal trade.

Dr. Harsh Vardhan stated that during the 'Operation Save Kurma' conducted from December 15, 2016 to January 30, 2017, approximately 16, 000 live turtles/tortoises were seized and released back into the wild. He said that 55 suspects involved in the illegal trade were also arrested.

WCCB worked in close collaboration with regional law enforcement agencies, including West Bengal Criminal Investigation Department, State Police and Forest Department, the Special Task Force of Uttar Pradesh Police, Karnataka Forest and Police departments and Maharashtra and Rajasthan Forest Departments.

A message from Dr. Harsh Vardhan was conveyed to all the participants of the 69th Standing Committee of CITES at Geneva.

Presently, 183 countries across the world are signatory to the Convention.

HK

(Release ID: 1511496) Visitor Counter : 562

