

**Ministry of Environment and Forests
Wildlife Division**

Minutes of the 26th Meeting of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife held on 31st October 2012 in Paryavaran Bhawan, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi.

The 26th Meeting of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) was held on 31st October 2012 in the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), New Delhi with Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Environment and Forests in chair. The list of participants is at **Annexure-1**.

Additional Director General of Forests (WL) and Member-Secretary, Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife welcomed the Hon'ble Chairperson, the members, Chief Wildlife Wardens of the States, and all other delegates and officials present in the meeting.

At the outset, the non official members felicitated and expressed their appreciation and gratitude to the Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Environment and Forests for having safeguarded the interests of environment, forests and wildlife in taking up the matter with Hon'ble Prime Minister in connection with the proposal for establishment of a National Investment Board (NIB). The members also expressed their deep appreciation to the spectacular success in hosting the prestigious 11th Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) COP-11 in Hyderabad. The members mentioned that the success of the COP-11 was a great and significant achievement, bringing honour and credit to our country, due to the able leadership of Hon'ble Minister and her deep commitment towards conservation of biodiversity.

Hon'ble Chairperson thanked the non official members for their felicitations and expressed that it was a collective effort of the entire team of officials, NGO's and others who had taken great efforts for the successful conduct of the COP-11 and pursued negotiations relentlessly on the issue of resource mobilization, which resulted in agreement on doubling of funding for biodiversity conservation. The Chairperson then requested the Member Secretary to take up the agenda items for discussion.

Agenda No. 1: Confirmation of the minutes of the 25th Meeting of Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife held on 13th June 2012.

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that the draft minutes of the 25th Meeting of Standing Committee of NBWL, held on 13.06.2012 were circulated to the members on 20th June 2012 for their comments within two weeks as decided in the 24th Meeting of the Standing Committee. The comments thus received on the draft minutes, within the stipulated time period, were incorporated appropriately in the revised version of the minutes. The final approved minutes were circulated to the members on 12th July 2012.

Thereafter, comments were received from Dr M.K. Ranjitsinh, Ms. Prerna Bindra, Shri Kishor Rithe and Dr M.D. Madhusudan. The comments received have been uploaded on the website of the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

Committee Member, Ms. Prerna Bindra, requested that the comments received from the members on the minutes of the last meeting may be incorporated in the minutes and reissued, and that the comments received from the members may kindly be incorporated in the main document of the Minutes of the meeting,. She also requested that the site inspection reports be also uploaded on the website of the Ministry.

Hon'ble Chairperson agreed to the suggestion of Ms. Prerna Bindra and assured that henceforth, the comments received from the members agreed for incorporating in the minutes at the confirmation stage would be incorporated as approved, and in case of any doubt, may be placed, as a separate paragraph under the approved minutes of the respective agenda items.

This was agreed to by all the members. With the above remarks, the minutes of the 25th Meeting of Standing Committee of NBWL were confirmed.

Agenda No. 2: Action Taken Report on the decisions taken during the 23rd and 24th Meetings of the Standing Committee of NBWL

The Member Secretary presented the actions taken with respect to the decisions of the 25th Meetings of the Standing Committee of NBWL. The deliberations and decisions on various agenda items are appended below:

Item No. 2 {2[3.1]}: Wildlife Conservation Issues

(a) Framing ecologically sound policy for dealing with linear intrusions.

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that in its 22nd Meeting, the Committee had assigned the task of preparation of draft guidelines on linear intrusions in Protected Areas to Dr Shankar Raman, Member, and had also decided to take a view in the matter once the draft guidelines were ready. Dr Shankar Raman had accordingly prepared the draft and the draft guidance document along with a background note was uploaded on the MoEF website for comments of all stakeholders.

Dr Yashveer Bhatnagar, representing NCF, Mysore, informed the Committee that Dr Shankar Raman had already initiated the task of collating the comments received along with the related literature on this issue and would come up with the document very soon.

Shri Kishor Rithe suggested that he had raised the issues of linear projects like electric transmission lines, roads, highways, railway lines and canal network of irrigation projects through wildlife areas in earlier SC-NBWL and NBWL meetings. However the draft guidelines prepared by NCF has only covered roads and powerlines. Hence the issues raised by him regarding linear intrusions, especially those related to the railway lines, and canal network of irrigation projects could be incorporated in the policy document. As per the earlier decision, now the committee should be formed to discuss and to finalize the document.

(b) Measures to check damage to environment on account of extraction of minerals.

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that in the 5th Meeting of the National Board for Wildlife held on 18th March 2010, it was suggested that mitigatory measures were to be taken to check damage to environment on account of mining. The matter was considered by the Standing Committee in its 20th Meeting held on 13th October 2010 and in the 22nd Meeting held on 25th April 2011, wherein they were deferred. However, the Committee had decided to defer the agenda.

The Chairperson informed the Committee that environmental clearance is mandatory for all mining proposals above 5 ha and for permission of mining for less [than than] than 5ha, state level authorities are responsible. She added that several State Governments had expressed concern regarding the inclusion of minor minerals including soil also in mining for mandatory environmental clearance. She also added that it was for the Ministry of Mines to look into this issue and take a view. She indicated that in case the State Governments had any grievances on this, they could approach Hon'ble Supreme Court for redressal.

Ms. Purna Bindra was of the opinion that there was a need to do similar work on this as has been done on the draft guidelines for linear intrusions, and stressed the need for a study of impact of mining on wildlife, particularly in the vicinity of PAs and wildlife corridors, and framing ecologically sensitive policy guidelines/guidance document for mining, particularly in context of wildlife areas.

Shri Kishor Rithe opined that the State Governments break up large projects into smaller ones that are below 5 ha. so as to evade the clearance from the MoEF. This matter needs a thorough scrutiny and that strict parameters for the scrutiny should be emphasized. Ms Purna Bindra said that there was a similar case with hydro-power projects in the Western Ghats, which were broken up into smaller projects to evade clearance as no clearance is required from the MoEF for less than 5 hectares, and also under EPA if the installed capacity is less than 25 MW.

Dr A.J.T. Johnsingh suggested of nomination of officials for each state for monitoring of clearances especially with respect to mining related cases.

Dr M.K. Ranjitsinh suggested that the State Governments should come up with a prospective plan for mining activities for 5-10 years so that a holistic view could be taken.

After discussions, the Chairperson suggested that this matter would be required to be discussed in detail at appropriate time.

Item 2[4(B) (12)] : Proposal for denotification of land from Radhanagari Sanctuary for Sarvade minor irrigation project, Maharashtra.

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that during the last meeting, after discussions, it was decided to forward the original recommendations made by Dr Asad Rahmani without any changes, to the State Government for its concurrence, and to take a final view after receipt of the opinion of the State Government on this proposal. The Member Secretary added that the response from the State Government on this was still awaited.

The Chief Wildlife Warden, Maharashtra, informed the committee that the recommendations of Dr Asad Rahmani have been forwarded to the State Irrigation Department for their views and the response was still awaited. He added that the opinion of

the State Government would be communicated as and when the response from the Irrigation Department is received.

The Committee therefore, decided to defer this agenda till the response from the State Government is received.

Item 2[4(2)]: Proposal seeking permission for control of fencing and patrol road along the Indo-Bangladesh Border in Dampa Tiger Reserve, Mizoram.

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that the Border Security Force had, in compliance of the decision of the Standing Committee of NBWL, submitted a revised proposal with a revised requirement of land as 1520 ha. Which included the area to be separated after the installation of the fence. The matter was considered in the last Meeting of the Standing Committee of NBWL, wherein it was decided that the recommendations of the State Board for Wildlife be obtained first. The Member Secretary added that the State Government of Mizoram had informed that the proposal was placed before the State Board for Wildlife and was not agreed to.

The DIG (Operations), BSF, made a presentation on the strategic need of fencing the border, which is part of the larger fencing along the border. He also suggested that while fencing the area, they could leave the required corridors for the movement of wildlife across and that a Memorandum of Understanding could also be signed by the BSF with the wildlife wing of the State Government for providing specific assistance to the state for anti-poaching/security and other wildlife protection related activities.

Dr Ranjitsinh reminded about the condition no. (iii) of the site inspection report, i.e., *“The patrol road and the border outposts should be on the Bangladesh side of the three line fencing to ensure that the habitat of Dampa Tiger Reserve inside the fencing remains sacrosanct and free of disturbance.”* and emphasized the need of adherence to it. The DIG (Operations), BSF informed that as a procedural requirement, patrol road and border outposts can not be located outside the fence and that it was also not possible to lay the fence at less than 150 yards distance from the international boundary. Dr M K Ranjitsinh added that the State of Mizoram had witnessed lot of troubles in the past and are now recuperating from the internal insurgency of the past. He said that the people of Mizoram were very much attached as well as were sensitive to their National Parks, viz, Phangpui National Park, Murlen National Park and Dampa Tiger Reserve. Therefore, the National Park cannot be allowed to be used by BSF

and its separation from patrolling track is essential. He suggested that in view of the laid down position of having the BOPs and patrolling track on the inner side of the boundary fence, BSF could consider taking up another fence inside bordering the patrolling track so that the National Park is not approachable to the patrol personnel routinely and the patrol road and BOPs are located outside the inner fence.

Dr A.J.T. Johnsingh supported the proposal of Dr M K Ranjitsinh.

After discussions, the chairperson desired that she would require some more time to understand the issue with more clarity and therefore, the proposal may be deferred.

The committee agreed to defer this proposal.

Item 2[4.2(2)]: Proposal for development of 8 lane access controlled expressway on right bank of Upper Ganga Canal (UGC) from Sanauta Bridge (Bulandshahar) to near Purkazi (Dist. Muzaffarnagar) near Uttar Pradesh-Uttarakhand border.

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that during the 23rd Meeting it was decided that the report of the Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) be obtained on the proposal, and thereafter the matter would be considered by the Standing Committee of NBWL. He also informed that the report of the FAC was awaited.

The IGF(FC) informed the committee that the matter was referred to the Regional CCF, Lucknow who had carried out a site inspection and had also submitted his report to the Ministry. The report of the Regional CCF, Lucknow was also placed for consideration by the FAC. He added that the FAC had requested for nomination of one expert for suggesting mitigatory measures for conservation of swamp deer.

Dr Asad Rahmani suggested the name of Dr Afifullah Khan of Aligarh Muslim University, for expert advice to the FAC for suggesting mitigatory measures. IGF(FC) agreed to propose this in the FAC.

The Committee decided to defer this agenda till the report of FAC was received.

Item 4.1 (2): Diversion of 79.474 ha of forest land in Kutch Desert Wildlife Sanctuary and Wild Ass Sanctuary for construction of Gaduli to Hajipur-Odma-Khavda-Kunariya-Dholavira-Maovana-Gadakbet-Santalpur road.

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that in the last meeting of the Standing Committee of NBWL, the Committee had decided that a detailed presentation be made by the Border Security Force on the proposal.

The IG (BSF), Gujarat made a detailed presentation before the Committee. Apart from highlighting the strategic importance of the proposed road, the IG also informed that a large area of the Rann of Kutch was marshy, slushy, salty and inaccessible and that there were only two roads available for approaching the forward post. As there was no parallel road for reinforcement and replenishment especially for evacuation of critically injured and sick persons, great difficulty was faced by BSF in logistic arrangements. He also added that the proposed road would improve the capability of the border security and that the BSF was ready for signing an MOU with the Forest Department, Gujarat for protection of flamingoes, wild ass and other wildlife of the area.

The Secretary (Home), Government of Gujarat highlighted the importance of the road in terms of internal security. He said that there have been reports of illicit activities in the border areas and that internal security was of great concern. He added that the border was very much porous and there was a requirement to provide better protection in those areas. He supported the resolve of BSF to sign MOU with the Forest Department, Gujarat for protection of wildlife of the area.

Dr Ranjitsinh explained the recommendations of the inspection team that the existing parallel road from Nanabhitara to Tingribet can be permitted to be extended up to Gaduli. Rest of the proposed road was passing through the best habitats of the Lesser Flamingoes and therefore, can not be permitted further eastwards. A diversion from Gaduli towards south for circumventing the nesting area to further join back the existing road at the eastern side of the nesting area could be possible. He added that the proposed area east of Gaduli, which is part of the sanctuary, is filled with more than 18 feet of silt and construction of culverts/bridges/road would be very difficult as there was a danger that the entire structure might sink. Further, the Sanctuary region is full of fossil forms, several important life forms, archaeological remains and unique hydrology, which can be altered by the disturbances from

the proposed road. In the circumstances, BSF was requested to consider the recommendations of the site inspection report.

Ms. Prerna Bindra drew attention to the unique and rare wildlife of the region, particularly the Flamingo City and stressed that the road will devastate and lead to the end of the only breeding ground for the two species of flamingoes found in India. The entire population of flamingoes in the Indian subcontinent—is dependent on this sanctuary, for nesting. A power point presentation on the biodiversity richness of the Kutch region was also made by Ms. Prerna Bindra, highlighting the need for providing adequate protection to the biodiversity in the Kutch region.

All non-officials members of the SC, NBWL were unanimous in their opinion against recommending the proposed road.

Dr. Divyabhanusinh Chavda supported Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh's stand and strongly emphasized that if the road is allowed to be built, it would mean the end of the breeding grounds of the flamingoes, the only one in India; it would cut through Tangri Bet the only refuge of the relict population of wild asses in the Great Rann of Kutch and; it would impact and possibly destroy Shravan Kavadia, the only example of inland mangroves reported. Also it may damage the archeological site of Dholaveera and the fossil park at Khadir Bet.

Under the circumstances he strongly stated that the road should not be allowed to be built.

After discussion, the committee decided to defer the matter for a detailed discussion.

Item 5.2 to 5.14:

5.2. Construction and Upgradation of 2.5 km. road from Khatola to Kisli, M.P.

5.3. Construction and Upgradation of 2.6 km Road from 14 km off T-2 to Mukki, M.P.

5.4. Construction and Upgradation of 5.13 km Road from Rajomal to Manoharpur, M.P.

5.5. Construction of Stop dam cum Causeway on Rehti- Tendukheda Road at Km 82/2, M.P.

5.6. Construction and Upgradation of 6 km Tendukheda- Taradehi- Sarra to Kudpura Approach Road, M.P.

5.7. Approach road from Somkheda to Hinouti – Ramgarh, M.P.

5.8. Construction and Upgradation of 4.20 km of Bamhori to Kotkheda Road, M.P.

5.9. Construction of MDR to Mokla Road, M.P.

5.10. Construction of 14.20 km road for NH-12, 7 km. to Malkuhi Jhilpani Dhana, M.P.

5.11. Construction of 4.73 km Somkheda-Suhela Approach Road, M.P.

5.12. Upgradation of 8.55 km road from Bineka to Borpani, M.P.

5.13. Widening of State Highway 59 from Indore to Gujrat Border, M.P.

5.14. Upgradation of Bhiapur to Amchhekala Dam Road, M.P.

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that as per the decision of the last meeting of the Standing Committee of NBWL, it was decided to carry out a site inspection by Ms. Perna Bindra, Dr Madhusudan, NCF, Mysore, and one representative from the National Tiger Conservation Authority to enable it to take a view in the matter. He added that the site inspection report was awaited.

Dr Divyabhanusinh Chavda informed that there were earlier decisions of the Standing Committee of NBWL that for any road falling within National Parks/Sanctuaries, no upgradation of roads should be allowed. Accordingly, any road falling within a Sanctuary or National Park can be allowed to be brought to the condition prevailing prior to the repair only. He further added that the Protected Area network is presently only about 4 % of the country's geographic area and the road projects could very well be diverted outside this Protected Area network in favour of conservation.

The Addl. Chief Secretary and Resident Commissioner, Madhya Pradesh, mentioned that as the proposals are for upgradation of very old existing roads, and if only sanctuary areas are left without upgrading, there would be problems in case where four lane roads become two lanes suddenly at the entry of a Protected Area and severe traffic congestion could in fact have an adverse impact on the Sanctuary. She requested that the Committee should consider each proposal on a case to case basis and requested for consideration with adequate conditions for mitigation of any problem related to wildlife.

Ms. Perna Bindra while agreeing to Dr Divyabhanusinh's point, added that PA's were already stressed and fragmented by roads, canals, railwaylines, and other development activities, therefore roads and highways within these should be kept in the best possible condition in their present form, and not be widened or expanded. As regards the the roads in discussion, she said that the information received for the project proposals under consideration was incomplete and the Standing Committee had desired to information regarding the status of each of these roads, and the State's proposal for the same.. In response

to Addl. Chief Secretary and Resident Commissioner, she said that in several cases, the conditions stipulated while recommending the road projects to NHAI etc are not complied with. and that Hon'ble Minister had also written to the concerned authorities in this regard for adhering to the conditions stipulated by the regulatory bodies like NBWL and FAC. She also pointed out that use of underpasses in western countries were not comparable as wildlife in India included larger animals like tigers, elephants and this has to be factored in mitigation measures.

Shri Kishor Rithe mentioned that he had made certain suggestions to maintain the existing roads in PA while submitting the site inspection report earlier for 12 roads inside Bagdara Wildlife Sanctuary, Madhya Pradesh and those "maintenance prescriptions" should be followed while dealing with the proposals of road projects in PAs.

Dr Divyabhanusinh Chavda mentioned that there was already a decision of NBWL pertaining to roads and no proposals for roads should be considered by the Standing Committee outside that.

It was agreed that the previous recommendation of the Standing Committee of NBWL, will be analysed and matter will be brought for discussion in the next meeting.

Item 4.1 (3): proposal for installation of coastal surveillance RADAR and power supply source in Narcondam Island Sanctuary, Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that in the last Meeting of the Standing Committee of NBWL, after discussions, the Chairperson had decided that a view would be taken on this proposal by her separately, taking note of the views expressed by non-official members and the Commander, Coast Guards. He added that the Ministry had issued an O.M. on 31st August 2012 intimating that the said proposal can not be recommended.

The non official members expressed their appreciation and gratitude to the chairperson for taking the decision.

Item 4.1 (12): Proposal for rehabilitation and upgradation of NH-69 to 'lane configuration' in Obaidullahganj to Betul Section passing through Ratapani Sanctuary, Madhya Pradesh

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that the matter was considered in the last meeting of the Standing Committee of NBWL and that after discussions, the Committee decided that the site inspection report be forwarded to the Member Secretary, NTCA for his views. He added that the comments of NTCA had been sought on the proposal and were awaited.

The Member Secretary, NTCA informed the Committee that site inspection had been completed and the proposal is to be placed before the technical committee of NTCA.

In view of this, the Standing Committee of NBWL, therefore, decided to defer the matter.

Item 4.2(1): Proposal for diversion of 477.03 ha of forest land in Kondapuram RF of Paloncha Division for Kondapuram underground coal mine by Singareni Collieries Company Limited, Andhra Pradesh.

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that in the last Meeting, the Committee had requested the NTCA and WII to expedite the site inspection and submission of the report for consideration of the Committee. He added that the site inspection report was awaited.

The Member Secretary, NTCA informed the Committee that site inspection had been completed and the proposal is to be placed before the technical committee of NTCA.

In view of this, the Standing Committee of NBWL, therefore, decided to defer the matter.

Action Taken Report on the decisions of the Standing Committee of NBWL taken in its 24th Meeting held on 13.12.2011

Item 2.1 (1 and 2): Framing of Rules for the functioning of the Standing Committee of NBWL and Mechanism to ensure implementation of conditions stipulated by the Standing Committee while approving proposals.

The member Secretary informed that three meetings of the sub-committee constituted for the purpose had been convened on 22nd August 2012, 27th September 2012 and 26th October 2012. This was also discussed in the 6th Meeting of the National Board for Wildlife held on 5th September 2012.

Dr M.K. Ranjitsinh informed the Committee that the sub-committee was making good progress in finalization of the rules/guidelines and that the draft is likely to be finalized in the next meeting of the sub-committee. He added that thereafter, the report would be placed before the Standing Committee for further deliberations.

In view of this, the Standing Committee decided to defer the matter.

Item 2.1 (3): Central funding to be restricted to Protected Areas directly under the Wildlife Wing and managed by trained officers

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that in the last meeting the Committee had requested the Director, Wildlife Institute of India to inform the committee about the number of trainees deputed by each State/UT in the next professional course commencing in September 2012. He also informed that the requisite information had been received from WII, as per which, all the 20 slots of trainees for the year 2012-13 were full.

The Secretary (E&F) desired to know whether the State Forest Service officers were also being trained in the WII Wildlife Training programme.

The Chief Wildlife Warden, Andhra Pradesh, informed that in his State, the State Forest Officers were not being able to be deputed for 10 month training programme since the State Rules only permits for availing study leave and not on duty training provision for the SFS officers.

The Chief Wild Life Warden, Gujarat mentioned that although the provision as in Andhra Pradesh was not in practice in Gujarat, but due to severe shortage of staff at the level of ACF's, and Rangers, the staff were not being sent for training.

The Secretary (E&F) mentioned that the State Governments should take due care to ensure that the middle level officers are also benefitted by the 10 month training programme being conducted by WII. He also mentioned that he would write to the Chief Secretary, Andhra Pradesh for making amendments in the respective rules for enabling the SFS officers to attend the 10 month training programme as part of their duty.

The above suggestion was agreed to by the Committee unanimously.

Item 2.1 (5): Implementation Protocol on Critical Wildlife Habitats to be approved by the Standing Committee.

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that the draft protocol was circulated to the Members, as agreed in the last meeting.

Shri Kishor Rithe mentioned that he was not in agreement with the present 'implementation protocol'. He added that the earlier guidelines of 7th February 2011 were much more practical and effective for wildlife conservation. He emphasized the need to ensure no encroachment on wildlife rights while settling individual and community forest rights and there should be bar of accrual of any fresh right in Protected Area notification and that the present protocol does not achieve this goal. He added that Section 2 (b) of the Forest Rights Act, 2006 was more stringent towards protecting wildlife rights in PAs. He suggested that there was a need to have a thread-bare discussion on the implementation protocol as well as the Forest Right Rules being issued by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

Dr M.K. Ranjitsinh suggested having a separate meeting to discuss this issue as it called for more attention.

Ms. Perna Bindra was of the opinion that the 2011 MoEF guidelines were more practical and one important aspect of extraction of Minor Forest produce also need to be considered with respect to the Protocol.

Ms. Perna Bindra said that it was of grave concern that not even one Critical Wildlife Habitat had been declared while considerable forest land-over 15 lakh hectares had been given away under the Forest Rights Act. She said that the opinion of the NBWL had not been sought in the current guidelines which were impractical and had serious lacunae, She was of the opinion that the MoEF guidelines of 2011 were more practical. She also pointed out that the amendment to the rules of the FRA has very serious implications for wildlife and there needs to be a process in place to discuss, review, and incorporate inputs on this from NBWL members, wildlife biologists etc

The Secretary (E&F) suggested that the matter could be discussed thread-bare as suggested by the Shri Kishor Rithe and that at appropriate stage, the representative of Ministry of Tribal Affairs also need to be involved in finalising the Protocol.

The Committee unanimously agreed to the suggestion by the Secretary (E&F).

Item 2.2 (3): Protection of wildlife and CAMPA work practices

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that in the last meeting, it was decided to seek the details of use of CAMPA funds for resettlement purposes from various States and it was also agreed to request the National CAMPA Advisory Council (NCAC) for allocating certain percentage of CAMPA funds for this activity for enhancing the present quantum of CAMPA funds being used by States for relocation and resettlement purposes in the wildlife areas. He added that the information from the State Governments was still awaited. It was also informed that Hon'ble Minister had also written to the chairperson, NCAC on this issue.

The Secretary (E&F) informed that the Ministry had already issued guidelines with respect to the utilization of CAMPA funds and that Hon'ble Supreme Court was also monitoring the utilization of funds by various states and for taking up any activity, approval of Hon'ble Supreme Court was mandatory.

The IGF(FC) informed the committee that provision for wildlife management is already built in the CAMPA guidelines and that the State Governments could propose such activities in their Annual Plans of Operations.

Shri Kishor Rithe suggested that right now, under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme, relocation of villagers is being taken up only in the Tiger Reserves, but this provision should be extended to cover all the Protected Areas. After implementation of sec 2(b) of the Forest Right Act, 2006, states would come out with the number of villages situated in the Critical Wildlife Habitats (CWH) to make them inviolate and would also need funds to relocate and resettle these villages.

Dr Asad Rahmani suggested that a major portion of the CAMPA funds have come from the Protected Areas and therefore, these funds should be used for wildlife management. He added that the State Governments should be urged to take up species recovery programme using CAMPA funds.

Ms. Prerna Bindra stressed that CAMPA funds must be utilised for voluntary relocation within PAs, and to meet the paucity of funds for protection. She expressed concern over the fact that there were reports of misuse of CAMPA funds which had been brought to the notice of NBWL members, and said that there was a need to for a proper monitoring mechanism for the use of CAMPA money by the State Governments.

The Secretary (E&F) suggested that once wildlife related activities are incorporated in the Plans of Operations, the Hon'ble Supreme Court may be approached for enhanced allocation of CAMPA funds. He also requested the non official members to forward specific cases of mis-management of CAMPA funds, so that the matter could be taken up with the NCAC.

Item 2.3 (11): Proposal for Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary.

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that in pursuance to the decision taken in the last meeting, letter from Hon'ble Minister requesting for declaration of Nandhaur as a Wildlife Sanctuary had already been sent to Hon'ble Chief Minister, Uttarakhand on 18th September 2012.

The IGF (FC) informed that the State Government of Uttarakhand has expressed certain reservations in declaring Nandhaur as a Wildlife Sanctuary, but instead has expressed their willingness for declaring Nandhaur as a Conservation Reserve. Ms. Prerna Bindra pointed out that that the proposed Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary is uninhabited and that the existing rights of local communities are not affected by the declaration of the sanctuary, and hence the state may expedite the declaration of Nandhaur as a Wildlife Sanctuary

It was agreed that since the notification of Nandhaur sanctuary was recommended by FAC, the request made by Government of Uttarakhand should be looked into by the FAC.

Item 2.4 (3): Conservation of Hangul and its habitat, especially the Dachigam National Park

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that the sub-committee for monitoring the Hangul recovery plan implementation, set up under the chairmanship of Dr M.K. Ranjitsinh had convened one meeting on 24th September 2012 and the next meeting was scheduled for 9th and 10th November 2012.

Dr Asad Rahmani emphasised that Hangul population needs to be protected and concrete steps needs to be taken on this front expeditiously. Dr M.K. Ranjitsinh suggested action on the two ways of protecting a species from being extinct, viz., *ex-situ*, and *in-situ*. He added that there were law and order issues in the region but our endeavour for conservation of the species should be continued. The entire approach of Hangul conservation mechanism should be taken up in a more professional manner and therefore, require very dedicated personnel. He also added that research activities could be taken up simultaneously with the conservation efforts.

Shri Kishor Rithe, suggested that *ex-situ*, and *in-situ* should go hand in hand. The non official members could draw out a plan for time bound implementation of the Hangul project.

The IGF(WL) requested Dr Ranjitsinh to provide inputs and advise, the Ministry based on their monitoring of the conservation programme for the Hangul, so that if and when necessary, mid course corrections could be taken up.

The Committee agreed to the request and decided to await the report of the Group for further action.

Item 2.5 (1): Contour canal in Anamalai Tiger Reserve (TR).

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that a DO letter to Hon'ble Chief Minister on this issue was being sent.

Dr A.J.T. Johnsingh suggested that when the team visits the site, the concerned forest officials, officials of the irrigation Department may be requested to be present so as to have proper discussion on the matter.

The CCF (WL), Tamil Nadu informed that the DFO concerned has already been requested to take necessary action. He assured necessary cooperation in this regard.

Item 3.1: Supreme Court case regarding Sigur Elephant Corridor, Tamil Nadu.

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that the affidavit based on the comments received from the non official members had been prepared and circulated to the members along with the agenda notes.

Ms. Prerna Bindra informed that the non official members were in agreement with the contents of the affidavit circulated with the agenda notes. She reiterated that the opinion expressed in the letter written by the non-official members on 05.01.2012 confirmed their

opinion as expressed in the Standing Committee Meeting of December 13, 2011, supporting the report of the High Court appointed Expert Committee.

Dr M.K. Ranjitsinh desired to know as to why the State Government could not declare the Reserve Forest Areas falling within the corridor as Protected Area and transfer the same from the territorial wing to the wildlife wing. CCF (WL) Tamil Nadu intimated that the area is being considered to be declared as a Protected Area.

After discussion, the Committee unanimously approved the affidavit prepared on behalf of the NBWL as circulated and desired that the Ministry may file the same before the Hon'ble Court.

3.1: Proposals that were placed for consideration in the 23rd Meeting of the Standing Committee of NBWL held on 14th October 2011 but could not be discussed due to paucity of time.

1. Proposal for construction of Baglinga M.I. project at Baglinga in Chikhaldara Taluka in Amravati District of Maharashtra.

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that during the last meeting, the Committee had decided that a site inspection be carried out by Dr Asad Rahmani and Shri Kishor Rithe, and a report after inspection be submitted for consideration of the SC of NBWL. However, the site inspection report was still awaited.

Dr Asad Rahmani pointed out that they would carry out the site inspection soon and that they would require a formal letter from the Ministry in this regard. Shri Kishor Rithe endorsed the views expressed by Dr Rahmani.

The IGF(WL) assured both the members that the letter in this regard would be sent very soon.

3.2: Proposals that were placed for consideration in the 24th Meeting of the Standing Committee of NBWL held on 13th December 2011 but could not be discussed due to paucity of time.

2. Proposal for railway line passing near Thol Wildlife Sanctuary to be constructed by Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India Ltd., at a distance of 700 mts from Thol Sanctuary, Gujarat.

The Member Secretary informed the Committee in pursuance to the decision taken by the Standing Committee of NBWL, Ms. Perna Bindra had carried out the site inspection and the report had been circulated to all members along with the agenda notes.

Ms. Prerna Bindra gave a brief account on the site inspection report. She informed that she had recommended the proposal on certain conditions, which the state government and the project proponent must commit to, and that their adherence be monitored.

After discussions the Committee decided to go by the recommendation made by Ms. Prerna Bindra and recommended the proposal with the following conditions:

(i) *Staff vacancy must be filled up to full capacity and a dedicated Range Officer provided on a priority basis. The sanctioned strength of the staff may also be reassessed. The state must pay the daily wagers on time plus provide basic benefits to ensure motivation and accountability. The state may consider providing training to the staff with the help of local and other NGOs. An effective patrolling regimen must be adopted to prevent illegal activities like tree felling and fishing.*

(ii) *Eco-Sensitive Zone under Environment Protection Act, 1986 must be demarcated for the sanctuary prior to actioning the project to provide for preventing any changes in land use patterns, since the environs of the wetland are critical for species like the Sarus Crane which nests in the surrounding areas. A well-thought out eco-sensitive zone will help plan and regulate ecologically damaging projects in the immediate vicinity of the sanctuary. This is important so that development in this rapidly urbanising area is planned keeping in view not only the ecological requirements of the wetlands, but the eco-system services it provides.*

(iii) *It is necessary to initiate a study to understand, monitor and address the impacts of the changed water regime following the construction of the Narmada canal and the release of excess waters. Periodic water analysis tests are also a must and the state may submit its intent and the plan on conducting this. A thorough monitoring and documentation of flora and fauna in the wetland may be actioned. Post the advent of the Narmada waters, there has been no study of the Thol wetland. Change in dynamics of the wetland including the study of plankton due to advent of Narmada waters may be studied.*

(iv) *Construction of the freight corridor must be such that flow of water into or out of the wetland system is not restricted or altered in any way.*

(v) *Periodic Environment Impact Assessments must be carried out by a competent agency, including physio-chemical analysis of water.*

(vi) *No railway yards or camps may be constructed within 3kms of the sanctuary boundary.*

(vii) *No labour camps can be permitted inside or in the immediate vicinity of the sanctuary. Labourers shall under no circumstances be allowed to enter the sanctuary, litter around it, cut trees for fuel wood.*

(viii) *Labourers and staff involved in the projects cannot be permitted to draw water from the sanctuary for any purpose.*

(ix) *Water for construction will not be drawn from the sanctuary.*

(x) *Funds to the tune of Rs. 500,000.00 (the amount maybe further ascertained after discussion with the Chief Wildlife Warden and other concerned authorities) only may be deposited by the project proponent annually with the sanctuary management which is to be used for wildlife conservation and protection study as mentioned in point III, other relevant studies mentioned in Site visit report.*

(xi) *Also, one must consider that ONGC oil wells within the sanctuary contribute significantly to disturbance and degrading/polluting the habitat within the sanctuary and a percentage of the revenue--to be mutually decided by the state forest department and the ONGC and any other relevant department--for conservation and protection of Thol, may be seriously considered.*

(xii) *Underpasses must be provided at intervals of 200m for mammals such as jackals, etc.*

(xiii) *The parking lot (built within the sanctuary near the gate) may be dismantled and restored to original form. Also, care must be taken in future that there is no such future construction or activity in the sanctuary in contravention of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972*

(xiv) *The sanctuary is small at 6.99 sq km, and hence does not really require any major facilities for tourists. However, some basic facilities ie benches (some of which have been provided), access to the presently defunct Interpretation Centre, knowledgeable local*

guides will help the trip meaningful. The state should initiate a program which trains locals as nature guides, and it is suggested that interested local NGOs, NGIs can be roped in for this. Any tourism facility viz. car parking should preferably may be constructed/shifted outside the sanctuary. Alternatives for movement inside the sanctuary must be explored ie cycle rickshaws --of which Bharatpur is a successful model. Vehicular movement inside the sanctuary needs to be discouraged.

(xv) It is suggested that the forest department sets up a committee which also includes interested NGIs , NGOs, ecologists and representatives of local bodies for initiating a nature tourism plan that causes minimal disturbance to wildlife, raises awareness and interest in conservation and benefits the local people.

The following items were included in the agenda notes for discussion in the 25th Meeting of Standing Committee of NBWL held on 13th June 2012 but could not be discussed due to paucity of time:

Agenda no.4: (4.1): Fresh proposals involving diversion of land from within National Parks and Sanctuaries.

1. Establishment of Light Beacon at Petrie Island- taking up non forestry activities in National Park.

The Member Secretary elaborated that the proposal was for establishment of lighted beacon at Western side of Petrie Island for providing aids to Navigation to mariners/vessels plying from Chennai/Vizag (West coast of the country) to Port Blair and Inter Island ferry services on Western Side. The proposed lighthouse structure would be 12m tall with a base covering 5.5 Sq.m and shall be located at the hilltop within the reserved forest area. The proposed lighthouse is proposed to be unmanned (solar powered) and no other additional infrastructure development is proposed. He added that the Standing Committee had considered the proposal in its 18th meeting held on 12th April 2010. During the meeting, the Committee decided that the recommendations of the State Board for Wildlife in this regard be obtained first before presenting it for recommendation of Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife. The State Board for Wildlife of Andaman and Nicobar Islands had

considered this proposal in its meeting held on 28th March 2011 and had recommended the same.

The Secretary (E&F) mentioned that the island is a cyclone prone region and proper lighting was required.

After discussions, the Committee unanimously decided to recommend the proposal subject to the conditions prescribed by the Chief Wildlife Warden, Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

2. Proposal for removal of bamboos in areas of gregarious flowering in Shoolpaneshwar Sanctuary by Forest Department, Gujarat.

3. Proposal for removal of bamboos in areas of gregarious flowering in Vansda National Park, Gujarat by Forest Department, Gujarat.

The Member secretary informed the Committee that since the two items were of similar nature, they could be considered together. He requested that the Chief Wildlife Warden to briefly explain the proposal.

The Chief Wildlife Warden, Gujarat made a brief presentation regarding the gregarious bamboo flowering in Shoolpaneshwar Sanctuary, Vansda National Park and Purna Sanctuary. He also mentioned that heavy sporadic flowering occurred in Manvel bamboo (*Dendrocalamus strictus*) during 2008-09 and later on it has been converted into gregarious flowering during 2009-10 and onwards. The gregarious flowering occurred in 167 compartments of the Shoolpaneshwar sanctuary. The flowered bamboos are since dried and there is an urgency to remove these to avoid fire hazard and congestion. All bamboo clumps that are flowered and dried are to be cut down. The area needs to be protected from fire and grazing. The flowered area of Shoolpaneshwar Sanctuary constitute 70% of the total area of the Sanctuary. He further added that it has been proposed by the State Government that the first and foremost beneficiaries of the harvested bamboo material would be the local tribal residing in and around the Sanctuary areas. There are about 7,051 families in 105 villages in and around the Sanctuary. It has also been resolved by the Government of Gujarat to sanction subsidised grant of 50 bamboos to individual families for construction/repairs of huts. Further, each family in the region will also be offered 30 bamboos to make/repair fence for their farmland. After the local people, the dried material would be used for the conservation and development of the Sanctuary (use in making brushwood check dams, bamboo

regeneration etc). The revenue generated would be parked in a separate fund and the amount shall be utilized during the next 3 years for conservation and development of the Sanctuary and eco-development in and around the Sanctuary.

Thereafter, he briefed about the bamboo flowering in Vansda National Park. He said that gregarious flowering of katas bamboo (*Bambusa arundinacea*) has occurred in the National Park during 2007 and constitutes 95% of the total area of the National Park. All bamboo clumps that are flowered and dried are to be cut down. The area needs to be protected from fire and grazing.

Dr M.K. Ranjitsinh mentioned that as per Section 29 of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, the wildlife removed from the Sanctuary should only be used for the personal bonafide use of the local communities living in the Sanctuary and should not be put to commercial use. He also indicated that once permission for removal of bamboo is given, other similar proposals would follow the line.

The Committee after discussions, decided not to recommend both the proposals for removal of dried flowered bamboo.

4. Diversion of 0.165 ha of forest land falling in Kalatop-Khajjjar Wildlife Sanctuary and extension of existing Lakarmandi-Dainkund Road (Dalhousie) by 500 mts. in favour of Chief Admn. Officer, Air Force Station, Dalhousie, District.

The Member Secretary explained that the proposal was to enhance the Air Defense capabilities towards eastern and western region to facilitate deep scanning inside the eastern region, a radar has been planned to be located in Air Force Station, Dainkund (Dalhousie) and the area on top of the hill is found to be most suitable to deploy the radar which is inside the Technical Campus at the Air Force Station. The proposal envisages extending the existing Lakarmandi-Dainkund road by about 500 mtr to facilitate moving the radar equipment to the hill top. He added that while the status of the land as per the revenue record is forest land having ownership of HP Government and tenancy with HP Forest Department, the physical/technical possession of the land is with Air Force since 1973, i.e., before the enactment of Forest Conservation Act (FCA) 1980. He also informed that no felling of trees was involved in the proposal.

After discussions and considering the nature of the proposal, the committee unanimously agreed to recommend the proposal subject to the conditions proposed by the Chief Wildlife Warden, Himachal Pradesh.

5. Proposal for construction of Ropeway Cable Car from Mubarakh Mandi to Mahamaya Park and Shahabad near Babu Fort, Jammu & Kashmir, involving Bahu Conservation Reserve.

The Member Secretary mentioned that the proposal is for construction of ropeway Cable Car from Mubarakh Mandi to Mahamaya Park to Shahabad near Bahu Fort. The area is situated on the left bank of river Tawi opposite Jammu city and above Gandhi Nagar.

Shri Kishore Rithe desired to know if any alternate option was examined. Ms. Purna Bindra was of the opinion that more pressure could not be put on a PA on the grounds that it was already 'degraded'-PAs are designated to conserve our wildlife, and that should not be lost sight of. She also pointed out that proposal was commercial in nature, for amusement purpose and not in sync with the value of a PA, and would set a very bad precedent. She said in spite of the urban development in the area and vicinity to the Jammu city, conservation of the PA needs to be ensured.

The IGF(FC) explained that he had seen the proposed area earlier and was conversant with the region. He added that the Conservation Reserve was amidst the municipal corporation of Jammu and was thickly populated.

After detailed discussion, the committee recommended the proposal as an exceptional case in view of the little incremental impact from the project on the area, and the fact that it is in a thickly populated area within the municipal limits of the city, subject to the following conditions as suggested by the Chief Wildlife Warden, Jammu & Kashmir:

- i. Proper permission for utilization water from Tawi River shall be taken by the user agency.*
- ii. Tree cutting operations shall be carried in the presence of wildlife officials.*
- iii. Avenue plantation shall be raised all along the boundary wall.*
- iv. Do's and Don't to be prescribed for tourists inside the Protected Area.*

- v. *Rs 38.68 lakhs as proposed in the EMP shall be provided to the Wildlife Department for taking up activities in and around Ramnagar Wildlife Sanctuary and Bahu Conservation Reserve.*
- vi. *Monitoring of the stipulations will be done by a team comprising Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife)/Regional Wildlife Warden, Jammu, DFO Jammu, Wildlife Warden Jammu and representative of User Agency (J&K Cable Car Corporation).*
- vii. *Labour camps shall be located outside the Conservation Reserve.*
- viii. *No commercial activities except the essential utilities shall be permitted at the terminal stations within the Conservation Reserve.*
- ix. *Solid waste shall be properly collected and disposed as per rules.*
- x. *Entry fees for Conservation Reserve shall be chargeable from the visitors using the Cable Car.*
- xi. *NPV as per orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court shall be borne by the User Agency*

6. Proposal for laying 132 KV D/C Hiranagar-Battal-Manwal transmission line, Jammu and Kashmir.

The Member Secretary mentioned that the proposal is for laying of 132 KV D/C Hiranagar-Battal-Manwal transmission line involving Surnisar-Mansar Sanctuary in Jammu and Kashmir. The Conservator of Forests, Jammu region while submitting the Part-III of the proforma has mentioned that laying of this transmission line would not have any serious impact on the wildlife of the area.

After discussions, the Committee unanimously agreed to recommend the proposal subject to the following conditions as suggested by the Chief Wildlife Warden, Jammu & Kashmir:

- i. *Construction debris or muck generated during the laying of transmission line will be disposed of properly away from site.*
- ii. *The user agency will report compliances regularly to the Jammu and Kashmir Wild Life Protection Department.*

- iii. *The user agency will pay 5% of the cost of the project i.e. Rs.0.82 crores to the Jammu and Kashmir Wildlife Protection Department for taking up activities for conservation of wildlife and its habitat in Surinsar-Mansar Wildlife Sanctuary.*
- iv. *User agency will also pay Net Present Value (NPV) @ 5 times Rs. 6.99 lakhs per hectare i.e. Rs.2.569 crores to the Wildlife Protection Department in accordance with the orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court.*
- v. *The maintenance of the transmission line in the protected area shall be ensured by the committee comprising of representatives of User Agency and Wildlife Officials under the Chairmanship of Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) /Regional Wildlife Warden, Jammu*

7. Diversion of 1.241 ha of forest land from Madhav National Park for investigation/survey and laying of underground pipeline for supply of drinking water to Shivpuri town, M.P.

The Member Secretary mentioned that The proposal for diversion of 1.241 ha of forestland from Madhav National Park for laying of pipeline for supply of drinking water from Madkheda to Shivpuri, Madhya Pradesh was considered by the Standing Committee of NBWL in its meeting held on 13th October 2011 and recommended. The proposal of Madhya Pradesh Government was taken up as 'survey and investigation for laying the pipeline for supply of drinking water from Madkheda to Shivpuri'. The permission was actually sought for investigation/survey and laying of underground pipeline in the right of way of roads N.H.-3, Shivpuri-Satanwada, 4.05 kms, compt no RF 31,32 and the land in use will be 1.241 ha. The diameter of the pipeline is 900 mm.

The communication of CWLW, MP dated 4th October 2011 requested for modification of the condition ii, iii & v and desired that the permission be made “**including**” laying of pipeline. Later, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (WL) vide letter dated 30th March 2012 mentioned that the Hon'ble Supreme Court had granted approval for the project, based on the earlier approval, vide their order dated 27th July 2011, leaving it to the project proponent to seek change of conditions it required.

The extracts of the order of Hon'ble Supreme court is given below:

“Item no. 314....

.... And submitted that the council has some objection with regard to sub-paragraphs (iii) and (v) of paragraph 1 of that letter. if that be so, it is open to the Municipal Council to move the Ministry of environment and Forests, and in turn , MoEF may vary the conditions, if so warranted.

Perused the report of the CEC dated 20.4.11 and permission is accorded to use of 1.241 hectares of forest land falling in Madhav National Park for laying of the underground pipeline for supply of drinking water to Shivpuri town, Madhya Pradesh subject to the conditions enumerated in paragraph 6 of the report of the CEC.”

He added that the State Government had therefore requested for waiving of the following conditions stipulated earlier:

Condition no. (ii) Water would not be drawn from the dam.- The State Government has clarified that there is no use of water from within the Protected Area by damming or diversion.

Condition no. (iii) No sewage water would be drained into the dam- The State Government has clarified that this activity is not intended.

Condition no. (v) The depth of the trench should not exceed 1 mt.- This recommendation is inconsistent with the proposal of pipeline which is 900 mm or 0.9 m diameter.

After discussions, the Standing Committee unanimously decided to recommend the project with waiving off the conditions no. (ii) and (v).

9. Proposal for laying 11 KV HT/LT line to provide connection to BPL families under Rajiv Gandhi Vidyutikaran Yojana in Desert National Park Sheo Block Barmer District., Rajasthan.

The Member Secretary mentioned that the Proposal is for laying 11 KV HT/LT line to provide connection to BPL families under Rajiv Gandhi Vidyutikaran Yojana in Desert National Park Sheo Block, Barmer District. The proposed project requires 35.7 ha revenue land (in sanctuary area) required for 11 kv line and 7.5 ha revenue land (in sanctuary area) required for LT line. The primary objective of Rajeev Gandhi Vidyutikaran Yojana is to electricity the villages and habitation having human population more than 100. The Desert National park has a cluster of 10 electrified villages, 21 de-electrified villages and 15 ee-electrified dhanis. A substation already exists in DNP area hence no new substation would be established. Villages will be electrified by tapping from the existing line.

The Chief Wildlife warden, Rajasthan also gave a brief description of the proposal elaborating the need for the transmission line in the area.

Dr M.K. Ranjitsinh mentioned that he was the member of the team for suggesting rationalization of boundaries of the Park. The Desert National Park and Chambal Gharial Sanctuary, being spread over the areas with different land categories, often involve several proposals for use. He suggested that in the circumstances, the State Government should come up with a perspective plan for the Desert National Park for the activities, including development activities required to be taken up in the next 5 years.

Ms. Prerna Bindra while endorsing the views of Dr Ranjitsinh that the State Government should come up with a perspective plan for the conservation of the Desert National Park, reiterated that the Chambal River was very important from the point of view of gharial and Gangetic dolphin conservation, and that already its flow had severely reduced as confirmed by the WII study.

Dr Divyabhanusinh Chavda also endorsed the views expressed by the two members.

After discussions, it was agreed that the project be recommended with the condition that no more proposal from Desert National Park would be considered until a perspective plan for the next 5 years is prepared by the State Government. The non official members expressed their willingness to be associated with the preparation of the perspective plan.

4.2: Proposals with respect to activities outside National Parks and Sanctuaries but within 10 km from the boundary of the Protected Areas.

The Member Secretary mentioned that the following two proposals were placed for the information of the members and no action was to be taken at this stage:

1. Proposal of M/s Shri A.X. Poi Palondicar for renewal of mining lease for production of Iron Ore with production capacity of 0.20 MTPA and expansion in capacity of Manganese ore from 0.010208 MTPA, Goa.

The final notification of Eco-Sensitive Zones around National Parks and Sanctuaries in Goa was still awaited.

2. Proposal for seeking permission of National Board for Wildlife for establishment of 135 MW Captive Thermal Power Plant by M/s Bhubaneswar Power Pvt. Ltd. over 48.06 ha non-forest land at Anantpur village in Cuttack District of Odisha.

After receipt of the response from the State Government, the Chairperson had taken a view in the matter.

AGENDA ITEM NO.3

AGENDA 3.1: Agenda proposed by Dr A.J.T. Johnsingh

(i) Reintroduction of Nilgiri tahr in two locations in Western Ghats

Dr Johnsingh suggested that we first reintroduce tahr in the Glenmorgan mountain from Mukurthy NP and thereafter plan reintroduction in Thirukurungudi Range of Kalakad-Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve.

It was decided that the MoEF would take up the matter with the State Government of Tamil Nadu for appropriate action.

(ii) Removal of unused/discarded barbed wires from the forest areas and demolition of unused buildings built by the Public Welfare / Electricity Department

Member Dr Johnsingh elaborated on his proposal that often the debris and old structures abandon in the forest areas by the executing agencies cause problems for movement of wildlife and hence the management should take action to remove such impediments from the habitats. It was decided that the MoEF would come out with an advisory to the State Governments on this issue.

AGENDA 3.2: Agenda proposed by Ms. Prerna Bindra

(i) Bring key wildlife corridors and Elephant Reserves under the purview of the Standing Committee, NBWL

(ii) Commercial exploitation of bamboo and other MFP in critical wildlife areas

It was decided that the first item would be discussed at the next meeting of the Standing Committee, NBWL, and the second item would be would discussed in detail in a separate meeting organised for the purpose.

(iii) A review of the implementation of decisions taken by the National Board of Wildlife over the past five meetings

It was decided that the MoEF would work out a strategy for review of the implementation of decisions taken by NBWL.

(iv) Review of National Wildlife Action Plan (2002-2016)

It was decided that MoEF would consider constituting a high level committee, wherein members of NBWL would also be members, so as to evaluate the implementation of the Action Plan and also to draw a the action plan beyond 2016.

AGENDA 3.3: Agenda proposed by Shri Kishor Rithe

(i) Notification of eco-sensitive areas (ESAs)/ safety zones around Protected Areas and views of the standing committee

Member Shri Kishore Rithe showed disagreement with the CEC recommendation on "safty zones" around PAs, expressing his views and wanted to know the stand taken by MoEF on the proposal of CEC about the ESZ/ safety zone around Protected Areas. Member Secretary informed that as directed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court, the Ministry had already taken steps to file an affidavit on the matter and that the matter was coming up for hearing before the Hon'ble court on 2nd November 2012. A copy of the affidavit being filed by MoEF was also circulated amongst the members.

The members were not in agreement with notifying the 'safety zone' arbitrarily as recommended in the report of CEC and desired that scientific opinion of the SC-NBWL be taken on board and filed as an affidavit before the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

It was, therefore, decided that the non official members would forward their comments urgently on the report of the CEC and thereafter a separate affidavit will be filed on behalf of the NBWL.

(ii) Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights)- 2006 -Forest Rights Act (FRA) implementation in PAs in India

It was decided to take up this matter in a separate meeting for detailed discussion.

AGENDA 3.4: Agenda proposed by MoEF

Declaration of eco-sensitive zones- order of Hon'ble supreme Court

The matter was already discussed under item 3.3 (i) above.

AGENDA 4.1: FRESH PROPOSALS FOR NON FORESTRY ACTIVITIES WITHIN PROTECTED AREAS:

4.1 (1) Proposal for permission to lay additional water supply pipe line from Papavinasanam Dam to forest check post, Tirumala in the already diverted land of 0.55 ha to Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD), Andhra Pradesh.

The Member Secretary mentioned that the proposal was for laying an additional water supply pipe line from Papavinasanam Dam to forest check post, Tirumala in the already diverted forest land of 0.55 ha to Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD), Andhra Pradesh. Thousands of pilgrims from all over India and abroad, visit Tirumala every day for darshan of Lord Venkateswara. The pilgrims influx was increasing year by year and in the last five years the average water consumption at Tirumala has increased from 25 lakhs gallons per day to 32 lakh gallons per day. In order to meet the water demand it has become very essential to lay additional pipeline from Papavinasanam dam along the existing pipeline in the already diverted land of 0.55 ha to Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD).

The Secretary (E&F) mentioned that the water problem in the pilgrimage town was grave and laying of this pipeline would ameliorate the problem to some extent. He added that no additional land was required and that the pipeline was being laid on the existing land being used by the TTD.

Dr Asad Rahmani suggested that the State Government should take up expeditious plan for the conservation of Jerdon's Courser in the State. Dr A.J.t Johnsingh suggested that the TTD could adopt the Jerdon's Courser and provide all measures for its protection.

The chairperson mentioned that she would write to the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Andhra Pradesh on the suggestions made by the members regarding conservation of Jerdon's Courser.

After discussion, the committee agreed to recommend the proposal with the pre-condition suggested by the Chief Wildlife Warden, Andhra Pradesh, viz., the Andhra Pradesh Forest Department would implement the mitigation plan with the funds to be deposited by the TTD Authorities, before allowing use of the area.

Thereafter, Hon'ble chairperson suggested that as she had to attend to certain very urgent prior commitments, the rest of the agenda items could be taken up in a separate meeting.

AGENDA ITEM NO.5: ANY OTHER ITEM WITH PERMISISON OF THE CHAIR:

The Member Secretary informed the Committee that a *suo moto* Court case no. 14029/2008-(G.M-RES-PIL) was going on in the Hon'ble High Court of Karnataka. The matter pertained to human-elephant conflict mitigation. The Honorable Court had, after hearing the issues involved in translocation of Elephants deaths, man-elephant conflicts etc., felt that a Task force be constituted to study and suggest measures for mitigation of human-elephant conflict. The task force had submitted its report to Hon'ble Court in September 2012. The Petition had come up for hearing on 17.10.2012, when the report of the Task Force was taken on file. While considering the report, the Hon'ble High Court of Karnataka had specifically directed that the National Board of Wildlife should also take stock of the report and explain its stand vis-a-vis the report. The Honorable High Court had stated that the Board will have to consider the issues taken up in the report of the Task Force and report to the Honorable High Court.

It was, therefore, decided that the report of the Task force be made available to the members for advice. It was also decided that since the time was too short to compile the comments and file a response, MoEF may seek extension of time for filing the response of NBWL and that the members of NBWL may respond by 10th November 2012.

Thereafter, the meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the chair.
