

Recommendation – Chief Conservator of Forests

Thrissur Zoological Park Project proposed in an area of 136.86 ha of Manapilly and Mannur reserve forest of Pattikkad Range, Thrissur Forest Division is a relocation Project. The Thrissur Zoo located in the midst of Thrissur town exist in a congested 5.26 ha area. There are around 511 number of animals of 64 species in the Zoo placed in cramped enclosures. Central Zoo Authority has directed the State Government for shifting the Zoo to a new site. Thus the State Govt. has issued the Order in 2012 to shift the Zoo to the forest areas at Puthur. The order has also entrusted the State Forest Department to implement the Zoo. Already CZA has given clarification based on the MoEF guidelines, that the proposed Zoo does not attract the provisions of Forest Conservation Act 1980. Thereafter the Master Lay out Plan, Master Plan were approved by CZA, DPR preparation of the enclosures, DPR preparation for Water Supply and Drainage etc were completed. State Environmental Impact Assessment has also provided the Environmental Clearance on 17/03/2018. The Working Plan of Thrissur Forest Division has also dedicated this area for construction of Zoological Park (based on previous proposals).

The construction of 8 units of quarters are already completed. At present the construction of four enclosures of Nilgiri Langur, Lion tailed Macaque, Indian Gaur and Great Aviary works are half way through. The works of remaining 8 enclosures have started in the field and the preparatory works for all the remaining items are going on. The design for the Zoo has 'nature immersion' technique as its basis. The barriers especially open moats and fences where constructions are inevitable are proposed to be concealed and covered using vegetation, rendering an appearance of natural greenery. The Project has also taken care to adopted features of natural ecosystems specific to each species. The Project lays emphasis on Breeding & Research and restocking of select wild animal species of the Western Ghats into forest habitats is also an important attraction of the Project. Hence the Project aims at furthering both in-situ and ex situ conservation efforts.

The proposed Zoo at Puthur is designed following all the norms and conditions of CZA and has been designed following the modern trend of

displaying animals in naturalistic open exhibits with hidden barriers and moats between the animals and the visitors. The design has taken care to provide habitat for the animals in such a way that it resemble their natural ecosystem. The engineering design of the Zoo has taken in to account the topography of the terrain and this has been integrated in to the design by continued visit of Shri. Jon Coe. This will ensure minimum manipulation in the landscape.

The proposed patch of forest land is an isolated bit of forest land surrounded by human habitation around the area. The area is about 12 kms from the Thrissur town. The Project ensures construction of spacious open enclosures as per the CZA guidelines. There aren't any tribals residing in this area nor any rights of any nature granted to any colony in this land. The area is not a part of any Ecosensitive Zone and is not included in any Wildlife Sanctuary, National Park, Biosphere Reserve, Tiger Reserve. The proposed construction zone of the Zoological Park is limited to the patch of Bamboo Plantations alone. The effective construction is limited to about 13% of the total area (17.96 ha). Bamboo has started to flower gregariously and needs to be removed soon (due to fire hazards). Therefore the area will be opened up soon. The site is mostly dominated by Cashew and Bamboo with scattered miscellaneous tree species.


The Project in many ways an Afforestation Programme too. The Project ensures to increase the Biodiversity of the area. It proposes to plant suitable rare and endangered forest trees species at the site, which is degraded at present. About 10 lakh of trees, shrubs, ground cover, climbers etc is proposed to be planted in the site. About 15000 seedlings of forest tree species belonging to 100 species have already been raised in the Chettikulam Central Nursery of Forest Department. Agreement is being executed with Kerala Forest Research Institute for the supply of 10000 seedlings of bamboos and 14000 seedlings of palms. Nearly 85% area is to be kept under green cover. As per the DPR of water supply and Drainage System, three number of rain water harvesting structures (2 structures of 500 sq m size and one of 8700 sq m size) are proposed at the site. Also four detention ponds are proposed in the Conservation Zone. Thereby the moisture retention capacity of the area will be enhanced.

The location of Kerala forest Research Institute at Peechi, College of Forestry and College of Veterinary and Animal Sciences is all located within a

radius of 15km from the Puthur Zoo site. It will be advantageous for the Zoological Park to avail the facilities of these Scientific Institutions. An alternative spacious site so as to follow the norms and conditions of the CZA, for establishing Park is therefore not seen available.

It is understood that physical construction of facilities for relocation of Thrissur Zoo was started in 2015-16 by Kerala Forest Department based on the CZA approved Master Plan, Master (layout) Plan and detailed design of enclosures as a forestry project. A clarification in this regard was received from the Central Zoo Authority in 2008 based on the guidelines issued by the Ministry in 2007 that provisions of Forest (Conservation) Act are not attracted for development activities in connection with a Zoo for the better management and welfare of animals, provided the activities have the approval of CZA. The guidelines that the establishment of Zoo in forest land is a non-forestry activity as it is a non site specific activity was issued by the Ministry in 2017 only. Then this matter was taken up by Kerala Forest Department in 2018 and based on their advice dated 11-10-2018, the application for post-facto approval is now submitted. Therefore, the activities taken up so far may not be considered as in violation of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

The Project once established will be a wholesome environmentally benefitted one and therefore I recommend the proposal for diversion of 136.8623 hectares of forest land at Manapillyand Mannur Reserve of Thrissur Division for the purpose of establishment of Thrissur Zoological Park- Wildlife Conservation and Research Centre.


Chief Conservator of Forests
Central Circle

PART -III

(TO BE FILLED BY CONCERNED CHIEF CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS)

14	Whether site, where the forest land involved is located has been inspected by concerned Conservator of Forests (Yes/No). If yes, the date of inspection notes to be enclosed.	Inspected the site on 12.11.2018. Inspection note enclosed.
15	Whether the concerned Conservator of Forests agree with the information given in Part-B and the recommendations of Deputy Conservator of Forests	Agreed as stated in the inspection note of the undersigned
16	Specific recommendation of concerned Conservator of Forests for acceptance or otherwise of the proposal with detailed reasons.	Recommended. Report enclosed.

Signature :

Name : Rajesh Ravindran, IFS

Office Seal :

