

Minutes of Meeting of 9th Standing Committee of State Board for Wildlife held under the chairmanship of Shri Bali Bhagat, Hon'ble Minister for Social Welfare, Forests, Environment & Wildlife on 29th September, 2015 in his office chamber at Civil Secretariat, Srinagar

The 9th meeting of the Standing Committee of State Board for Wildlife was held under the Chairmanship of Shri Bali Bhagat, Hon'ble Minister for Forests, Wildlife, Ecology and Environment on 29.09.2015 in his office chambers in his office chamber at Civil Secretariat, Srinagar, list of participants who attended the meeting is annexed.

The meeting started with the brief background of the agenda items by the Member Secretary and it was followed by discussion on these items.

Agenda No. 1: Action taken on minutes of 8th meeting of Standing Committee of State Board for Wildlife

A. Proposal for issuance of "No Objection" for undertaking the Survey & Investigation activities for construction of Bursar Hydroelectric Project in Kishtwar High Altitude National Park (KHANP)

Dr. M. K. Ranjitsinh expressed his concern that the proposed project area was falling within the National Park prior to the issuance of revised notification of Kishtwar High Altitude National Park vide SRO 212 dated 06.07.2015 and wanted clarification that revised notification was not done with the intention to bring the proposed construction of Bursar Hydroelectric Project outside the National Park.

However, Principal Secretary, Forest Department and Chief Wildlife Warden clarified the point that the revised notification had been done in order to comply with the National Board for Wildlife / Hon'ble Supreme Court observations on redefining the core area of the Kishtwar High Altitude National Park while considering the wildlife clearance of Pakal Dul Hydroelectric Power Project. In fact in the revised notification the area of Kishtwar High Altitude National Park has increased from 1453.98 sq km to 2191.50 sq km substantially.

B. Permission for laying of 24" dia Natural Gas Pipeline from Bhatinda (Punjab) to Jammu (J&K) passing within vicinity of Jasrota Wildlife Sanctuary

The Chief Wildlife Warden informed that proposal for laying of 24" dia Natural Gas Pipeline from Bhatinda (Punjab) to Jammu (J&K) passing within vicinity of Jasrota Wildlife Sanctuary through Eco Sensitive Zone shall be sent to the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India as and when received.

Meanwhile, the proposal on Eco Sensitive Zone of Jasrota Wildlife Sanctuary is being expedited to the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India. The said pipeline does not fall within the proposed Eco Sensitive Zone.

C. Construction of standalone / Ring Road Bypass around Srinagar city under NHDP Phase VII – permission for taking up Non Forestry Activities in Hokersar Wetland Reserve

The Chief Wildlife Warden informed that the area does not fall under the Wildlife Protected Area Network. The Principal Secretary, Forest Department stressed that the case be expedited at earliest. The Member Secretary assured that the project proposal for construction of standalone / Ring Road Bypass around Srinagar city under NHDP Phase VII – permission for taking up Non Forestry Activities in Hokersar Wetland Reserve will be submitted within 15 days. Set of proposals for wildlife clearance with respect to filling up of format part I, II and III, Shri S. D. Swatantra, IFS (Retd.) expressed that it should be ensured that these projects should not choke inland drains supplying water to wetlands of Hokersar Kashmir.

D. Construction of standalone / Ring Road Bypass around Jammu City of Jammu & Kashmir under NHDP Phase 4th – permission for taking up Non Forestry Activities in Kukrian Conservation Reserve

The Chief Wildlife Warden informed that the area does not fall under the Wildlife Protected Area Network. The Principal Secretary, Forest Department stressed that the case be expedited at earliest. The member secretary assured that the project proposal for construction of standalone / Ring Road Bypass around

Jammu City of Jammu & Kashmir under NHDP Phase 4th – permission for taking up Non Forestry Activities in the vicinity of Kukrian Conservation Reserve will be submitted within 15 days. Set of proposals for wildlife clearance with respect to filling up of format part I, II and III, Shri Swatantra, IFS (Retd) expressed that it should be ensured that these projects should not choke inland drains supplying water to wetlands of Kukrian Jammu.

Agenda No. 2: Proposal for Wildlife Clearance for construction of 400 kV / DC Samba – Amargarh Transmission Line of NRSS-XXIX Transmission Limited.

The Chief Wildlife Warden briefed about the project which was further elaborated by the Director NRSS-XXIX Transmission Limited through a power point presentation. The issue was discussed threadbare in the meeting. Dr. Ranjitsinh expressed that the user agency should bring forth in a transparent manner all the impacts on wildlife and habitat of the area due to this project. Dr. Ranjitsinh informed the members and Hon'ble Minister for Forest, Environment and Wildlife that the area of Hirpora Wildlife Sanctuary is an important habitat of the Pir Panjal Markhor which is already under severe biotic pressure due to grazing by Nomads and construction of the Mughal Road. He further informed that during the critical period when snow starts melting, the valley bottom area over which the proposed transmission line will go, is the tract which will melt first and provide forage to the Markhor in early spring, which is when they need food most and this transmission line will thus deplete the Markhor habitat and forage and deny the opportunity of food to the Markhor and other herbivores. He further suggested that the area between Tatakutti Wildlife Sanctuary and Hirpora Wildlife Sanctuary consisting of a small patch of forest and which has been left unnotified needs to be declared as a Protected Area. Noorpur, Rutachamba etc. can be included under the notified protected area for the corridor of the Markhor and other wild animals between Poonch and Kashmir region (Northern and Southern aspects of Pirpanjal).

Dr. Ranjitsinh also suggested that the proposal for establishment of breeding centers for vultures and pheasants shall not be a practical option as the similar conservation breeding centre for pheasants in Himachal Pradesh has not yielded any fruitful results.

Dr. Ranjitsinh also suggested that though the Tatakutti Sanctuary had been notified in 2009, it's control had not been transferred to the Wildlife Department,

which members agreed must be done urgently now Dr. Ranjitsinh also said that Tatakutti must get adequate protection staff immediately.


However, the Principal Secretary, Forest Department has advised that livelihood of the people and Nomads of the area is to be taken care of. The Principal Secretary, Forest Department suggested that the user agency should ensure that there is minimum possible impact on the area and the habitat due to project activities.

Shri S. D. Swatantra, IFS (Retd.) suggested that a research project be established and manpower for research purpose be engaged to conduct research on Markhor and other important species in Hirpora Wildlife Sanctuary and Tatakutti Wildlife Sanctuary.

The Standing Committee of State Board for Wildlife also recommended that 5% of the Project Cost and NPV to be received from the user agency shall be utilized for Markhor Recovery Programme for the entire Markhor habitat including Tatakutti, Khari Rakh, Hirpora and Kazinag National Park etc. for which detailed project should be prepared by the Wildlife Protection Department and put up before the Standing Committee of the State Board for Wildlife.

The Standing Committee of State Board for Wildlife recommended the proposal to be placed before the National Board for Wildlife with above change in the recommendations of the Chief Wildlife Warden J&K.

The meeting concluded with the note of thanks to the Chair.


Member Secretary
Standing Committee
State Board for Wildlife

No: WLP/Tech/9/St.Com/2015/470-83

Date: 01.10.2015

Copy for information and necessary action to the:

- ✓ 1. Shri Vibodh Gupta, Hon'ble MLC.
2. Principal Secretary, Forest Department J&K
3. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests J&K
4. Commissioner / Secretary, Revenue Department J&K
5. Commissioner / Secretary, Tourism Department J&K
6. Chief Wildlife Warden J&K
7. Director, Forest Protection Force J&K

8. Director General of Police, J&K Srinagar
9. Dr. M. K. Ranjitsinh, Chairman, Wildlife Trust of India, New Delhi
10. Shri S. D. Swatantra, IFS, Retired PCCF
11. Shri Junaid Nazir Shah, Chairman, Wildlife Conservation Society
12. Shri Sheikh Manzoor Ahmad, Advocate, J&K High Court
13. OSD to Hon'ble Forest Minister.
14. Record file.

Annexure

List of Participants

1. Shri Rakesh K. Gupta, IAS, Principal Secretary to Govt., Forest Department
2. Shri A. K. Singh, IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests J&K
3. Shri Deepak Khanna, IFS, Chief Wildlife Warden J&K
4. Shri Suresh Kumar Gupta, IFS, Director, Forest Protection Force J&K
5. Shri Ashwani K. Gupta, IFS, Chief Conservator of Forests, Ecotourism
6. Dr. M. K. Ranjitsinh, Chairman, Wildlife Trust of India, New Delhi
7. Shri S. D. Swatantra, IFS, Retired PCCF
8. Shri Chatur Bhuja Behra, IFS, Regional Wildlife Warden, Kashmir
9. Dr. Shalindra R. Mishra, IPS
10. Shri Ghulam Rasool, KAS, Under Secretary to Govt., Revenue Department
11. Shri Manzoor Ahmad, Under Secretary to Govt., Revenue Department
12. Shri S. C. Ghosal,
13. Shri Sheikh Manzoor, Advocate, J&K High Court
14. Shri Tahir Shawl, Wildlife Warden, Headquarters
15. Shri Lal Chand, Assistant Director Information Department
16. Shri Nishant Gupta
17. Dr. J. K. Thakur
18. Dr. Rahul Srivastava