

**MINUTES OF FOURTEENTH MEETING OF THE EXPERT COMMITTEE FOR DECLARATION OF ECO-SENSITIVE ZONE (ESZ) AROUND WILDLIFE SANCTUARIES/NATIONAL PARKS ON 26<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2015**

A meeting of the Expert Committee for declaration of Eco-Sensitive Zones around wildlife sanctuaries/national Parks was held on 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2015 under the chairmanship of Shri Hem Pande, Special Secretary. The proposals for finalization of draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) notifications were taken up for discussion during the meeting. The list of participants is annexed.

2. At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the members of the Expert Committee and representatives of Telangana, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha. Proposals of Haryana and Maharashtra were not taken up for discussion as the two States had requested for deferment. Chairman invited the representatives of various States to make presentation on their proposals.

***Eco-sensitive Zone around Son Gharial Wildlife Sanctuary, Madhya Pradesh***

2.1. The Committee was informed that no objections or suggestions were received on the draft notification declaring Eco-sensitive Zone around Son Gharial Wildlife Sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh. Shri Sudeep Singh, Chief Conservator of Forests (CPA), Environment Department, Government of Madhya Pradesh informed the Committee that the Government of Madhya Pradesh has submitted revised proposals with respect to declaration of eco-sensitive Zones around 29 National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries to the Ministry which includes revised proposal for Eco-sensitive Zone around Son Gharial Wildlife Sanctuary in the state. He explained the revised proposal in detail. He stated that the State Government has now proposed to prohibit only two activities in the ESZ viz. setting up of saw mills and wood based industries and commercial use of firewood, while 10 activities were kept in the regulated category and 7 were kept in the promoted category. He mentioned that the extent of the ESZ remains the same. The category wise list of activities mentioned in the revised proposals is given below:

***Prohibited activities***

- I. Setting up of saw mills and wood based industries
- II. Commercial use of firewood

***Regulated activities***

- I. New trenching ground

- II. Use or production of any hazardous substances
- III. Grant and renewal of mining lease
- IV. Setting up of hazardous and polluting industries (Red/Orange category industries of Schedule -5)
- V. Establishment of major projects
- VI. Old trenching ground
- VII. Discharge of effluent and solid waste in natural water bodies or terrestrial area
- VIII. Air vehicular and noise pollution
- IX. Felling of trees
- X. Establishments of hotels and resorts

**Promoted activities**

- I. Protection of hill slopes and river banks
- II. Agriculture and horticulture practices by local communities as on date
- III. Use of renewable energy sources
- IV. Restriction of vehicle movement
- V. Insulation of electric lines
- VI. Rain water harvesting
- VII. Organic farming

The Committee enquired about the rationale for removal of the following 8 prohibited activities in the revised proposal which were earlier included by the State Government: (i) commercial mining, stone quarrying and crushing units, (ii) setting up of industries causing water or air or soil or noise pollution, (iii) establishment of new major hydroelectric projects and irrigation projects, (iv) use and production of any hazardous substances, (v) discharge of untreated effluents and solid waste in natural water bodies or land area, (vi) undertaking activities related to tourism like over-flying the National Park the National Park Area by aircraft, hot-air balloons, (vii) new wood based industry and (viii) Goat farming.

Shri Sudeep Singh, CCF, Environment Department, Government of Madhya Pradesh stressed that the revised proposal submitted by the State Government reflects the considered view of the State Government on the subject. The Committee was of the view that activities like commercial mining, stone quarrying and crushing units, (ii) setting up of industries causing water or air or soil or noise pollution, (iii) establishment of new major hydroelectric projects and irrigation projects, (iv) use and production of any hazardous substances, (v) discharge of untreated effluents and solid waste in natural water bodies or land area have significant adverse environmental impact. Also, it was informed to the State Government representative that as per the interim order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court dated 04.08.2006 in the matter of T.N. Godavarman Thirumulpad Vs. UOI in

W.P.(C) No.202 of 1995 and order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court dated 21.04.2014 in the matter of Goa Foundation Vs. UOI in W.P.(C) No.435 of 2012 mining cannot be carried out within one kilometre from the boundary of the National park and Wildlife Sanctuaries.

It also emerged from the deliberations of the Committee that the prohibited activities should be the same as given in the published draft notification. The activities prohibited as per the Guidelines for the declaration Eco-sensitive Zone issued by Wildlife Division of the Ministry should also be maintained. The Committee was of the view that activities such as mining, stone quarrying and crushing units, (ii) setting up of industries causing water or air or soil or noise pollution, (iii) establishment of new major hydroelectric projects and irrigation projects, (iv) use and production of any hazardous substances, (v) discharge of untreated effluents and solid waste in natural water bodies or land area need to be prohibited in the Eco-sensitive Zone.

The Committee did not agree with the revised draft proposal submitted by the Government of MP and recommended the finalization of the draft notification declaring eco-sensitive zone around Son Gharial Sanctuary as it is, wherein prohibited regulated activities are as per standard practice.

### **Eco-sensitive Zone around Pakhal and Pranahita Wildlife Sanctuaries, Telangana**

**2.2** The Committee was informed that no objections or suggestions were received on the draft notifications declaring Eco-sensitive Zone around Pakhal Wildlife Sanctuary and Paranhita Wildlife Sanctuary in the state of Telangana. Shri P.K. Sharma, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (HOFF) & I/C Chief Wildlife Warden, Forest Department, Government of Telangana made a brief presentation on the proposal for declaration of Eco-Sensitive Zone around Pakhal and Pranahita Wildlife Sanctuaries, Telangana. The PCCF explained the process for delineating and demarcation of the ESZ which was adopted by the Forest Department. It was informed that ESZ for the two sanctuaries were delineated after due consultation with the District Administration and other line Departments in a meeting convened by the concerned District Collectors. The extent and the biodiversity and wildlife value of

the two sanctuaries was also explained. It was informed that the activities proposed to be prohibited/regulated in the ESZ are as per established practice being followed.

The Committee enquired as to why the extent of ESZ is Zero towards the North-eastern end of the Pakhal Wildlife Sanctuary. The PCCF informed that the extent of ESZ is zero towards the north-eastern end because the boundary of the Pakhal Wildlife Sanctuary adjoins the boundary Etunagaram Wildlife Sanctuary. The representative of the State Government also informed the Committee that the proposal for declaration of ESZ around the two sanctuaries was earlier submitted to the Ministry by the erstwhile Government of undivided Andhra Pradesh, these proposals have now been concurred by the Government of Telangana.

After detailed deliberations, the Expert Committee recommended for finalisation of the Draft Notification for Declaration of Eco-Sensitive Zone around the Pakhal Wildlife Sanctuary and Paranhita Wildlife Sanctuary in the state of Telangana.

**2.3** Shri S.S. Srivastava, PCCF (WL) & CWLW, Govt. of Odisha made a brief presentation on the proposal for declaration of Eco-Sensitive Zone around Chandaka Dampara Wildlife Sanctuary. He highlighted the following salient features:-

**2.3.1 Chandaka Dampara Wildlife Sanctuary:**

- Notified in 1988.
- Total area: 193.39 sq.km.
- Location: Cuttack & Khurda District.
- Proposed ESZ: zero to 7.34 kilo meter.

**Flora**

- Sal, Kasi, Kangara, Sidha, Phasi, Kendu, Jamu, Anla, Mango, Asan, Bija, Kurum, Teak, Dhaura, Kadamba, Karanja, Mundi, Mahul, Bela, Gmabhari, Kanchan, etc.

**Fauna**

- Elephant, Hyena, Spotted Deer, Wolf, Macaque, Common Longoors, Jackal, Fox, Hares, Wild Boar, Porcupines, Peafowls, Varieties of Birds, Snakes, Lizards etc.

### 2.3.2 Management of ESZ for Chandaka Dampara ESZ in the state of Odisha:

- **Prohibited Activities:** Commercial Mining, stone quarrying and crushing units, Setting up of saw mills, Setting up of industries causing water or air or soil or noise pollution, Use or production of any hazardous substances, Commercial use of firewood, Establishment of new major hydroelectric projects, Undertaking activities related to tourism like over-flying the sanctuary area by hot air balloons, etc, Use of plastic carry bags, Discharge of untreated effluents and solid waste in natural water bodies or land area etc.
- **Regulated Activities:** Widening and strengthening of existing and new roads, Movement of vehicular traffic at night, Introduction of exotic species, Protection of hill slopes and river banks, Commercial Sign boards and hoardings, Air (including noise) and vehicular pollution, Discharge of treated effluents in natural water bodies or land area, Small scale industries not causing pollution, Collection of Forest produce or No-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP), Security Forces Camp, New wood based industry, Eco-friendly tourism activities.

**2.3.3** The draft notification to declare Eco-Sensitive zone around Chandaka Dampara Wildlife sanctuary was published on 1.5.2015. The objections from 18 Stake holders on the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone were received. The State Govt. convened a consultative meeting on ESZ on 23.9.2015, which was attended by the 12 Stake holders. Total 90 villages fall in the proposed ESZ.

**2.3.4** It was further informed that the proposed ESZ has been identified in Bharatpur-Jaganathprasad Forest in Khurda District to be co-terminus with sanctuary boundary i.e zero extent. For other areas it is varying from 500 mtrs. to 7.34 k.m around the protected area situated in Khurda and Cuttack District. The (extent) limit has been reduced from 8.99 kilometer to 7.34 k.m, as compared to the draft notification . Therefore, now a total of 66 villages fall in the proposed ESZ. It was also informed that the northern area is important elephant habitat where they are traditionally migrating from Dampara Forests. He suggested that the activity in

prohibited area at Sl. No. 5 & 11 i.e. commercial establishment of hotels & resorts and construction activity may be shifted to Regulated activity.

**2.3.5** After detailed discussion, the Committee decided that the activity at sl. No. 5 & 11 may be shifted to Regulated activity, as per standard procedure followed in other ESZ notifications. For zero ESZ side, the State Govt. to provide full justification. It was also decided that the representative from State Department of Urban Development and Tourism to be added as members in the proposed Monitoring Committee.

**2.3.6** The Expert Committee recommended the finalisation of Draft Notification for Declaration of Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) around the Chandaka Dampara Wildlife Sanctuary in the Odisha state with the above amendments and subject to receipt of detailed justification from Government of Odisha on Zero extent and reduced extent as compared to the draft notification.

**2.4** Shri Dharendra Singh, APCCF(WL) & CWLW, Govt. of Punjab made a brief presentation on the proposals for declaration of Eco-Sensitive Zones around three Wildlife sanctuaries i.e (i) Bir Motibagh WLS, Punjab, (ii) Bir Bhadosan WLS, Punjab and (iii) Bir Gurdialpur WLS, Punjab. These draft ESZ notifications were published on 2.6.15, 20.5.15 and 22.6.15 respectively. No comments/suggestions have been received on the draft notifications. He highlighted the following salient features:-

**2.4.1 Bir Motibagh Wildlife Sanctuary:**

- Notified in 1952 under Fauna of Patiala Act.
- Total area: 654 Ha.
- Location: Patiala District Southern Punjab, Near Patiala Town.
- A Deer Park is located inside sanctuary.
- Proposed ESZ: 100 Mts.

**Flora**

- Forest Type: 5B of the Northern Dry Mixed Deciduous Forests, Eucalyptus, Prosopis Julifolra, Acacia nilotica, Dalbergia sissoo, Albizia lebbeck.

**Fauna**

- Blue Bull, Wild Boar, Rhesus Macaque, Jackal, Peafowl, Black and Grey Partridges.

#### **2.4.2 Bir Gurdialpura Wildlife Sanctuary:**

- Notified in 2003 under Section 26 A of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
- Total area: 620. 53 Ha.
- Location: Tehsil Samana, Patiala District
- Proposed ESZ: 100 Mts.

#### **Flora**

- Forest Type: 5B of the Northern Dry Mixed Deciduous Forests, Eucalyptus, Prosopis julifolra, Acacia nilotica, Dalbergia sissoo, Albizia lebbeck, Azadirachta indica.

#### **Fauna**

- Blue Bull, Wild Boar, Rhesus Macaque, Jackal, Jungle Cat, Peafowl, Black and Grey Partridges.

#### **2.4.3 Bir Bhadson Wildlife Sanctuary**

- Notified in 1952 under Fauna of Patiala Act.
- Total area: 1022.63 Ha.
- Location: Near Nabha, Patiala District.
- Proposed ESZ: 100 Mts.

#### **Flora**

- Forest Type: 5B of the Northern Dry mixed Deciduous Forests, Eucalyptus, Prosopis julifolra, Acacia nilotica, Dalbergia sissoo, Albizia lebbeck, Azadirachta indica.

#### **Fauna**

- Blue Bull, Wild Boar, Rhesus Macaque, Jackal, Jungle Cat, Peafowl, Black and Grey Partridges.

#### **2.4.4 Management of ESZ for above three ESZ in the state of Punjab:**

- **Prohibited Activities:** Mining, Stone quarrying and Crushing Units, Setting up of Saw mills, New polluting Industries, Hazardous Industries, Hotels and Resorts, Commercial use of Firewood, Hydroelectric Projects, flying in hot air balloon, use of plastic bags, effluents discharge, large scale construction.

- **Regulated Activities:** Felling of trees, Drastic change of agriculture system, Commercial utilization of ground water, Electric cables and telecommunication towers, Roads, Vehicular traffic at night , Introduction of exotics, Commercial sign boards, Discharge of treated effluents, small scale industries, NTFP, Security forces camp, New wood based industries, Eco Friendly tourism activities.

**2.4.5** After detailed discussion, the Committee decided that the monitoring Committees be headed by the District Collector, Patiala and Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife), Govt. of Punjab to be represented as member in the Monitoring Committee.

The TCPO representative was of the view that organic farming should be encouraged in the Eco-sensitive Zones in the Punjab this would help in checking salt pan/salinization syndrome due to intensive agriculture. He was informed that organic farming is already included as a promoted activity in the ESZ notification.

**2.4.6** The Expert Committee recommended for finalisation of these three Draft Notifications for Declaration of Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) around the (i) Bir Motibagh WLS, (ii) Bir Bhadosan WLS and (iii) Bir Gurdialpur WLS in the state of Punjab with the amendment in the Monitoring Committee of the ESZs.

The meeting ended with vote of thanks to the Chair.

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## **List of Participants**

### **Members of Expert Committee**

1. Shri Hem PAnde, Special Secretary, Chairman
2. Dr. T. Chandini, Adviser, MoEF&CC;
3. Dr. Arijit Roy, Indian Institute of Remote Sensing, ISRO, Dehradun; Member
4. Shri Sanjay Kumar Agarwal, Assistant Director, Forest Survey of India, Dehradun; Member
5. Shri P.K.Duria, Town & Country Planner, TCPO, Ministry of Urban Development, GOI; Member
6. Dr. S.A. Hussain, Scientist G, WII Dehradun;
7. Shri Prem Kumar Jha, DIG (F), Department of Land Resources, Ministry of Rural Development; Member
8. Dr. Kailash Chandra, Director, Zoological Survey of India; Member
9. Shri Lalit Kapur, Director, MoEF&CC-Member Secretary;

### **Officials of State Government of Odisha, Punjab, Telangana and Madhya Pradesh**

10. Shri S C Mahapatra, Principal Secretary, Govt. of Odisha;
11. Shri S.S.Srivastava, PCCF(WL) & CWLW, Govt. of Odisha;
12. Shri Dharendra Singh, APCCF(WL) & CWLW, Govt. of Punjab;
13. Shri P K Sharma, PCCF&HOFF & CWLW, Govt. of Telangana;
14. Shri C K Patil, CCFWL, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh;
15. Shri Sudeep Singh, CCF, Department of Environment, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh

### **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF & CC), GOI**

16. Shri S P Vashishth, DIG(WL), MoEF & CC;
17. Shri Pankaj Verma, Scientist 'D', MoEF&CC;
18. Dr. Amit Love, Scientist 'D', MOEF&CC;

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