



Government of India
Ministry of Environment and Forests
(Wildlife Division)

Paryavaran Bhawan
CGO Complex, Lodhi Road
New Delhi-110003

F. No. 6-10/2011 WL

Dated: 15th March 2011

Sub: Guidance document for taking up non-forestry activities in wildlife habitats

The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and orders of Hon'ble Supreme Court makes it mandatory for following certain procedures for taking up any non-forestry activity in wildlife habitats. However, many firms/individuals approach the Ministry seeking the details of procedures to be adopted. In order to facilitate and guide the people on the various steps that need to be followed for taking up non forestry activities in wildlife habitats, a guidance document has been prepared which is enclosed for ready reference and necessary action.


(Prakriti Srivastava)

Deputy Inspector General (WL)
Telefax: 011-24360704
E.mail: digwl-mef@nic.in

Encl: As above

Distribution:

1. The Secretary, all Ministries/Departments of Government of India, New Delhi
2. The Chief Secretary, all States/Union Territories
3. The Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests, all States/Union Territories
4. The Chief Wildlife Warden, all States/Union Territories.

Copy to:

1. PS to Hon'ble MEF
2. PPS to Secretary (E&F), MoEF
3. PPS to DGF & SS, MoEF
4. PPS to Addl. DGF(WL)
5. PPS to Addl. DGF(FC)
6. PS to Advisor, LA Division, MoEF
7. The NIC Cell- with a request to kindly upload the same on the official website of the Ministry.

GUIDELINES FOR TAKING NON-FORESTRY ACTIVITIES IN WILDLIFE HABITATS

1. POLICY AND APPROACH:

1.1 General Policy

National Parks, Sanctuaries and Conservation Reserves are extremely important for conservation of biodiversity, and for ensuring the survival of floral and faunal components of biodiversity, not only for the present but also for future. However, the rising human population and their growing demands for socio economic development have placed tremendous stress on such areas both directly and indirectly. Keeping in view the fact that a balance has to be struck between development and conservation, any activity involving use or diversion of protected areas may be considered only under **most exceptional** circumstances. Additionally, such activities to be taken up in the wildlife habitats need to be governed by the orders of Hon'ble Supreme Court as well as the statutory requirements as provided in the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

1.2 Activities inside Wildlife Sanctuaries:

The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 provides that the recommendation of the **State Board for Wildlife** (*a Board chaired by the State Chief Minister*) is essential for any kind of destruction/damage/removal of any wildlife or for diverting the habitat of any wild animal, including removal of forest produce or diverting / stopping / enhancing the flow of water into or outside the Sanctuary.

Further, in view of the directions of Hon'ble Supreme Court in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 337/1995, all such proposals also require the recommendation of the **Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife** (*a Committee chaired by the Minister in charge of the Ministry of Environment and Forests*).

1.3 Activities inside National Parks:

The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 provides that the recommendation of the **National Board for Wildlife** (*a Board chaired by the Prime Minister*) is essential for any kind of destruction/damage/removal of any wildlife or for diverting the habitat of any wild animal, including removal of forest produce or diverting / stopping / enhancing the flow of water into or outside the National Park.

However, as the **Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife** has been delegated the powers of the National Board for Wildlife, such cases are to be referred to the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife for consideration and recommendation.

1.4 Activities inside Conservation Reserves:

The Ministry of Law and Justice has opined that activities to be taken up inside a Conservation Reserve can also be dealt with the Standing Committee of NBWL. Therefore, the procedure indicated under para 2 below needs to be followed for planning and executing any activity inside Conservation Reserve also.

1.4 Activities within 10 Kms from boundaries of National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries:

In pursuance to the order of Hon'ble Supreme Court in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 460/2004, the Ministry of Environment and Forests has issued an Office Memorandum on 2nd December 2009 (**Annexure-1**), indicating that Environmental Clearances for all such projects that fall within 10 Kms boundary of the National Parks and Sanctuaries will be subject to recommendation of the Standing Committee of NBWL.

2. PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED FOR ACTIVITIES INSIDE NATIONAL PARKS, WILDLIFE SANCTUARIES AND CONSERVATION RESERVES:

- 2.1** The User Agency/Project Proponent is required to submit the proposal in the prescribed proforma that has been prescribed by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, and is available on the website of the Ministry (<http://envfor.nic.in>) (**Annexure-2**).
- 2.2** The prescribed proforma has **five** parts and each part is required to be filled in by the User Agency; concerned Divisional Forest Officer/Park Manager; Concerned Chief Conservator of Forests; Concerned Chief Wildlife Warden and the Forest Secretary.

- 2.3 The proforma also seeks information in detail on the biodiversity of the area in question; maps of the area, other activities already in place; possible impacts of the proposal, etc.
- 2.4 The User agency is required to submit Part-I and Part-II of the proforma duly filled in to the concerned Forest Officer, who in turn, forwards the same to the Chief Wildlife Warden through the Chief Conservator of Forest.
- 2.5 The Chief Wildlife Warden, after giving his specific comments on the proposal, forwards the same to the Government of India, through the Forest Secretary **after obtaining the recommendation of the State Board for Wildlife on the proposal.**
- 2.6 The proposal so received from the State Government is placed before the Standing Committee of NBWL, chaired by Minister of State (I/C) Environment and Forests. The meeting of the Standing Committee is convened once in 2-3 months.
- 2.7 In cases where the area proposed for diversion is large and/or the impact of the project on wildlife is considered to be serious, site inspections are conducted by the members of the Committee on the instructions of the Standing Committee of NBWL.
- 2.8 The site inspection reports are generally considered in the next meeting of the Standing Committee to enable the Committee to make its recommendation.
- 2.9 After the Standing Committee of NBWL recommends the proposal, the User Agency/State Government is required to approach Hon'ble Supreme Court for final clearance in view of the Court orders dated 13.11.2000 .
- [**Note:** *Hon'ble Supreme Court vide their order dated 13.11.2000 had directed that there shall be no dereservation/denotification of National Parks and Sanctuaries without approval of the Supreme Court. Therefore, to take up any such activity, a clearance from Hon'ble Court is mandatory.*]
- 2.10 In case of Border Roads, proposals of the Ministry of Defence, a simplified proforma for simultaneous clearance under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and wildlife clearance is being adopted under 'A Single Window System'.

3. PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED FOR ACTIVITIES WITHIN 10 KMS FROM BOUNDARIES OF NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE SANCTUARIES:

- 3.1 In case the project site is located within the eco-sensitive zone or 10 Kms in absence of delineation of such a zone from the boundaries of National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries or is an Elephant Reserve/Tiger Reserve and/or important corridors of wildlife movement, the User agency/Project Proponent should seek prior clearance from the Standing Committee of NBWL before seeking Environmental Clearance and the procedure as mentioned under paragraphs 2.1 to 2.8 above are required to be followed in such cases also.

[Note: The Standing Committee of NBWL has been insisting on the recommendation of the State Board for Wildlife for all proposals, including those falling within 10 Kms from the boundary of National Parks and Sanctuary].

4. PROPOSALS FOR SURVEY WORK TO BE CARRIED OUT INSIDE NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE SANCTUARIES:

In case any kind of survey work and/or Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) studies, that is a prelude to future diversion of land, are to be taken up in areas involving a wildlife habitat, then also the entire procedure, as prescribed in paragraph 2 above would need to be followed.
