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My dear Rangaswami,

Since you have close links with Shri Suresh Prabhu, former Minister of Environment, and now Minister for Panchayati Raj and Rural Development, I would like to hear from you whether an approach of this kind will lead to any result. I thought of writing to him in this fashion:

Honourable Shri Suresh Prabhu,
Minister for Panchayati Raj & Rural Development
Government of India, New Delhi.

Dear Sir,

During your tenure as Minister for Environment and Forests you took several initiatives which were widely appreciated. Your public pronouncements on the need for environmental protection in several forums, must surely have led to favourable action on the ground.

Amateur conservationists like me were disappointed when you did not continue as Minister in charge of Environment. But some of us felt that in your new assignment you are well placed to take a special interest in saving and rehabilitating the wetlands of our country. Indeed since there is now worldwide recognition that water will be the most critical resource of the coming century, the preservation of wetlands for the conservation of water should have high priority in Government plans. These wetlands play as you know too well a crucial part in conserving the 2000 million acre feet of water which we receive in the South West and North East monsoon

Several birdwatching and conservation societies have acquired detailed knowledge about a number of wetlands as a result of their interest in birds, and are in a position to provide you with ^{their} accurate profiles. One factor which has to be kept in mind is that only those wetlands can be saved which are as yet free from human habitations surrounding them. once the periphery is ^{target} inhabited no suitable ecological steps can be taken. We should therefore concentrate on those wetlands which have open areas around them.

I look forward to your reply .

Yours truly
Sd Zafar Futehally

S Rangaswami
Rishi Valley Education Centre

Asheesh - I like forward to your comments. Zafar