

**Ministry of Environment and Forests
Wildlife Division**

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Minutes of the 11th Meeting of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) convened on 22nd May, 2008 at 10.30 A.M. in Room No.403, Paryavaran Bhavan, New Delhi under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister of State for Forests and Wildlife.

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The 11th Meeting of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) was convened on 22nd May, 2008, Paryavaran Bhavan, New Delhi under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister of State for Forests and Wildlife. List of participants is at **Annexure-I**. Dr. Divyabhanu Sinh Chavda and Shri B.K. Talukdar informed their inability to attend the meeting.

At the outset, Hon'ble Minister of State (F&WL) welcomed the Members appreciating their contribution for wildlife conservation in the country. After the welcome address, regular agenda items were taken for discussion as follows :-

Agenda Item No.1 : Confirmation of the Minutes of the meeting of Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife held on 19th February, 2008.

Member Secretary informed that the draft minutes of the last meeting were circulated to all the Members requesting to confirm the minutes. Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh, Member, informed about the receipt of a letter from Dr. Divyabhanu Sinh Chavda in which Dr. Chavda had requested to amend the minutes as per his observations detailed in his earlier letter. Member Secretary apprised the members that after the last meeting of the Standing Committee of NBWL, nonofficial members met separately with the Hon'ble Minister for Forests and Wildlife. They briefed the Hon'ble Minister about their concerns regarding compliance of the decisions taken in the last meeting of NBWL. However, the Minister dispelled their doubts about the recording of the Minutes and informed them about the follow up action taken on various action points emanating from the minutes of the meeting of NBWL

held on 1st November, 2007. It was later followed by another meeting with the non official members held on 3rd April, 2008 resolving the contentious issues raised by the non official members. Minutes of that meeting had already been circulated to all the non official members. Further, neither any objection from other members whose names had been indicated in the letter of Dr. Chavada had been raised regarding the minutes nor any confirmation of the stand taken by Dr. Chavada in his letter was received from them. The Chairmain also clarified that all the decisions taken in the last meeting were unanimous and it was accordingly reflected in the circulated minutes. Thereafter, the minutes of the last meeting were taken on record.

Agenda Item No.2 : Action taken report on the recommendations of the Standing Committee of NBWL meeting held on 19th February, 2008.

2.3.2 : Diversion of Tale Sanctuary for Lower Subhansri Hydro Electric Project by National Hydro Power Corporation Limited (NHPC)

As decided in the last meeting, representatives of NHPC made a presentation before the Standing Committee of NBWL. Before presentation, CMD, NHPC submitted that energy requirement of the country is increasing with the economic growth of the country. But energy production was lagging behind. India had great hydro power potential which should be made use of. It was also pointed out that hydro power was non polluting when compared to other modes of power production. In a presentation, it was informed that there were three projects of NHPC on Subhansri river namely; Lower, Middle and Upper involving a total diversion of about 9052 ha. The total submergence of forests areas was only 0.17% of the total forest area of Arunachal Pradesh. Principal Secretary (Power), Arunachal Pradesh also requested to follow case by case approach for different hydro power projects. He informed that State of Arunachal Pradesh needs development and power generation for the State as well as for the country. Secretary, Department of North Eastern Region, GOI who was a special invitee while supporting the views of State Government also submitted that in Arunachal Pradesh, there is power shortage coupled with poor agriculture and overall very low socio-economic

and human development index. It needs to be addressed through such projects. Committee Members were also apprised about the concerns of Dr. B.K. Talukdar, Member, Standing Committee about reviewing the conditions imposed on the Lower Subhansri Hydro Electric Project. He has suggested not to make any changes in the conditions imposed by the earlier Committee. Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh, Member submitted that power was important and the Committee was in favour of more power generation. However, certain safeguards and cautious project was necessary considering the immense value of the area. He wanted to know whether all the three projects of NHPC namely; Lower, Middle and Upper were independent of each other and stand alone projects. He also emphasized that approval of one project should not be used directly or indirectly for approval of other projects of similar nature on one plea or the other. CMD, NHPC informed that all the three projects were independent of each other and were viable independently.

Member Secretary drew the attention of the Standing Committee to the Minutes of the last meeting of the Standing Committee in which the inspection report of Dr. Asad Rahmani and Dr. Anmol Kumar was discussed. The deliberations in the last meeting were as follows :-

“Regarding the second issue, there were two opinions of the inspection team, i.e. Dr. Rahmani has advised for advanced cumulative Environment Impact Assessment of all the proposed projects and a carrying capacity study of Subhansri river basin before considering any new project. On the other hand, Dr. Anmol Kumar, DIG(WL) has recommended a case to case approach while considering the future projectsThe Standing Committee members requested for presentation by the NHPC. Representatives of NHPC promised to make a detailed presentation in the next meeting before the Standing Committee with respect to their present and future projects and their cumulative Environment Impact Assessment”.

Dr. Rehmani emphasized the need for declaration of all the reserve forests in the catchment area of Subhansri as Protected Area which was not very difficult. However,

CWLW of the State informed that there were problems for declaration of Protected Areas because of resentment of the local people.

After detailed discussions, Committee unanimously decided that NHPC and State Government would give a commitment on strict monitoring and compliance of all the conditions which have been provided in the environmental clearance as well as by the Standing Committee of NBWL (excluding the two conditions which are under review) and would also indicate clearly whether all the three projects were independent of each other and were viable independently. State Government of Arunachal Pradesh would also submit their views in writing about declaration of Protected Areas of Reserve forest in the catchment of Subhansri river alongwith extent/details of area to be declared as Protected Area and also detailed reasons for not declaring the remaining reserved forest of the Subansiri Catchment. On receipt of these reports/submission, the Standing Committee would discuss the proposal in the next meeting.

2.3.2 : IAs referred by Hon'ble Supreme Court

Member Secretary informed that these applications had been filed by Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) seeking intervention of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in matters related to Rajaji National Park (IA No.52, 64 and 95), Askot Musk Deer Sanctuary (IA No.91 & 107) and Kedarnath Sanctuary (IA No.101)

Comments on these IAs had been received only from the CWLW, Uttarakhand and, therefore, could be deliberated by the Standing Committee. Thereafter, Member Secretary requested the CWLW, Uttarakhand to apprise the Committee on the subject.

CWLW, Uttarakhand informed that one of the issues in the IA No.64(52 of 2004) was for settlement of Gujjars. There were 1390 families who were identified for rehabilitation in

1998. Out of these, 878 families have been relocated at Gandikhatta and 521 families at Pathri. The land on which these relocation had been carried out was forest land and necessary approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act 1980 from Government of India had been obtained for the same by the State Government. A number of socio-economic amenities have been provided to them and a rehabilitation scheme was being implemented by the Forest Department. This rehabilitation had been voluntary. Presently, only 238 families were remaining to be relocated. He also informed that till 2001 only 80 ha land was available for Gujjar rehabilitation at Pathri. Considering the requirement of land for additional families (1390-512 = 878) proposals were sent under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and remaining land was made available to the Park in 2001 (700 ha at Gandikhatta and 343 ha in Pathri) and in 2006 (55 ha at Gandikhatta and 25 ha at Pathri). Thus, the land required for rehabilitation of Gujjars was made available in phases and the plantations on these lands were cleared as per requirement. Remarkable recovery of habitat has been observed in the areas from where relocation has been made. CWLW also informed that the Gujjars Rehabilitation Programme was applicable to the eligible gujjar families only in Rajaji National Park and it was not possible to include gujjar families of Haridwar Forest Division living in forests adjoining Rajaji National Park.

The Standing Committee unanimously appreciated the work carried out by Uttarakhand Forest Department.

Another issue in the IAs was about Gothiyas (Relocation of Village Kuno Goth). It was informed that before notification of Rajaji National Park, certain leases were sanctioned to 236 families of Gohari range over an area of 7.383 ha of land. Later, these leases were cancelled after settlement proceedings carried by District Magistrate. The families were awarded compensation of Rs.3,75,020/- against the leases. However, these families did not accept the amount and status of these families is that of encroachment/encroachers in that area. He also informed that there were four other Taungya villages in Rajaji National Park.

Out of these four villages, one has already been relocated outside the national park and the process of relocation of the remaining was underway.

Standing Committee appreciated the efforts of the Uttarakhand Forest Department for relocating the Taungya Village and observed that immediate steps to relocate remaining Taungya villages as well as encroachment of Gothiyas in Kumao Goth be taken by the State Government to ensure protection and conservation of Rajaji National Park.

Regarding final notification of Rajaji National Park, CWLW informed that the process of settlement of rights in the park has already been completed and proposal for final notification was under consideration of the State Government.

I.A. No.95 (in IA No.52 of 2004): CWLW, Uttarakhand informed that the following issues had been raised in this I.A.

- (a) Relocation of Kunao Goth, Gangabhogpur Malla and Gangabhogpur Talla.
- (b) Non compliance of stipulated conditions of the Forest Department by Irrigation Department in Chilla Hydel Power Project.
- (c) Illegal occupation in Chilla Hydel Power Project Colony.
- (d) Construction of bridges of adequate width for movement of wild animals especially wild elephants.

- (a) **Relocation of Kunao Goth, Gangabhogpur Malla and Gangabhogpur Talla.**

About Kumao Goth, matter is as per Gothiyas detailed in preceding paras.

Gangabhogpur Malla and Gangabhogpur Talla are two revenue villages which are enclaved in Ghohari Range of Rajaji National Park. Approximately 451 families are inhabiting these two villages which spread over an area of 86 ha. On account of their

location within the rich wildlife habitats of elephants, tiger and other endangered species of wild animals, these villages are facing problems of man-animal conflict. This conflict is going to intensify further with the increase in human and cattle population in these villages and increase in density of wild animals following relocation of Gujjar families in Rajaji National Park. Relocation of these two villages is a policy matter on which the state government has to take a decision.

Standing Committee unanimously recommended relocation of these villages by the State Government.

(b) Non compliance of stipulated conditions of the Forest Department by Irrigation Department in Chilla Hydel Power Project.

CWLW intimated that 373.074 ha of forest land was given by the forest department for construction of Chilla Hydel Power Project and Shakti Canal in 1976. This project is located inside Chilla range of erstwhile Lansdown Forest Division which at present falls in Gohari and Chilla range of Rajaji National Park and a formal approval for the transfer of forest land for the project under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 is yet to be issued. Certain conditions were recommended by the then Divisional Forest Officer, Lansdown Forest Division for the land transfer. Condition No.4 stipulated that no shops and commercial activity will be carried out by the irrigation department. Any shop, if required will be established through forest department. However, it is to be informed that how many shops are currently in place in violation of this condition.

(c) Illegal occupation in Chilla Hydel Power Project Colony.

CWLW informed that approximately 500 houses are existing in Chilla Hydel Power Project Colony. Out of these 120 houses are dilapidated and deserve to be demolished. Some of these houses have been occupied illegally. In addition to this, large number of houses are

either occupied or rented out by the staff of irrigation department and Uttaranchal Jal Vidhut Nigam who are not required for the operation of Chilla Hydel Power Project. Therefore, it is necessary that only those staff required for operation of the power project should be allowed to live in the colony and rest of the houses should be demolished and land be handed over to the forest department. A formal request in this regard has been made to District Magistrate, Pauri which is under consideration.

Committee observed that M/s Chilla Hydel Power Project must abide with the conditions stipulated at the time of land transfer and any formality/action, if required, under the Forest Act, 1980 be completed by the State Government.

(d) Construction of bridges of adequate width for movement of wild animals especially wild elephants.

CWLW further informed that the Chilla Hydel Power Project was fed by a 14 km Chilla Canal starting from Kunaon Barrage near Pashulok, Rishikesh. The canal is so wide that no wild animals can cross this as it has fragmented the habitat completely. The canal is a big hindrance in the access of wild animals from Chilla and Gohari ranges to the river Ganges. Accordingly, the condition No.6 for transfer of forest land for the project stipulated that “the irrigation department will construct the bridges on the canal in such a way that wild animals can have access to the river Ganges for drinking water. The forest department will be consulted in construction of these bridges”. It is informed that this 14 km canal running parallel to the Ganges is having only four narrow bridges which are not suitable and sufficient for movement of wild animals especially elephants. For facilitating unhindered movement of elephant and other wild animals from one side of canal to the other, access of wild animals to river Ganga and for maintaining continuity of habitat, existing bridges over Chilla Power channel need to be modified and additional bridges are required to be constructed after reassessment.

Standing Committee unanimously recommended for immediate modification of bridges across Chilla Canal in consultation with Wildlife Institute of India and CWLW, Uttarakhand.

I.A. No.91, 101 & 107 in Writ Petition © No.337 of 1995

CWLW informed about three IAs namely; IA No.91, 101 and 107 in Writ Petition (Civil) No.337/1995 which were for diversion of land from Askot Musk Deer Sanctuary.

Member Secretary informed that three IAs namely; IA No.91, 101 and 107 have also been referred to the Standing Committee of NBWL for its recommendation. IA No.91 and 107 are regarding diversions of land from Askot Musk Deer Sanctuary. IA No.91 involves diversion of an area of 0.334 ha for construction of Power House by Uttarakhand Jal Vidyut Nigam. The proposal was for transfer of land on lease basis for 35 years and has been recommended by CWLW, Uttarakhand.

Considering the recommendation of CWLW, Uttarakhand and that very small area was involved (10.334 ha), the Committee unanimously recommended the proposal.

IA No.101 involves diversion of 0.604 ha in Kedarnath Sanctuary for laying a pipeline for drinking water supply. The project proponent is Uttaranchal Jal Sansthan Vikas Evam Nirman Nigam. CWLW has recommended the proposal subject to the condition of constructing a pond for drinking water for animals at two points. No negative impact to wildlife will be caused by harvesting the water and the project proponents would provide drinking water free of cost to the forest department at Devria Tal.

Considering the recommendation of the CWLW and the fact that the proposal was for drinking water pipeline, the Committee recommended the proposal unanimously.

IA No.107 was filed by Tehri Hydro Development Corporation. However, no details in this connection were available with the CWLW as he had not received any proposal. In the absence of any detail and any proposal from the project proponents, the Committee unanimously decided not to consider this proposal.

2.3.2 I.A. No.106

Member Secretary informed the Members that this I.A. had been filed by State Government of Madhya Pradesh seeking permission for final notification of the Gangau Wildlife Sanctuary under Section 26(a) of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. CWLW, M.P. made a presentation and informed that by issuing the final notification, about 1659.693 ha of revenue land and protected forest land would be excised from the proposed Sanctuary. It was also informed that this proposal was considered and recommended by the Rationalization Committee for Protected Areas. Shri M.K. Ranjitsinh, Member, raised the question of not attaching the maps with the proposal. He suggested that an equivalent area of reserve forest should be added to the Sanctuary so that the area of the Sanctuary is not reduced.

After deliberations, Committee unanimously decided that the State Government should give a written submission before the Committee for adding atleast equivalent area of reserved forest in the Gangau Sanctuary in lieu of proposed deletion. On receipt of submission from the State Government, the proposal will again be discussed in the next meeting of the Standing Committee of NBWL.

Agenda Item No.3.2 : Rationalization of Boundaries of National Parks and Sanctuaries.

3.2.1 : Gujarat

Member Secretary informed the Members that Rationalization Committee for Protected Areas of the Ministry which met on 5th May, 2008 had considered rationalization

proposals from Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh and recommended these proposals for consideration of the Standing Committee of NBWL. He requested CWLW, Gujarat to make a presentation for his proposal. CWLW, Gujarat made a presentation about rationalization of boundaries of two sanctuaries namely; Balaram Ambaji and Narayan Sarovar Sanctuaries. Rationalization of the boundaries of Balram Ambaji Sanctuary involved exclusion of 32 revenue villages from the Sanctuary. In lieu of the proposed deletion, additional forest area which was having better growth and was important for the movement of wildlife in Banaskantha village would be added. After rationalization, the present area of the Sanctuary i.e. 542.08 sq. kms would be slightly increased to the extent of 544.43 sq. kms. It would lead to improvement of habitat and management of wildlife as well as better development in the excluded villages creating goodwill for wildlife.

Another proposal from Gujarat was about rationalization of Narayan Sarovar Sanctuary involving deletion of village Pakho from the Sanctuary which was 12 kms away from the boundary of Narain Sarovar Sanctuary. In lieu of deleted area (6.14 sq. kms) a better adjacent forest area (6.82 sq. kms) has been proposed for addition increasing the total area of the Sanctuary marginally. Dr. Rahmani showed his concern about the deleted forest patch and informed that the forest area in Kutch region was of immense importance and there was every likelihood of using this area for mining and other forestry purposes. CWLW, Gujarat informed that the status of the deleted patch of forest would remain that of forest and State Government had no intention to carry out non forestry activity there. Moreover, for any non forestry activity, the proposal has to come before the Central Government for permission. Therefore, there was no possibility of using the deleted forest area for non forestry purpose. Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh, Member observed that these proposals were also in consonance with the recommendation of earlier Committee headed by him.

After detailed discussions and considering the benefits of the proposals leading to better wildlife conservation and reduction in man-animal conflict, the Committee

unanimously recommended both the proposals i.e. rationalization of Balram Ambaji and Narayan Sarovar Sanctuary as suggested by the State Government of Gujarat.

3.2.2 : Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh Government has submitted a proposal for rationalization of Protected Area Network in the State. CWLW and Additional PCCF, H.P. made a presentation about the proposed rationalization of boundaries of Protected Areas in Himachal Pradesh. He informed that there were 35 Protected Areas (33 Sanctuaries and 2 National Parks) constituting 12.79% of the total geographical area of the State. Out of this, there was no proposal for any change in 8 Protected Areas namely; Pin Valley National Park, Great Himalayan National Park, Chandra Tal Wildlife Sanctuary, Lipa Asrang WLS, Rakchan Chitkula WLS, Rupi Bhaba WLS, Shimla Water Catchment WLS and Titrahan WLS. Out of the remaining 27 Protected Areas, Daralaghat WLS (Area 6 kms), Shilli WLS (Area 213.51 sq. kms) and Govindsagar WLS (100 sq. kms) have been proposed to be denotified completely. Main reasons for denotification of these Sanctuaries were detailed as follows

- (i) Very little or no biodiversity value of the areas under the Protected Areas proposed for rationalization/denotification.
- (ii) Presence of large inhabitations (village/township etc.) within the Protected Areas i.e. 793 villages of human population to the extent of 116658 and livestock of 183891 cattles.
- (iii) Acute pressure on the resources of Protected Areas, both by human and cattle population;
- (iv) Govindsagar Sanctuary which covers only huge water lake formed after impounding of water is used by tourists and locals for various water sports, fishing and boating etc. and every other possible activity which is in violation of the Wildlife (Protection) Act and has very little conservation values.

In the remaining Protected Areas, he informed that wherever possible, areas with habitation having very little or no biodiversity value had been proposed for exclusion. Simultaneously, the adjoining forest areas having better biodiversity value and harboring wildlife were proposed for inclusion. He also informed that Naina Devi WLS and Simbalbara WLS have been proposed to be converted into Conservation Reserves after their denotification as WLS. Nargu, Dalaghat, Naina Devi, Shilli, Khokhan and Pong lake have been inspected by Dr. Sukumar, Member, Rationalization Committee who has agreed with the proposal of State Government for rationalization/denotification. Remaining 20 Protected Areas proposed to be rationalized were inspected by Shri Sawarkar, Member Rationalization Committee. He had also given his recommendations for denotification/rationalization. CWLW also informed that the total area under Protected Area Network as on today was 7161.2 sq. km. After denotification/rationalization of boundaries, it is going to be increased to 7499.71 sq. kms, thereby causing an increase of good quality forest area to the extent of 338.51 sq. kms.

CWLW also circulated the maps of all the Protected Areas. It was also informed to the Committee that all the Protected Areas in this proposal for rationalization had been inspected by the Members of the Rationalization Committee namely; Shri Sawarkar; and Dr. Sukumar. They had recommended the proposal of the Himachal Pradesh as summarized in the Annexure 'A'.

Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh supported the proposal and was of the opinion that the proposal of the CWLW, H.P. was very well conceived and other states should also take such course of action to increase the ecological growth of Protected Areas and to reduce human animal conflict wherever possible.

Considering the fact that net area under Protected Area Network was increasing and the proposal was leading to better wildlife conservation coupled with reduced man-animal conflict, the Committee was in agreement of the proposal. However, it was decided that the

reports of the inspecting officers along with maps should be circulated amongst all the members of the Standing Committee of NBWL for further consideration by the Committee.

3.3.21 Proposal for construction of new alignment of NH-IA from Km.195.200 to km 199.100 by NHAI in Jammu and Kashmir.

As decided in the last meeting, comments of the Ministry of Law and Justice were solicited. However the same had not been received as yet. Therefore, the proposal could not be discussed.

3.3.9 Proposal for formation of road inside Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary at Srivilliputhur Formation of road from Kilavan Koil to Kodikulam Kudisai.

This proposal is about construction of road between Kilavan Koil to Kodikulam Kudisai in Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary. CWLW informed that this road was necessary for the protection as movement in the Sanctuary was very difficult. The total width of the road would be restricted to 10 m only. He also informed that it involved felling of about 620 trees. Member Secretary informed that this proposal was considered in the last meeting also but information on felling of trees could not be provided. Therefore, it had again been put for consideration of the Committee.

Dr. Asad Rehmani opined that Grizzled Squirrel is an arboreal species, which moves from one tree to another. It should be ensured that tree felling did not cause opening in the canopy. CWLW informed that trees to be felled were scattered over a large area and it would not cause any damage to the grizzled squirrel. However, the members felt that the proposed width was on the higher side. After deliberations and considering the need of road for protection, the Committee unanimously recommended the proposal subject to the condition that total width of the road would be confined to only 6 meters including everything and all

precautions as has been envisaged in the publication of Wildlife Institute in this regard would be complied with. .

**Agenda Item No. 3(1.1) and No.3(1.2) Presentation on Tiger Conservation
Presentation on Gharial Conservation**

Considering the paucity of time, it was decided that the copies of these presentations would be circulated amongst the members along with the minutes.

**Agenda Item No.3.2 : Fresh Proposal for diversion of National Parks and
Sanctuaries**

The fresh proposals were introduced by the Member Secretary as follows:-

**3.2(1-5) : Diversion of forest land from Changthang Cold Desert
Sanctuary for construction of roads in Jammu and Kashmir**

Member Secretary while introducing these proposals informed that there were 5 proposals forwarded by the State Government of Jammu and Kashmir for construction of roads in in Chanthang Cold Desert Sanctuary involving diversion of 126 ha, 53 ha, 144 ha, 27 ha and 72 ha of forest land for five different roads namely; Kazok to Chumar, Charste to Point 4433, Koyal to Zarsar, Phobrang to Marsimikla and Phobrang to Charste respectively. It was observed that the enclosed maps with the proposals were not indicating the correct location of the proposed roads within the Sanctuary. The Committee also observed that the proposals did not give any idea of alternate roads.

Considering the large extent of areas proposed to be diverted, Committee unanimously decided to carry out site inspection. It was decided that Dr. Asad Rehmani of BNHS and Dr. Anmol Kumar, DIG(WL) from the Ministry would carry out the inspection and submit report in the next meeting of the Standing Committee of NBWL for its consideration.

3.2(6-7) : 3-D - Seismic survey for oil exploration by ONGC and Focus Energy Limited.

These two proposals have been forwarded by the Rajasthan State Government involving 3D seismic survey over an area of 600 sq. kms by ONGC and over an area of 765 sq. kms by Focus Energy Limited.

While discussing the proposals, it was observed that 'Closed Areas' of the Desert National Park should not be disturbed by any diversion. However, the proposal did not indicate whether closed areas were going to be affected or not in the National Park. Considering it and the fact that the area to be affected was large, the Committee unanimously decided to carry out inspection before taking a final view on the proposals. It was decided that Dr. Asad Rehmani along with Shri P.R. Sinha, Director, WII would carry out the inspection and submit report before the next meeting of the Standing Committee of NBWL.

3.2(8-18) : Proposals for diversion of forest land from Desert National Park for construction of Gravel Roads for connecting different villages.

Member Secretary informed that 12 proposals from State Government of Rajasthan have been received proposing diversion of forestland varying from 4.5 ha to 27.83 ha. These roads were to be undertaken under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana and have been recommended by the CWLW. While deliberating on the proposals, Dr. Asad Rehmani observed that it was very necessary to protect and develop existing 'Close Areas' within the Desert National Park and to ensure that these were not affected by the proposed road network. It was observed that the area was ecologically fragile and needs utmost care while considering such proposals. It was unanimously decided that the area should be inspected before considering these proposals. It was decided that Dr. Asad Rehmani along with Shri P.R. Sinha, Director, WII would carry out the inspection and submit report before the next meeting of the Standing Committee of NBWL

3.2(19) : Construction of an aerial ropeway from Kanak Vrindavan to Jaigarh Nahargarh involving diversion of 1.8 ha of forest land from Nahargarh Wildlife Sanctuary.

While briefing the members about diversion of the proposal, CCF(WL), Rajasthan informed that this ropeway would facilitate the visitors of Nahargarh fort and Jaigarh fort enabling them to have first hand knowledge of rich architecture and heritage of Jaipur. CWLW, Rajasthan has recommended the proposal.

The issue was deliberated by the Committee and taking into account that the proposed diversion of forest land is only 1.8 ha and recommended by the CWLW, the Committee unanimously decided to recommend the proposal.

3.2(20) : Diversion of 20 ha of forest land from Nahargarh Wildlife Sanctuary for construction of Sloth Bear Rescue Centre.

CCF(WL), Rajasthan informed that the proposed rescue centre was approved by Central Zoo Authority and was to be constructed on the eastern periphery of the Sanctuary. The rescue centre would function as a shelter for orphaned wild bear cubs and rescued bears from Kalandars. CWLW has recommended the proposal.

After deliberations, the Committee felt that there was need of rescue centre especially for bears and bear cubs which are rescued from Kalandars. Before taking a view, Committee enquired about the final notification of the Sanctuary. CCF(WL) informed that the final notification was likely to be issued soon. Committee unanimously recommended the proposal.

3.2(21) : Construction of Bridge over River Chambal between Gainta & Makhida in Rajasthan

It was informed that the project was important for providing the missing link on State Highway-1A between the approach roads of Gaina and Makhida. It involves diversion of

3.48 ha of forestland in Bundi district. CWLW has recommended the proposal with 12 conditions.

After deliberations, considering the need to provide missing link for better transport, the Committee unanimously recommended the proposal subject to the compliance of conditions envisaged by the CWLW.

3.2(22) : Diversion of 0.585 ha of forest land from Mount Abu Wildlife Sanctuary for laying of Optical Fibre Cable in Mount Abu – Gurushikhar Route, Rajasthan

CCF(WL), Rajasthan explained that only 0.585 ha of forest land was required for laying Optical Fibre Cable. This optical cable was laid with the objective of providing reliable connectivity to Air Force Station. CWLW, Rajasthan has recommended the proposal.

After deliberations and considering the fact that CWLW has recommended the proposal and need of better connectivity for Air Force Station at Mount Abu, the Committee unanimously recommended the proposal.

3.2(23) : Diversion of 0.6708 ha of forest land from Mount Abu Wildlife Sanctuary for parking facilities in Mount Abu.

CCF(WL), Rajasthan explained that a number of tourists visit Mount Abu and about 70% of them used to come in private vehicles and taxis. Therefore, there was an urgent need to have a parking space. He also informed that the State Government has already issued a notification for exclusion of Mount Abu town from the boundaries of the Sanctuary. Member Secretary informed that Ministry had not received any such proposal.

Considering the above, the Committee decided that before considering this proposal, State Government should clarify how notification for exclusion of Mount Abu town from the boundaries of the Sanctuary without the approval/consent of the Standing Committee of NBWL had been issued.

3.2(24) : Diversion of 2.2 ha of forest land from Sawai Man Singh Wildlife Sanctuary for construction of B.T. road to Neemli Kalam from Sawai Man Singh Sanctuary.

CCF(WL), Rajasthan briefed about the proposal. CWLW had also recommended the proposal with 8 conditions. On enquiry, it was observed that this Sanctuary forms part of tiger reserve. Considering this fact, Committee decided to seek the comments of Member Secretary, NTCA before taking a view on the proposal.

3.2(25) : Diversion of 4.17 ha of forest land from Jamwa Ramgarh Wildlife Sanctuary for construction of missing link of National Highway-11 (Dausa – Manoharpur), Rajasthan.

While discussing the proposal, it was observed that Jamwa Ramgarh Wildlife Sanctuary has suffered immensely in past because of illegal mining. Further proposal did not clearly indicate position of the road within the sanctuary. Considering this fact, Standing Committee unanimously decided to carry out site inspection in the instant case before taking a view on the project.

It was decided that Dr. Divyabhanusinh Chavda alongwith with a representative of the Ministry may carry out an inspection and submit a report for consideration of the Committee.

3.2(26) : Repair of existing Digamber Jain Temple located inside Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve in Sawai Madhopur District, Rajasthan.

Committee observed that the proposed area was falling within the Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve and the CWLW, Rajasthan had recommended the proposal. Further it did not involve any diversion of forestland. It was only a repair/renovation of old archaeological monument for which Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has also given their no objection. Considering the fact that the proposal would not be having any negative impact on the habitat the Committee unanimously recommended the proposal.

3.2(27) : Diversion of 260 ha of forest land from Ranthambore National Park for construction of Tiger Safari Park

CCF(WL), Rajasthan informed that Ranthambore National Park was under great pressure from the tourists visiting the Park leading to heavy biotic pressure. The construction of Tiger Sarari Park would divert this pressure of inflow of tourists and would be helpful in conservation of tiger as well as its habitat. Committee observed that the comments of CZA in this regard have not been provided by the State Government. Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh observed that tiger was a solitary animal and keeping it in the Safari might not be appropriate. Since the area was part of Tiger Reserve, it was necessary to obtain comments of National Tiger Conservation Authority. In the light of foregoing discussions, Committee unanimously decided to consider this proposal after approval of CZA and opinion of NTCA.

3.2(28) : Setting up of Zinc Dust and Zinc CGG Plant at Sidcul, Haridwar which is about 2 kms from the boundary of Rajaji National Park.

While introducing the agenda, Member Secretary informed that the Hon'ble Supreme Court in its Order dated 4th December, 2006 in Writ Petition (C) No.460 of 2004 has directed the State Governments to declare areas adjacent to the boundary of National Parks and Sanctuaries as Eco-sensitive Zones as early as possible. However, the State Government of Uttrakhand has declared the areas adjacent to Rajaji National Park as industrial enclave in the name of Sidcul. At the same time, it was mentioned that no proposal for declaration of eco sensitive zones around Protected Areas has been received by the Ministry from the State Government. Within Sidcul, M/s Hindustan Zinc Limited has submitted a proposal to set up a 365,000 TPA Zinc Dust and 36500 TPA CGG Plant at Sidcul. The area required for their project is 3.44 ha which is only about 2 kms far from the boundary of Rajaji National Park. This proposal has been given environmental clearance by the Environment Wing of the Ministry subject to the condition of clearance by the Standing Committee of NBWL. It is further mentioned that Hon'ble Court vide Order dated 4.12.06 has directed that the proposals

falling within 10 kms from the boundary of Protected Areas be considered by the Standing Committee of NBWL.

The Committee deliberated the issue in detail and felt that such projects should not be considered in the close vicinity of Rajaji National Park.

3.2(29) Removal of dry and dead bamboos from Purna Sanctuary, Gujarat.

CWLW, Gujarat while briefing the Committee informed that Bambusa arundinacea in Purna Sanctuary have flowered in a number of compartments covering an area of 5381.311 ha. This flowering cycle varies from 30-40 years. The dry Bamboo is combustible material and was a fire hazard in the area. The State Government has, therefore, proposed to remove dry and dead Bamboos from the Sanctuary. The bonafide requirement of the people in and around the Sanctuary would be met first from the harvested Bamboos and the remaining Bamboo was proposed to be sold in the market. The proceeds from this sale would be used for eco development schemes within and nearby Purna Sanctuary.

After detailed discussions in the matter, the Committee recommended the proposal of removal of flowered bamboos in question subject to strict adherence of the provisions of the Section 29 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 by the State Government.

3.2(30) : Survey and investigation for construction of Chambal development scheme (4 Hydropower Projects), Rajasthan.

The proposal is for carrying out survey and investigation for construction of four Hydro Power Project at Chambal river in Rajasthan. CWLW, Rajasthan had recommended the proposal with certain conditions. Shri M.K. Ranjitsinh, Member, expressed his concerns about large number of proposals coming on Chambal river for irrigation and hydro power etc.

It was observed that the Chambal river was one of the cleanest river in the country with rich biodiversity. Committee Members also felt that it was also important to find out the proposed site of dam and whether the construction of dam and impounding of water would affect the aquatic life in the river. Therefore, it was necessary to carry out detailed inspection.

The Committee unanimously decided that a team consisting of Director, WII, Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh; and a representative of the Ministry would carry out detailed inspection of the proposed site and submit report before the Standing Committee of NBWL in its next meeting for consideration.

ADDITIONAL AGENDA

1. Use of CAMPA funds

Dr. Asad Rehmani informed that huge money collected under CAMPA funds was lying idle. At the same time, there was urgent need of funds in a number of Protected Areas. Therefore, he suggested that a part of CAMPA funds should be used for wildlife conservation. While appreciating the concerns of Hon'ble Member, Member Secretary informed that a Bill for utilization of CAMPA funds has already been introduced in the Parliament. Therefore, at this stage it may not be possible to take any view on the issue at this stage.

Dr. Rehmani also raised the issue of diversion of forest land for upgradation of road network for construction of new roads by NHAI. He suggested that NHAI should incorporate policy changes in the road projects keeping in mind the wildlife concerns. Member Secretary apprised that NHAI to some extent was also having these concerns incorporated in their proposal. However, Forest Conservation Division would be requested to take up this matter with NHAI.

2. Diversion of 66.60 ha of forest land from Gangau Sanctuary for construction of new railway line between Satna and Khajuraho

CWLW, M.P. briefed the Committee about the project and informed that the proposed railway line passes for 9 kms through Gangau Sanctuary which is adjacent to Panna National Park. Gangau Sanctuary is also a part of the tiger reserve.

While discussing the proposal, Committee observed that tiger habitats were already shrinking in the country. Diversion of land from tiger reserve was not pragmatic. Therefore, it was not advisable especially when there could be a possibility of alternate routes with some extra expenditure. Further, laying of railway line in tiger habitat is a permanent menace causing all sorts of disturbances and accidental deaths of animals. Considering these facts, the Committee unanimously decided not to recommend this proposal.

3. Permission for upgrading existing transmission line (Maithan – Jamshedpur) passing through Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary

CCF(WL) from Jharkhand State briefed the members about the project. It was mentioned that there was already a existing transmission line passing through the Sanctuary and the Power Grid Corporation of India has proposed to upgrade the same from double circuit line to multi circuit line. It did not involve any additional diversion or felling of trees etc.

Considering these facts, Committee after deliberations, unanimously recommended the proposal.

4. Maintenance of already existing road (NH-67_ from Mettupalayam to Kakkanalla passing through Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary

CWLW, Tamilnadu informed that Highway was passing through Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary for about 15 kms. CWLW has recommended the proposal with the condition that the Agency would put up speed breakers at appropriate places and signages as per the suggestions of Wildlife Warden.

Since it was only maintenance of existing road without any upgradation or change in the width, Committee recommended the proposal subject to the compliance of conditions proposed by CWLW.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

Annexure-I**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS ATTENDING THE MEETING OF STANDING
COMMITTEE OF NBWL HELD ON 22nd May 2008**

1.	Shri S. Regupathy	Chairman
2.	Prof. Chander Kumar, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha)	Member
3.	Shri G.K. Prasad, ADG(FC), MoEF	Member
4.	Dr. Ranjitsinh	Member
5.	Dr. Asad Rehmani	Member
6.	Shri P.R. Sinha, Director, WII, Dehradun	Member
7.	Shri S. Chandola, CWLW, Uttarakhand	Member
8.	Shri B.K. Patnaik, CWLW, Orissa	Member
9.	Shri. M.B. Lal, ADG(WL), MoEF	Member-Secretary
10.	Shri Hari Krishna, Principal Secretary, Arunachal Pradesh	Special Invitee
11.	Ms Veena S. Rao, Secretary-DONER, GOI	Special Invitee
12.	Shri R.B. Lal, IGF(WL), MoEF	Invitee
13.	Shri Rajesh Gopal, Member Secretary, NTCA	Invitee
14.	Shri Anmol Kumar, DIG(WL), MoEF	Invitee
15.	Shri S.K. Sharma, CCF, Jharkhand	Invitee
16.	Shri D.V. Negi, CWLW, Arunachal Pradesh	Invitee
17.	Shri Rajan Mathur, CWLW, Rajasthan	Invitee
18.	Shri R. Sundararaju, Addl. PCCF, Tamil Nadu	Invitee
19.	Dr. P.B. Gangopadhyay, CWLW, Madhya Pradesh	Invitee
20.	Shri A.K. Srivastava, CWLW, J&K	Invitee
21.	Shri V.B. Sawarkar	Invitee