

**Ministry of Environment and Forests  
Wildlife Division**

**Minutes of the 19<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) held on 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2010 in 403, Paryavaran Bhavan, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003.**

The 19<sup>th</sup> meeting of Standing Committee of NBWL was held on 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2010 in Room No. 403, Paryavaran Bhawan, New Delhi under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Environment & Forests.

A list of delegates who attended the meeting is at **Annexure-1**.

At the outset, Hon'ble Chairman welcomed all the Members of the Standing Committee for National Board for Wildlife (NBWL). It was followed by discussion on agenda items.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 1**

**Confirmation of the minutes:**

Member Secretary informed that the draft minutes of last meeting was circulated to all the Members. However, two members, viz; Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh and Dr. B.Talukdar have written about discrepancy in recording of the final decision on Uranium mining in Balpakaram National Park. Dr. Talukdar had also informed that he would not be able to conduct the site inspection as the ground situation in the area was not conducive.

Member Secretary clarified that the final decision was taken in meeting after deliberations and only the correct decision has been recorded in circulated draft minutes. He also informed that the issue was again coming up for discussion as an

agenda item. Thereafter, Dr.M.K.Ranjitsinh raised the issue of notification of additional Protected Areas in Maharashtra in lieu of Rationalization of Maldhok Sanctuary in Maharashtra.

Hon'ble Chairman informed that he would write to the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Maharashtra regarding notification of all the six areas as suggested by the Rationalization Committee as Protected Areas and atleast 3 on priority basis.

The views of the Members were taken on record and thereafter, the minutes of 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Standing Committee of NBWL were confirmed.

## **AGENDA ITEM NO. 2**

### **Agenda items by Dr. Asad Rahmani:**

#### **(a)Nowapada Swamps**

Member Secretary informed that Hon'ble Chairman had written a letter to Chief Minister, Andhra Pradesh bringing concerns to his notice and redressing the same by the Andhra Government.

#### **(c) Kolleru Lake Sanctuary**

The Member Secretary informed that the expert committee on Kolleru lake sanctuary, under the Chairmanship of Dr. Azeez, Director, SACON has already been constituted. It was therefore, decided to defer this matter till the report of the committee was received.

#### **(d)Balpakram Complex**

The Member Secretary informed that the site inspection report of Dr. Asad Rahmani has been circulated to the members. The Committee decided to request the Regional Office, Ministry of Environment and Forest, Shillong for a site

inspection and forward a detailed report to Forest Conservation Division regarding illegal mining, who should follow up the matter as per rules in force.

**2[5.2(20)] Diversion of 0.3 ha of Forestland from National Chambal Ghariyal Sanctuary Rajasthan, for Dholpur lift irrigation project**

**&**

**4(B)(19) Proposal for construction of Chambal development scheme-four Hydropower Projects (Rahu ka Gaon, Gujjapura, Jaitpura & Barsala) on Chambal River, Rajasthan.**

The Member Secretary informed that necessary instruction to Wildlife Institute of India, Bombay Natural History Society and World Wide Fund-India has already been communicated. It was therefore, decided to defer this matter till the report of the committee was received.

**4.2(4): Diversion of 7.2871 ha of forestland for construction of Ropeway from Bhavnath Taleti to Ambaji Temple in Girnar Wildlife Sanctuary by Usha Breco Ltd, Ahmedabad, Gujarat**

Hon'ble Chairman informed that he would visit the site at the earliest and thereafter a final view would be taken on the proposal.

**3.1: Declaration of new Protected Areas.**

**Point Calimere Sanctuary and Conservation Reserve.**

The Member Secretary informed that Hon'ble Chairman had written a letter to Chief Minister, Tamil Nadu for final notification of Point Calimere Sanctuary as well as notification of these wetlands as Conservation Reserves for long term protection of this fragile eco-system and large bio-diversity of birds found there. It was also informed that no action was required at this moment.

**4(B)(8) Proposal for laying of 220 KV Double Circuit Zainkote-Alusteng-Mirbazar Transmission Line (ZAMTL) via Zabarwan Hills –**

**Letter to Hon'ble Chief Minister, J& K from Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Environment and Forests about sheep farms relocation.**

The Member Secretary informed that Hon'ble Chairman had written a letter to Chief Minister, J & K regarding relocation of sheep farm from the Dachigam National Park. It was also informed that no action was required at this moment. However, the committee in the mean time agreed to the suggestion of Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh for preparation of an action plan by him.

**4(B)(9) Proposal for exploratory drilling for Uranium in Rongcheng Plateau, Balphakram National Park, South Garo Hills District, Meghalaya.**

The Member Secretary informed that Dr. B. Talukdar, had informed the Ministry that it was not feasible to conduct the site inspection presently as the ground situation in Garo Hills was not conducive for site inspection. Dr. B. Talukdar, had also mentioned that the local people, organizations and other outfits are opposed to any drilling and that they had already started mass movement against the drilling. The Member Secretary also informed that there were lot of reports from NGO's, Organizations and Members of Legislative Assembly

showing concern on the Uranium Mining. The Member Secretary also apprised about the receipt of a letter from Shri. Satto R. Marak, Member, Meghalaya Legislative Assembly mentioning that the Balpakram National Park was an ecological hot spot and home to rare and endangered species like Slow loris, Hoolock gibbons, elephants and is also a sacred place for the indigenous Garo Community in Meghalaya and therefore, mining activity should not be permitted at the cost of local traditions and sentiments.

The Committee after discussions reviewed their earlier decision and in the light of foregoing decided to revoke the earlier recommendation of permitting exploratory drilling.

**4(B)(12) Proposal for denotification from Radhanagri Sanctuary for Savarde minor irrigation project.**

The Member Secretary informed that during the last meeting, it was decided that a site inspection would be conducted by Dr. Asad Rahmani and that a report be submitted before the end of April, 2010. However, the report was yet to be received. The Committee decided to defer the matter till the receipt of the report.

**AGENDA ITEM NO.3.1:**

**Collection of Sea Horses for research leading to extraction of medicines.**

The Member Secretary informed that the Government of Maharashtra had sought the permission of the Ministry of Environment & Forests for collection of about 1kg of Sea horses for scientific research leading to extraction of medicine from the species. It was also informed that since the species was listed in Schedule – I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 the commercial extraction even for medical purposes would not be possible.

During the discussions, Dr. Ranjitsinh was of the opinion that it would be very difficult to grant permission for commercial exploitation of such a rare and endangered species. The Committee also observed that rearing the species ex- situ for commercial exploitation was not advisable. In view of this the Committee decided to reject the proposal.

### **AGENDA ITEM NO.3.2:**

**Agenda item proposed by Dr. Asad Rahmani, Member, Standing Committee of NBWL: Illegal mining in and around Protected Areas in Jammu & Kashmir**

The Member Secretary informed that Dr. Asad Rahmani had raised the issue of illegal mining in and around Protected Areas in Jammu & Kashmir. Dr. Rahmani has informed that there are 16 illegal cement factories around Dachigam National Park, 10 illegal limestone mines within and in the vicinity of the Dachigam National Park and Khrew- Khanmoh Wildlife Conservation Reserve, and 7 illegal gypsum mines within in and in the vicinity of Kazinag National Park and Limber-Lachipora Wildlife Sanctuary. The Member Secretary apprised the Committee that the State Chief Wildlife Warden was requested to send comments on the proposal. However, so far no comments have been received.

Hon'ble Chairman informed that he would write to the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Jammu & Kashmir on this issue. The Committee also decided to request Regional Office, Ministry of Environment & Forests, Chandigarh to conduct an inspection of the sites and submit a report. It was also decided to forward a copy of the representation of Dr. Rahmani to the Forest Conservation Division for necessary follow up.

### **AGENDA ITEM NO.4:**

## **FRESH PROPOSAL FOR DIVERSION OF NATIONAL PARKS AND SANCTUARIES.**

### **(1) Diversion of land in Balaram-Ambaji Wildlife Sanctuary for Manpur-Kansa approach road by Panchayat (R & B) Division, Palanpur, Gujarat.**

The Member Secretary informed that the proposal was for Diversion of 2.99.50 ha of land in Balaram-Ambaji Wildlife Sanctuary for Manpur-Kansa approach road by Panchayat (R & B) Division, Palanpur, Gujarat.

During discussions, Dr. Ranjitsinh observed that there were several proposals for construction of road in Balaram Ambaji Sanctuary, which were being proposed in piece meal. It was advisable that the total number of roads proposed in the sanctuary be considered in one set itself. To this, the Chief Wildlife Warden, Gujarat clarified that the present road proposal was one of the 11 road proposals forwarded for the consideration of the Standing Committee but could not be considered earlier.

Considering the clarification, the Committee after discussions recommended the proposed road, i.e. Manpur-Kansa approach road subject to the following conditions:

1. Only gravel road is recommended and no black topping of the above roads would be done.
2. The road development shall be carried out with utmost care.
3. It shall be ensured that no damage is caused to the Wildlife and Sanctuary.
4. For movement of runoff water and wildlife, minimum of one subway per 3 kms, culvert per every 8 meter for maintaining continuity of water and speed breakers at suitable distance for safety of wildlife shall be provided.
5. All construction material and other material will be brought from outside the sanctuary and no digging for extraction material will be done in the sanctuary.

6. All the conditions laid down by Government of Gujarat, GFD or any agency shall be binding on the user agency.
7. The Committee also decided to advise the State Government to finalize and process Rationalization of boundaries of the sanctuary and till then, no other road proposal will be considered in this sanctuary.

**(2) Permission for construction of fencing and patrol road along the Indo-Bangladesh Border in Dampa Tiger Reserve, Mizoram.**

The Member Secretary informed that the proposal was for construction of fencing and patrol road along the Indo-Bangladesh Border in Dampa Tiger Reserve, Mizoram. He also informed that the Chief Wildlife Warden had not recommended this proposal since; it would have an impact on the movement of wildlife. However, the State Board for Wildlife had recommended this proposal. The Member Secretary also informed that the Central Empowered Committee (CEC) has also recommended the proposal with certain conditions including approval of the Standing Committee of the NBWL.

The Chief Wildlife Warden, Mizoram informed that Dampa was having rare and endangered species like Tiger, Clouded Leopard, Himalayan Sun Bear, Hoolock gibbon etc. and the road and fencing proposal would have serious implications on the migratory species.

The representatives of the Ministry of Home Affairs was of the view that the road as well as the fencing was of utmost importance to stop the infiltration from Bangladesh and that the alignment was chosen out of three alternatives because of least involvement of forest land and minimum destruction of felling of trees and vegetation while being technical feasible.



The Committee after detailed discussions, decided unanimously that Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh and Dr. Rajesh Gopal, Member Secretary, NTCA would conduct site inspection, suggest alternatives/precautionary measures.

**Agenda item no. 5: Any other item with the permission of Chair:**

**(1) REVIEW OF PROPOSAL FOR REMOVAL OF GREGARIOUSLY FLOWERED BAMBOO IN SATKOSIA TIGER RESERVE:**

The Member Secretary informed that during the last meeting of Standing Committee of NBWL, while discussing the proposal on removal of gregariously flowered bamboo in Satkosia Tiger Reserve, the Committee was in agreement with the recommendation of Central Empowered Committee. The Committee had decided that since the recommendation of the State Board for Wildlife was not obtained, the decision could be taken thereafter. The Member Secretary also informed that in the meantime, the National Tiger Conservation Authority had expressed their reservations for granting permission for removal of bamboo in Satkosia Tiger Reserve.

The Member Secretary, National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) informed that the NTCA proposes to file an affidavit before the Hon'ble Apex Court for revising/reconsidering the judgment on this proposal. He also mentioned that bamboo flowering does occur in other Tiger Reserves also like Bhadra, Anshi & Dandeli, Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserves etc. and under the garb of bona fide use the core areas of Tiger Reserves would be exploited for commercial gains by vested groups. He also mentioned that Project Tiger could provide additional funds for fire protection.

After detailed discussions the Committee decided to reject the proposal.

**(2) AGENDA ITEM PROPOSED BY DR. M.K. RANJITSINH, MEMBER, STANDING COMMITTEE OF NBWL: CRITICAL STATUS OF THE HOG DEER IN CORBETT NATIONAL PARK**

Dr. Ranjitsinh informed the Committee that the Hog Deer has been in retreat all over its habitats in the Gangetic- Brahmaputra floodplains and is either rendered extinct or severely reduced in numbers even in protected areas, with the exception of the southern portions of the Kaziranga National Park. In the Corbett National Park, it was always confined to the lowland high-grass "chaurs". The Ramganga Dam had changed the situation and with the flooding of the low lying flanks of the river in the park, the prime habitat of the Hog deer and of the Tiger was lost forever and the Hog Deer were pushed back onto the upper chaurs of Dhikala, Khinanauli and others. This drastic reduction of the grasslands, the most productive terrestrial ecosystems, was indeed a lethal blow to Corbett National Park. But all would not have been lost had we managed the grasslands better. However, burning the chaurs repeatedly and regularly was continued, gradually turning the terrain more suitable for Chital and for viewing of wildlife including elephants. The net result was that the prolific and once ubiquitous Hog Deer which cannot adapt to new habitats is now on the verge of extinction. The situation could still be saved if the chaurs were managed differently, keeping in view the needs of the endangered Hog Deer at the forefront. This was done in the Kanha National Park in the late 1960s, and the high grasslands which resulted helped in the dramatic recovery of the Central Indian Barasingha. The grassland regime needs to be studied and the management of the park should refrain from extensive burning of the grasslands till a report of these studies is made available. Then the prescriptions that may emanate must be followed, the priority being the more endangered species including the tiger, and not the tourist.

After discussion it was decided that the NTCA would follow up the matter with the State Government for necessary action.

(3) **AGENDA ITEM PROPOSED BY DR. M.K. RANJITSINH, MEMBER, STANDING COMMITTEE OF NBWL: FOLLOW UP FOR RECOVERY PLANS FOR ENDANGERED SPECIES.**

Dr. Ranjitsinh also informed that there was a need for constant follow up with the State Governments on the action plan for recovery of endangered species. The specific time limit should be prescribed for implementation of such action plans. He quoted the example of the Great Indian Bustard which was reducing in numbers in several States like Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Rajasthan. He also mentioned that in Rajasthan that the Sudasri enclosure in the Desert National Park was the only spot in that area where there is resident population of the bird and it survives because of the protection it and its habitat gets from the enclosure which keeps out livestock. The Chief Wildlife Warden, Rajasthan informed that there was urgent need of shifting of some villages from the Desert National Park for recovery of Great Indian Bustard in the area.

Member Secretary informed the Committee that the concerns expressed by the Members would be looked into.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks from the Chair.

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ANNEXURE - 1

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS ATTENDING THE MEETING OF THE 19<sup>th</sup>  
MEETING OF STANDING COMMITTEE OF NBWL HELD ON 14<sup>th</sup> MAY,  
2010

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1.	Shri Jairam Ramesh Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Environment & Forests	Chairman
2.	Shrimati Chandresh Kumari, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha	Member
3.	Dr. P.J. Dilip Kumar, Director General of Forests & Special Secretary, MOEF.	Member
4.	Shri M.B. Lal Addl. Director General of Forests (WL)	Member-Secretary
5.	Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh	Member
6.	Shri P. R. Sinha Director, Wildlife Institute of India	Member
7.	Shri.S.S. Rasaily, Director Rajaji National Park, Uttarakhand Representing CWLW, Uttarakhand	Member
8.	Dr. Rajesh Gopal, Member Secretary, NTCA	Invitee
9.	Shri. S.S. Garbyal, PCCF and Secretary (E&F), Govt. of Mizoram	Invitee
10.	Shri. R.N. Mehrotra PCCF & CWLW, Rajasthan	Invitee
11.	Shri R.V. Asari, CWLW, Govt. of Gujarat	Invitee
12.	Shri. A.K. Srivastava, IGF (WL), MOEF	Invitee
13.	Dr. Anmol Kumar, DIG(WL), MOEF	Invitee

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