

WFO (FCA)
February 11
13/12/14

F.No.6-47/2014-WL (31st Meeting)
Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change
Wildlife Division

6th Floor, Vayu Wing
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan
Jor Bag Road, Aliganj
New Delhi-110003
Dated: 08.12.2014.

To
The Principal Secretary (Forests)
Department of Forests
Government of Sikkim
Gangtok.

Sub: Minutes of the 31st Meeting of Standing Committee of NBWL.

Sir,

During the 31st Meeting of Standing Committee of NBWL held on 12th-13th August 2014 under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Environment and Forests, the following proposals pertaining to your State were considered. The relevant portion of the decision taken in respect of the proposals is reproduced below:

"1. Proposal for 520 MW Hydroelectric Power Project, Teesta Stage-IV on river Teesta in North Sikkim by NHPC Ltd.

The Member Secretary briefed the Committee regarding the site inspection report. He added that the site inspection report has been circulated to all members. The Chief Wildlife Warden, Sikkim informed that as per the Environment Management Plan to be implemented, fish ladders shall be constructed along the stretch of the river. Dr. R. Sukumar desired to know if the proposal was a fait accompli. The Project Proponents explained to the committee that no work on this stretch has been started and in spite of the project being outside the boundary of the proposed Eco-Sensitive Zone, the project proponents had sought recommendations of the Standing Committee of NBWL.

After discussions, the Standing Committee considered the fact that a detailed environmental appraisal has been done for the project and that it is 4.3 km away from the Fambonglho Wildlife Sanctuary and 5.83 km away from the Khangchendzonga NP and not within the proposed eco sensitive zone. Accordingly the Committee decided to recommend the proposal subject to the conditions stipulated by the State Board for Wildlife and the State Chief Wildlife Warden.

2. Proposal for construction of road from Sopakha village to Chewabhanjyang via Jorbotay in West Sikkim by the Roads & Bridges Department, Government of Sikkim for connecting the Police & SSB Out Posts at Chewabhanjyang.

The Member Secretary briefed the Committee regarding the proposal. He added that the site inspection report was circulated to the members of the Committee. The Chief Wildlife

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Warden explained to the Committee regarding the proposal. He added that this proposal was for construction of the road for linking police and SSB outposts and thus will have limited but strategic use and therefore may not cause negative impact in the P.A. After discussions, the Standing Committee decided to recommend the proposal subject to the following conditions, besides the conditions stipulated by the State Board for Wildlife and the Chief Wildlife Warden:

- i. Only gravel/metalled road shall be constructed within the Sanctuary within the prescribed width, with firm shoulders, good drainage system on both sides to prevent erosion.
 - ii. Status of the land shall remain unchanged as a Sanctuary and shall not be diverted/de-reserved.
 - iii. All the construction and road maintenance material shall come from outside the Sanctuary limits. The camps of the construction workers shall also be situated outside the Sanctuary.
 - iv. The specification of the streams in 18kms stretch to build bridges/culverts shall be worked out in consultation with the State Chief Wildlife Warden.
 - v. The width and height of bridges and culverts shall be decided and constructed in consultation with the State Chief Wildlife Warden.
 - vi. No debris resulting from the cutting of the road shall be tipped into the slopes or deposited inside the Sanctuary.
 - vii. The top soil, which is the most productive element in the rubble, is in short supply in the hills and be offered to the local people for use in their fields.
 - viii. The Chief Wildlife Warden shall impose such penalties as provided under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 in case of any violations.
 - ix. A chowki manned by the Sanctuary staff shall be established at the entrance of the Sanctuary, to prevent any violation of law.
 - x. Ecological restoration through plantation of purely indigenous plants shall be undertaken in consultation with the State Chief Wildlife Warden.
 - xi. Due consideration shall be given for movement of wild animals while planning the mitigation measures.
3. Diversion of 7.60 ha of forest land from Pangolakha Wildlife Sanctuary for upgradation/widening of road from Kupup to Tri-junction, East Sikkim.

The Member Secretary briefed the Committee regarding the proposal. The Chief Wildlife warden also explained to the Committee regarding the proposal. He said that this road was of strategic importance and sufficient mitigation measures have been suggested. After discussions, the Standing Committee decided to recommend the proposal subject to conditions stipulated by the State Board of Wildlife and State Chief Wildlife Warden.

4. ***Diversian of 2.606 ha. of forest land from Kitam Bird Sanctuary for improvement & up-gradation of Melli-Nayabazar State Highway (SK-10) from km 17.100 to Nayabazar, Sikkim.***

The Member Secretary briefed the Committee regarding the proposal. The Chief Wildlife Warden informed that there was no clearing of vegetation involved in the improvement of road. He added that Khaleej Pheasant is present in the Kitam Bird Sanctuary. The representatives of Project proponent explained to the Committee regarding the proposal. He said that the proposed upgradation was within the right of way. He also added that the road was constructed in 1950 while the Sanctuary was notified in 2005.

After discussions, the Standing Committee decided to recommend the proposal subject to the condition that necessary under passes for animal movement shall be constructed in consultation with the State Chief Wildlife Warden. It was also decided that the following conditions, as stipulated by the State Chief Wildlife Warden shall also be complied with:

- i. Labour camps will not be permitted to be set up inside or nearby sanctuary.*
- ii. Construction materials should be stored in the identified area.*
- iii. No felling of tree or destruction of wildlife habitat, exploitation or removal of any wildlife including forest produce from the sanctuary or forest area should take place.*
- iv. Authorised forest personnel will check the construction sites as when required.*
- v. No collection of Fuel-wood permitted from the PA or forest area.*
- vi. Project authority should obey the Acts, rules and guidelines of the land in letter and spirit."*

The above recommendation(s) are subject to the existing directives of Hon'ble Supreme Court and provisions of Forests (Conservation) Act, 1980.

Yours faithfully

R. Rajasekhar 03/12/14
(Rajasekhar Ratti)

Scientist 'C'/Deputy Director (WL)

Copy to:

1. The Chief Wildlife Warden, Forest Environment & Wildlife Management, Government of Sikkim, Deorali, Gangtok-737 102.
2. The Addl.Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests, Ministry of Environment & Forests, Regional Office (NEZ), Upland Road, Laitumkharah, Shillong-793003, Meghalaya.
3. The Chairman & Managing Director, NHPC Ltd., N.H.P.C Office Complex, Sector-33, Faridabad-121003 (Haryana).
4. Police & SSB Out Posts, Sikkim.
5. Border Roads Organization, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi.
6. The Joint Secretary, I.A. Division, MoEF & CC.
7. The Inspector General of Forests, FC Division, MoEF & CC.

R. Rajasekhar 03/12/14
(Rajasekhar Ratti)

Scientist 'C'/Deputy Director (WL)