

## **MINUTES OF 48<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE EXPERT COMMITTEE FOR DECLARATION OF THE ECO-SENSITIVE ZONE (ESZ) AROUND PROTECTED AREAS HELD ON 4<sup>th</sup> MARCH, 2022 THROUGH VIDEO CONFERENCING**

The 48<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Expert Committee on Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) was held under the Chairmanship of Shri Tanmay Kumar, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change on 4<sup>th</sup> March, 2022 through Video Conferencing. The list of the participants is at **Annexure-I**.

2. At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the members of the Expert Committee and other participants. After a brief introduction of the participants, the Chairman invited the attention of all State Governments/UT administrations that Forest Department and the Revenue Departments in the States /UT administrations need to cohesively work together and mark ESZ boundary on the revenue maps so that the ambiguity in the ESZ boundary on ground are removed for perpetuity and the demarcation on the ground is known to the public at large in a transparent manner. He asked for opinion of the committee on the issue, which was supported unanimously by the committee. He therefore requested the representatives of the State Governments/ UT administrations to work on this front and new ESZ proposals henceforth submitted may be done following the exercise as for a possible or else the ESZ boundary for the current and previously approved ESZ be marked separately on the revenue land map to avoid delay in submission of proposals. Subsequent to the deliberation on the issue, he invited the State Government representatives to present their proposals as per items listed in the agenda. Agenda-wise detail of deliberations is as given below.

### **Item No 3.1: Panidehing Bird Sanctuary, Assam**

The draft notification for declaration of ESZ around Panidehing Bird Sanctuary was earlier published on 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2016 but got expired due to non-submission of requisite information/documents by the State Government. On receipt of a revised proposal from the State Government, the draft was re-notified on 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2021, for inviting stakeholders/public comments.

2. DFO, Shivsagar, Government of Assam made a presentation on the proposed ESZ around Panidehing Bird Sanctuary, Assam and provided the following information:

Area of PA	: 33.93 sq.km
Proposed ESZ Area	: 282.121 sq.km
Proposed ESZ Extent	: 0.36 to 12.46 km

It was also informed that the ESZ extent has been kept at minimum of 0.36 km at some sector due to presence of oil and natural gas drilling sites and that there are no oil wells/drilling sites within the proposed ESZ. It was further stated that the

comments received on the draft ESZ notification have been duly considered by the State Government. The Committee noted the comments received and the response of the State Government on the same.

3. *Based on the deliberations held and the presentation made, the Committee recommended for finalization of the draft notification for declaration of ESZ around Panidehing Bird Sanctuary with area of 282.121 sq.km and ESZ Extent of 0.36 to 12.46 km.*

### **Item No 3.2: Barail Wildlife Sanctuary, Assam**

The draft notification for declaration of ESZ around Barail Wildlife Sanctuary was earlier published on 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2016 but got expired due to non-submission of requisite information by the State Government. On receipt of a revised proposal from the State Government, the draft was re-notified on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2021.

2. Chief Conservator of Forest, Wildlife, Government of Assam made a presentation on the proposed ESZ around Barail Wildlife Sanctuary, Assam. Following are the salient features of the notification.

Area of PA	: 326.255 sq.km
Proposed ESZ Area	: 596.311 sq.km
Proposed ESZ Extent	: 0 to 3 Km

*[Zero extent of ESZ is due to inter-state boundary with the State of Meghalaya in the western side of the PA]*

It was also stated that the Barail Wildlife Sanctuary is situated at the altitudinal variation from 100 m to 1800 m above MSL and has rich population of reptiles and avifauna and Hoolock Gibbons, the flagship species of the Sanctuary. That Barail Wildlife Sanctuary consist of two reserve forest viz. Barail R.F and North Cacher Hill R.F. That the NF Railway passes through between these two forests. The State government representative stated that no comments have been received on the draft notification.

3. The State Government requested that removal of boulders and sand mining may be permitted so that upper reaches of the rivers get e-flow. That boulders and sand if not removed leads to slush and mud downstream. It was stated that the State will submit a sustainable riparian plan to this effect. The Committee noted the request and observed that requests of such nature cannot be considered on such limited information made available and there are standing orders of the Courts in this regard.

4. The Committee noted that some of the activities are proposed under the heading *prohibited activities* during the presentation, which is in deviation from the contents in the draft notification. The Committee therefore decided that bringing these activities at this stage under prohibited activities will not be appropriate as the draft had not mentioned them and therefore concerned stakeholder's objection have not been obtained on these issues. The Committee therefore asked the State Government to submit separate proposal at a later stage for any amendment of the notification including for any proposed inclusion under the prohibited activities. The proposal will be considered by the Ministry following due procedure including publication of a draft amendment the matter.

5. *Based on the deliberations held and presentation made, the Committee recommended for finalization of the draft notification for declaration of ESZ around Barail Wildlife Sanctuary as per the draft notification already published earlier on 1<sup>st</sup> Oct, 2021 by the State Government of Assam with area of 596.311 sq.km and ESZ Extent of 0 to 3 Km.*

**Item No 3.3: Ghatigaon Hukna Wildlife Sanctuary, Madhya Pradesh.**

The notification for declaration of the ESZ around Ghatigaon Hukna Bird Sanctuary, Madhya Pradesh was published on 13<sup>th</sup> December, 2016. The Protected Area i.e Ghatigaon Hukna Wildlife Sanctuary was notified by the Government of Madhya Pradesh vide no. 15-16-75-ten-2, dated 21.05.1981 and is spread over an area of 512 sq.km. However, the PA area has been rationalised pursuant to the recommendation of SCNBWL and after de-notification of 113.08 sq.km of its areas, it is now spread over 398.92 sq.km. In reference to the reduction in the area of the PA, the State Government sought an amendment in the ESZ area to 127.77 sq km while keeping the ESZ extent same i.e 100 m to 2 km.

2. APCCF, Wildlife, Madhya Pradesh made a presentation and provided the following information:

Item	As per Final Notification (13.12.2016)	Amendment
Area of PA	512 sq. km	398.92 sq.km ( <b>Finalized by WL Division</b> )
Extent of ESZ	100 m to 2 km	100 m to 2 km (Proposed)
Area of ESZ	1100.4601 sq.km	127.77 sq.km (Proposed)

3. The Committee observed that the ESZ notification mentions the ESZ area as 1100.4601 sq km whereas, the area of the PA is only 512 sq.km. Further, the reduction in the area of the PA in the amended PA Notification is limited to the extent of 111.73 sq km i.e. approximately 22% reduction whereas the proposed reduction of ESZ by State Govt from 1100.4601 sq km to 127.77 is approximately 88%,

which does not appear to be proportionately in consonance with each other. The comparative maps submitted by the State Govt, which did not show significant variation in the proposed ESZ area vis-a vis the previous ESZ area, also didn't support the request of State Govt for 88% reduction in the ESZ area. After detailed evaluation of the related documents, the representative of the State Government clarified that there is an error in the ESZ area mentioned in the final ESZ notification dated 2016 for Ghatigaon Hukna Wildlife Sanctuary and a written clarification to this effect will be submitted by the State Government. It was stated that the actual area of the ESZ as notified vide notification dated 2016 was to be 146.85 sq km and the same is now proposed to be reduced to 127.77 sq.km with the same ESZ extent of 100m to 2.0 km. The proportionate reduction in the ESZ area will thus be limited to approximately 13% which is lesser than 22% reduction in area of the PA. *The Committee deliberated on the issue and decided that the State Government shall submit detail written submission on the ESZ area along with its geo-coordinates, maps, list of villages, shape/kml file with boundary description etc.*

4. *Based on the deliberations held and presentation made, the Committee recommended for amendment as appropriate subject to submission of the aforementioned clarification and additional information as was committed by the representative of the State Government.*

**Item No 3.4: Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park, Wandoor, Andaman and Nicobar Islands.**

The proposal for declaration of ESZ around Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park, Wandoor was earlier taken up in the 47<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Expert Committee 17.08.2021, wherein, the Committee had observed that there is a possibility of extending the ESZ from 'zero' extent at some areas which seem feasible. The Committee had therefore suggested that the Union territory administration shall re-examine possibility of extending ESZ, in particular in the sea area, and in case it is absolutely not feasible a sound justification may be submitted. The UT administration has submitted its justification for not extending the ESZ extent.

2. PCCF, Government of Andaman and Nicobar Islands made a presentation and provided the following information:

Area of PA	: 281.5 sq.km
Proposed ESZ Area	: 4.05 sq.km
Proposed ESZ Extent	: Zero to 100 m

*[Zero extent is proposed at places where the boundary of the Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park adjoins another Marine WLS viz. Lohabarrack Crocodile*

*Sanctuary on the north western side followed by boundary of revenue villages at northern and eastern boundary and boundary ends in the sea front].*

3. The UT administration representative stated that these areas beyond the boundary of the Park are already regulated by the CRZ Regulations and any activity in the CRZ area requires clearances from the Regulatory Authority after obtaining appropriate recommendation of the Coastal Zone Management Authority. It was emphasized that 86.93% of the geographic area of the Union territory is under notified forest area; 4.79% (394.54 sq.km) under water bodies, coastal land, mudflats etc. and 1.97% (162.50 sq.km) are categorized as deemed forest area. That therefore for developmental purpose only 6.31% of geographical area (520.51 sq.km) is available for meeting the developmental needs of the local people.

4. *Based on the deliberations held and presentation made, the Committee recommended for finalization of the draft notification for declaration of ESZ around Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park, Andaman and Nicobar Islands as proposed by UT of Andaman & Nicobar Islands.*

**Item No 3.5: Dachigham National Park, Thajwas Wildlife Sanctuary and Overa-Aru Wildlife Sanctuary, Jammu and Kashmir**

The draft notification for declaration of ESZ around Dachigham National Park, Thajwas Wildlife Sanctuary and Overa-Aru Wildlife Sanctuary, Jammu and Kashmir was earlier considered in the 47<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Expert Committee held on 17<sup>th</sup> August, 2021, wherein, the Committee noted that high altitude area can also be kept within the ESZ. The Committee had also noted that on the southern side a Sanctuary is being proposed which has been excluded from ESZ. The Committee had suggested that the proposal may be revisited and necessary revision carried out. On receipt of a revised proposal, the proposal is placed for re-consideration.

2. The representatives of the State Government had made a presentation in the aforesaid 47<sup>th</sup> Meeting and had provided the following information:

Area of PA : 769 sq.km  
Proposed ESZ Area: 137.75 km  
Proposed Extent : 0 to 9.90 km

*[Zero extent of the Eco-Sensitive Zone towards South and SouthWest side of Overa-Aru Wildlife Sanctuary is due to the fact that the Eco-Sensitive Zone boundary passes along the important tourist destination of Pahalgam and Nunwan Camp and the base camp of the famous annual pilgrimage Amarnath Yatra. Further, the Pahalgam area is under high demand for tourist infrastructural development and is notified under the Development Act as the local area for*

*Pahalgam Development Authority. The area has also sizeable resident population and infrastructures developed.]*

3. The representative of the State Government had also stated that a combined proposal is proposed as an effort to make all the three important wildlife areas as a single unit, helping thereby, easy gene flow across the landscape and allowing biodiversity to flourish.) Accordingly, the proposal prohibits certain industries or class of industries and their operations and processes in the said Eco-Sensitive Zone. It was further stated that the zero extent of the Eco-sensitive zone towards South and South east of Overa-Aru WLS as it passes along important tourist destination of Pahalgam and Nunwan Base camp of the Holy Amarnath Yatra pilgrimage. That Pahalgam is perpetually under high demand for tourism activity and the demand for infrastructure needs are high. That approved Master Plan for Pahalgam is already under implementation and the Hon'ble High Court of Jammu and Kashmir is monitoring implementation of the Master Plan.

4. The representatives of the UT Government made a presentation and informed that the draft notification for declaration of ESZ around Dachigam National Park, Thajwas (Baltal) Wildlife Sanctuary and Overa Aru Wildlife Sanctuary was published on 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2021, for seeking public comments. The salient features of the Eco-Sensitive Zone after the revision are as follows:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Draft Notification (08.06.2021)</b>	<b>Revised proposal</b>
Area of PA	769 sq.km	776.00 sq.km
Extent of ESZ	0 to 9.90 km	200 m to 13.15 km
Area of ESZ	137.75 km	448 sq.km

5. Representative of the UT administration informed that Tral was earlier a Conservation Zone but has now been upgraded to Tral Wildlife Sanctuary and the revised proposal thus submitted included a part of Tral Wildlife Sanctuary within ESZ. That a separate proposal for ESZ around Tral WLS will be submitted in due course. To this the Committee observed that Tral WLS cannot be in ESZ and therefore suggested that adjoining Tral WLS, the ESZ may be kept at zero, as an interim measure (pending finalization of ESZ for Tral WLS) and confirmation to this effect may be submitted soon. The UT administration representative agreed to the suggestion and also agreed to submit a separate ESZ proposal for Tral Wildlife Sanctuary. The representative of the UT administration also informed that comments received on the draft ESZ notification have been duly considered by the UT administration.

6. *Based on the deliberations held and presentation made the Committee recommended for finalization of the ESZ proposal around Dachigam National Park, Thajwas Wildlife Sanctuary and Overa-Aru Wildlife Sanctuary subject to submission*

*of clarification on excluding ESZ extent towards Tral Wildlife Sanctuary and that the State Government would submit a separate proposal in respect of ESZ of Tral Wildlife Sanctuary. The revised proposal based on above suggestions was received after the meeting.*

### **Item No 3.6 Tata Kutti Wildlife Sanctuary, Jammu & Kashmir**

The draft notification for declaration of ESZ around Tata Kutti Wildlife Sanctuary was earlier discussed in the 46<sup>th</sup> and 47<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Expert Committee held on 25<sup>th</sup> June.2021 and 17<sup>th</sup> August, 2021 respectively. In the 46<sup>th</sup> Meeting the representative of the UT administration had informed that there are no representations received on the draft notification and had desired that they will place the draft notification in their website for comments of local stakeholders before a final decision is taken. The UT administration had therefore requested for deferring consideration for finalisation.

2. The matter was again taken up in the 47<sup>th</sup> Meeting, wherein, the UT administration had informed that they have placed the draft notification in their website as well but no response from local stakeholders was received. Copy of notification for the Protected Area (PA) and kml/shape files of the PA and the ESZ boundary have been also duly submitted by the UT administration.

3. The Committee in the said 47<sup>th</sup> Meeting had observed that the area adjoining Kherra Conservation Reserve seem feasible to be included within ESZ and had accordingly requested that the UT administration shall explore the possibility of its inclusion in ESZ and revise the proposal appropriately. The Committee had further suggested that in case such a possibility does not arise, appropriate justification shall be submitted in this regard.

4. On receipt of a revised proposal the matter was again taken up. The representative of UT administration of Jammu & Kashmir made a presentation and provided the following information:

Area of PA	: 116.70 sq.km
ESZ Area	: 67.456 sq.km (now revised ESZ area - 111.07 sq.km)
ESZ Extent	: Zero to 3.98 km (now revised ESZ extent is Zero to 12.12 km)

*[Zero extent of the Eco-sensitive zone is due to contiguous border with Hirpora Wildlife sanctuary towards the Eastern side and Kulian Conservation Reserve towards North-Western side of the Wildlife Sanctuary]*

5. The representative of the UT administration informed that one village is within the Eco-sensitive Zone and no comments have been received on the draft notification.

6. *Based on the deliberations held and presentation made the Committee recommended for finalisation of the draft ESZ notification around Tata Kutti Wildlife Sanctuary, Jammu & Kashmir a proposed by the UT administration of Jammu & Kashmir.*

### **Item No 3.7: Gulmarg Wildlife Sanctuary, Jammu & Kashmir**

The proposal for ESZ around Gulmarg WLS was earlier discussed in the 47<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Expert Committee held on 17<sup>th</sup> August, 2021, wherein, representative of the UT administration made a presentation and informed that the draft notification for declaration of ESZ around Gulmarg Wildlife Sanctuary was published on 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2021, for seeking public comments. The salient features of the Eco-Sensitive Zone are as follows:

Area of PA : 180 sq. Km  
Proposed ESZ Area: 62.2 km  
Proposed Extent : 0 to 4.1 km

*[Zero extent of Eco-sensitive Zone in some directions is proposed as the areas have tourist potential and the population living around the Gulmarg Wildlife Sanctuary mainly are dependent on tourist activities. If the entire area is included within the Eco-sensitive Zone, then livelihood of the villagers will be directly affected]*

2. In the said meeting the Committee had observed that the zero extent of ESZ on the ground has been considered purely on account of the fact that the area has tourist potential and habitations around Gulmarg WLS are dependent on tourist activities is not appropriate. The Committee had observed in the said 47<sup>th</sup> Meeting that if there are geographical attributes of the area then justification of zero extent has a point but purely on the fact that the entire area adjoins Jammu and therefore zero extent ESZ should be considered, is not acceptable. The Committee therefore had decided that the State Government shall re-examine the ESZ zero extent and submit a revised ESZ extent along with necessary maps delineating ESZ boundary and areas.

3. On receipt of revised justification for zero extent ESZ the matter was again taken up. Representative of the UT administration of Jammu & Kashmir made a presentation and informed that on the eastern side of the Protected Area, extent of Eco-sensitive Zone is proposed as zero as it adjoins the Ferozpora Watershed comprising of Gulmarag Wildlife Sanctuary which is bifurcated geographically by geological features like high mountains, peaks and glaciers.

The entire watershed is draining into Gulmarg Wildlife Sanctuary and has been included in the Protected Area /Eco-Sensitive Zone. That ESZ extent is kept at 0.05 km on the Southern side, 0.012 Km on South Western side and 0.012 km on Western side of Gulmarg Wildlife Sanctuary. The reason for shorter distance of ESZ on these sides is because the area is a well-known tourist spot with large tourist footfalls all around the year and there are no scope of ESZ extent possible on these sides. It was also stated that besides, a number of regulations as included in the Master Plan by Gulmarg Development Authority are in place and the Hon'ble High Court of J&K is monitoring its implementation and that bringing another legal instrument to govern the area will create confusion in the execution of Tourist Development Plans.

4. The Committee deliberated the matter and observed that tourism development plan anyway will be a part of the Zonal Master Plan required to be formulated for the final ESZ notification of the Protected Area and the UT administration shall be mindful while the ZMP is formulated. On the issue whether inclusion of adjoining reserve forest area in the nearby vicinity within ESZ can be done, the UT administration stated that since R.F is adequately protected under Forests Act and there is no biotic pressure in these areas the same is not necessary. The representation of UT administration stated that comments received on the draft notification have been duly considered by the UT Govt.

5. *Based on the deliberations held and presentation made the Committee recommended for finalization of the draft ESZ notification around Gulmarg Wildlife Sanctuary, Jammu & Kashmir.*

### **Item No 3.8: Thatteked Bird Sanctuary, Kerala**

The draft notification for the declaration of ESZ around Thatekkad Bird Sanctuary was first published on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016 but its validity period for finalisation had expired due to non-submission of requisite information/documents by the State Government. The draft was re-notified on 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2020 with an ESZ area of 28.444 sq km and extent of 1km uniform. Subsequently, State Government had submitted a revised proposal with ESZ area of 16.0 sq. km and an ESZ extent ranging from zero to 1.0 km.

2. The proposal was earlier discussed in the 44<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on 18.01.2021, wherein, the State Government had made a presentation and shared the reasons for revision of the proposal, wherein, the area of ESZ has is now proposed as 16.0 sq. km with an ESZ extent ranging from zero to 1.0 km. It was stated that the zero extent of ESZ on the eastern and south-eastern side of the Protected Area is due to the fact that there is high density of human habitation on these sides. It was also stated that people have tremendous apprehension of any ESZ on these sides. To this the Committee in the said 44<sup>th</sup> Meeting had desired to know the kind of activities being

carried out in the villages falling in proposed ESZ and the apprehensive of the people if delineation of ESZ is carried out on these areas. The representative of the State Government had then informed that villagers have a notion that ESZ declaration would entail restriction in agricultural and allied activities.

3. The Committee in the said 44<sup>th</sup> Meeting had observed that there is no prohibition in agriculture practices within the ESZ and stated that it is the state Government's responsibility to sensitise the people appropriately so as to remove such wrong notions. The Committee had therefore observed the scope of expanding the ESZ extent from zero to a suitable distance on the eastern and south-eastern direction, in particular from GPS points 15 to 17, where water bodies seem to exist, shall be examined and the instant proposal revised.

4. As follow up to the 44<sup>th</sup> EC meeting, State Govt submitted the revision wherein the area of the ESZ had been increased to 16.52 sq km by adding the three water bodies devoid of any human habitation. After receipt of a revised proposal the matter was again taken up. The representative of the State Government made a presentation and informed that the three water bodies have been now included and the ESZ area and extent has been revised.

Area of PA	: 25.16 sq. km	
	Proposed ESZ area	: 28.444 sq. km (as per draft notification)
		<b>Now revised to 16.52 sq. km</b>
Proposed ESZ Extent	: 1.0 km uniform (as per draft notification)	
		<b>Now revised as 0 to 1 km</b>

*[The ESZ is zero in East and South-East part of Thattekkad Bird Sanctuary to exclude densely populated human habitation and tribal settlements. These areas include agriculture land, patta land and possession lands. ]*

5. The Committee noted that significant area has been reduced from previous draft notification to which the State Government representative responded that the area has been reduced in the eastern and south-eastern side due to extensive human habitation. The Committee observed that maps presented does not substantiate claim of State Govt. regarding extensive human habitations in the eastern and south-eastern side. The Committee observed that revised ESZ map appropriately representing the distribution of human habitation shall be submitted to the Ministry.

6. Based on the deliberations held the Committee recommended the proposed ESZ around Thatekkad Bird Sanctuary, Kerala for finalization with an area of 16.52 sq. km and extent of 0 (zero) to 1 Km, subject to submission of revised map showing

appropriate distribution of human habitation as proposed by the State Government.

**Item No 3.9: Eravikulam National Park, Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary, Anamudi Shola National Park , Kurinjimala Wildlife Sanctuary and Pambadum Shola National Park (5 PA), Kerala.**

The draft notification for the declaration of ESZ around Eravikulam National Park, Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary, Anamudi Shola National Park , Kurinjimala Wildlife Sanctuary and Pambadum Shola National Park , Kerala (5 PAs) was first published on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2016 but got expired due to non- submission of requisite documents/information by the State Government. The draft was re-notified on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and was earlier considered in the 46<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Expert Committee held on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2021. The Committee in the said 46<sup>th</sup> Meeting asked the State Govt to submit the pending essential documents viz. shape file/ kml file with boundary of ESZ and PA, response to public comments; and copy of PA notification, which could not be made available on the day of the meeting also.

2. On receipt of the above cited pending documents, the proposal was again taken up for consideration in the meeting. The representative of the Government of Kerala made a presentation and provided the following information:

Area of PA	: 264.643 sq.km
Proposed ESZ Area	: 102.26 sq.km
Proposed ESZ Extent	: zero to 1.0 km

*[It was justified that zero extents of Eco-Sensitive Zone in the Northern side of Eravikulam National Park, as this part is contiguous with the Anamalai Tiger Reserve in Tamil Nadu while North Eastern boundary is contiguous with Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary. The zero extents at other directions are contiguous with notified reserve of Munnar territorial division.*

*Zero extents of Eco-Sensitive Zone in north, north-east and east boundary is due to the interstate boundary with Tamil Nadu state and most of this area is protected as Anamalai Tiger Reserve. While, the zero extents of Eco-sensitive Zone in South-east direction is contiguous with Kurinjimala Sanctuary, similarly zero extents at the west and north-west direction are due to contiguous with boundary of Eravikulam National Park.*

*Zero extent of Eco-Sensitive Zone in north-east direction is due to contiguous with Kurinjimala Sanctuary and adjoining with other Protected Areas of Munnar Wildlife Division.*

*Zero extents of Eco-sensitive Zone in the Northern, North-East, Eastern and South Eastern side of Kurinjimala sanctuary is due to interstate boundary with Tamil Nadu. While, zero extents of Eco-sensitive Zone in the South and North-west is due to*

*contiguous with other Protected Areas of Munnar Wildlife Division (Pambadum Shola National Park and Anamudi Shola National Park.*

*Zero extents of Eco-sensitive Zone in the North-eastern, Eastern, South-eastern, and Southern sides of Pampadum Shola National Park are due to contiguous with the interstate boundary with Tamil Nadu or adjoining with other Protected Areas of Munnar Wildlife Division].*

3. The representative of the State Government also informed that all the five protected areas present in the instant proposal are contiguous and the comments received on the draft notification had been duly considered by the State Government.

4. The Committee also suggested that possibility for inclusion of Anamudi Reserved Forest in ESZ in order to provide multilayer protection can be explored. To this the State Government representative stated that western boundary of Ervaikulam National Park is bordered by Anamudi Reserve Forest of Munnar Territorial Forest Division which is already notified as Reserved Forest on 6<sup>th</sup> August 1959 vide notification number FA2-1084/57/AD as per section 19 of Travancore-Cochin Forest Act 1951 (Act III) of 1952. The Committee noted that there are tribal settlements in the area and ESZ on these directions have been made zero extent, which need to appropriate justification. The experts were of the opinion that with many activities viz. mining, polluting industries etc prohibited in ESZ, it offers better protection to such RFs, which are prone to diversion through Forest Clearance under FC Act. State Govt stated that Quarrying and mining operations never happened in Anamudi Reserve Forest and Department is bound to prevent such activities in future also. The reserve with tribal population is having the legal protection under different Acts and rules made thereunder and the need for its inclusion in ESZ is not necessary. The Committee asked for written elaborate justification in this reference to be submitted by the state government to the Ministry. **The same has been received.**

5. *Based on the deliberations held and presentation made the Committee recommended the proposal of ESZ around Eravikulam National Park, Kerala for finalization with ESZ area of 102.26 sq.km and extent of zero to 1.0 km.*

### **Item 3.10 Categorisation of Petroleum operations as “Regulated” instead of “Prohibited” Activity in notified ESZ**

The item was deferred for discussion in the absence of representative of State Government and pending clarification from them.

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**List of Participants**

**Members of the Expert Committee**

1. Shri Tanmay Kumar, Additional Secretary, Chairperson, MoEF&CC.
2. Shri Rakesh Kumar Jagenia, DIG, Wildlife Division, MoEFCC
3. Dr. K. Chandra Shekar, Scientist-'E', GB Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment & Development, Almora.
4. Dr. C. Rahunathan, Scientist-E, Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata.
5. Shri. Sanjay K. Agarwal, Deputy Director, Forest Survey of India.
6. Dr. Sanjay Singh, Scientist 'D', ICFRE.
7. Dr. Diwakar Sharma, WWF
8. Shri P.K Duria. Town Planner, Town & Country Planner, TCPO, Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs.
9. Central Water Commission, Environment Management Directorate
10. Dr. Sanjeev Kumar, IIRS/ISRO, Dehradun
11. Shri W. Bharat Singh, Scientist F, Director, MoEFCC

**Ministry of Environment Forest And Climate Change**

12. Dr. Shruti Rai Bhardwaj, Scientist E, Additional Director, MoEFCC
13. Dr. Veenu Joon, Scientist D, Joint Director, MoEFCC
14. Ms. Ritu Narwaria, Consultant, MoEFCC

**Officials of Government of Assam**

15. Shri Mazidul Hussain IFS CF (Wildlife) Divisional Forest Officer, Government of Assam.
16. Shri D.D. Gogoi IFS (Retd) former CCF (Wildlife) & Consultant Wildlife, O/O PCCF(WL)
17. Shri Tejas Mariswamy (IFS), Divisional Forest Officer, Cachar, Government of Assam.
18. Divisional Forest Officer, Sivsagar

**Officials of Government of Andaman & Nicobar**

19. Principal Chief Conservator of. Forests, Andaman and Nicobar Islands

**Officials of Government of Jammu & Kashmir**

20. Shri. Rashid Yahya Naqash, Regional Wildlife Warden, Government of Jammu & Kashmir.

21. Dr. Kumar MK, Regional Wildlife Warden, Government of Jammu & Kashmir.

22. Shri. Suresh Kumar Gupta, CCF, Government of Jammu & Kashmir.

**Officials of Government of Kerala**

23. Chief Wildlife Warden , Government of Kerala

24. Wildlife Warden, Eravikulam National Park, Munnar, Government of Kerala

25. Wildlife Warden, Idduki, Government of Kerala.

**Officials of Government of Madhya Pradesh**

26. Shri S. Sen APCCF Wildlife Government of Madhya Pradesh

27. Division Forest Officer, Gwalior, Government of Madhya Pradesh

28. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Wildlife, Government of Madhya Pradesh