

F.No.6-39/2021 WL
Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
(Wildlife Division)

1st Floor, Agni Wing,
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bagh Road, Aliganj,
New Delhi - 110003.

Date: 30.04.2021

To
All Members,
Standing Committee of National Board for Wild Life.

Sub: Minutes of 62nd Meeting of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wild Life-reg.

Sir,

Kindly find enclosed copy of the Minutes of 62nd Meeting of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wild Life held on 30th March, 2021 under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India and as per permission given by the Election Commission of India in respect of Agenda item no. 62.4.7.

Yours Faithfully,

(Rakesh Kumar Jagenia)

Deputy Inspector General of Forests (Wildlife)

E-mail: digwl-mefcc@gov.in

Enclosure: As above

Distribution

1. Secretary, MoEF&CC
2. DGF&SS, MoEF&CC
3. ADGF(WL), MoEF&CC
4. ADGF(FC), MoEF&CC
5. Member Secretary, NTCA
6. Director/IGF, PE Division, MoEF&CC
7. Director, WII, Dehradun
8. Director, GEER Foundation, Gandhinagar, Gujarat
9. Prof. R. Sukumar, Member, NBWL
10. Dr. H.S. Singh, Member, NBWL
11. Secretary, Forest Department, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh

Copy to

1. PS to Hon'ble MoEF&CC
2. PS to Hon'ble MoSEF&CC
3. PPS to DGF&SS, MoEF&CC
4. PSO to Addl.DGF(WL), Sr.PPS to IGF(WL)

5. Additional Chief Secretary/Principal Secretary/Secretary, Forest Department, Government of Assam, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.
6. PCCF and HoFF, Government of Assam, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.
7. CWLW, Government of Assam, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

Copy also to:

Sr. Technical Director, NIC with a request to upload the minutes of the meeting on PARIVESH portal

MINUTES OF 62nd MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF NATIONAL BOARD FOR WILD LIFE HELD ON 30th MARCH, 2021

The 62nd Meeting of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wild Life was held on 30th March, 2021 through Video Conference and chaired by the Hon'ble Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change. List of participants is placed at **ANNEXURE-I**.

The Chairman welcomed all the participants to the 62nd Meeting of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wild Life and asked the Member Secretary to initiate the discussions on the Agenda Items.

AGENDA ITEM No.1

62.1.1 Confirmation of the minutes of the 62nd Meeting of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wild Life held on 18th February, 2021.

The Member Secretary stated that the minutes of the 61st meeting of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wild Life held on 18th February, 2021 were circulated on 08th March, 2021 amongst all the Members of the Standing Committee. No comments have been received on the minutes of the meeting from the members.

Decision Taken: Based on the discussion held, the Standing Committee decided to confirm the minutes of the 61st meeting.

AGENDA ITEM No.2

(Action Taken Report)

62.2.1 Proposal for use of 98.59 ha of reserve forestland from Saleki proposed reserve forest which is a part of Dehing Patkai Elephant Reserve for Tikok OCP coal mining project by North-Eastern Coal Field, Coal India Limited, Assam State (Original Agenda – 54.4.3).

The Member Secretary stated that the proposal was initially considered by the Standing Committee in its 54th meeting held on 18th July 2019. Thereafter a committee comprising of Dr. Sukumar and a representative of the Ministry was constituted to inspect the site and submit a report. The committee submitted a report which indicated some irregularities. The Standing Committee recommended stoppage of mining on 3rd July, 2020. In the 59th meeting, the Standing Committee decided to send a two-member fact finding team comprising of an official each from the Ministry and the Assam Forest Department and submit a factual report within a month. Ministry constituted a fact finding team comprising of Deputy Director General of Forests (C), Integrated Regional Office (Shillong), MoEF&CC and Nodal Officer (FC, Act),

Assam Forest Department. The mandate of the team was to find reasons/facts/lapses on the part of North-Eastern Coalfield, Coal India Limited and State Government due to which mine was operated without obtaining the recommendations of the SCNBWL for a long time.

The Standing Committee in the 61st meeting granted extension till 31.01.2021 to the committee for submission of report. The report of the Committee was received and examined in the Ministry. The Member Secretary stated that the team has made certain recommendations in their report and requested the DDG, IRO Shillong to brief the Standing Committee about the visit and findings of the Committee. DDG, IRO apprised the Standing Committee about the mining in the area and the reasons that might have led the North-Eastern Coalfield to continue mining in the proposed site. She also stated that at present mining has been stopped in the area.

General Manager, Coal India Limited informed that application was submitted for forest clearance was submitted to the Forest Department in the year 2003 after the lease came to end. No communication was received from Forest Department regarding the application. In the year 1996, when the process of the forest settlement was going on for Saleki Proposed Reserve Forest, a meeting was held between Forest Settlement Officer, officials of Assam Forest Department and Coal India Limited. In the meeting it was decided that Coal India Limited may continue with mining as the process of settlement would take long time. Due to these reasons, Coal India Limited would have continued mining in the area.

Dr. Sukumar stated that during their visit as per the recommendations of Standing Committee, it was wrongly informed that there was balance area of 41.39 ha unbroken land. However, later it was found that 16 ha has been mined recently. Therefore, he suggested that this 16 ha of broken area should be restored and mining should not be allowed in 25 ha. unbroken area in the proposed site as it is a very important link for the Dehing Patkai Elephant Reserve overlooking Arunachal Pradesh is very rich in biodiversity.

Secretary, EF & CC stated that the North Eastern Coalfield should have stopped mining even in the broken area as soon as their lease expired in the year 2003 till such time forest and wildlife clearance was granted.

The Chief Wild Life Warden, Assam informed that there are several other proposals for coal mining for which Coal India Limited has applied for forest clearance and suggested that Coal India Limited should abandon and restore 98.59 ha in Saleki proposed reserve forest.

Decision Taken: After discussion, the Standing committee decided that Ministry review with Coal India Limited the issues highlighted during this meeting in the meantime. It was also decided that since the Hon'ble Guwahati High Court has appointed a One Man Commission, further action in the matter shall be taken after the receipt of order in the court case. Therefore, the matter was deferred.

62.2.2 Proposal for use of 6.704 ha of reserve forest land from Pilibhit Tiger Reserve for Mailani-Pilibhit Gauge Conversion chainage 212.520-213.070 KM and 242.310-250.140 KM (8.38 KM) between Kuriya-Dudhiyakhurd and Sandai Mala, Uttar Pradesh State-FP/UP/RAIL/4257/2019.

The member secretary stated that the Standing Committee in the 60th meeting has decided to constitute a team comprising of representative of WII, Rail Vikas Nigam Limited and Uttar Pradesh Forest Department to study the site and suggest mitigation measures within two months' time. The Ministry has constituted the committee vide F. No. 6-4 /2020 WL dated 09.02.2021. The report of the committee has been submitted by the Member Convenor of the Committee to the ministry in consultation with Railways and Uttar Pradesh Forest Department. In the report of the committee, mitigation measures such as underpasses, bridge, fencing etc. have been suggested.

Decision Taken: After discussions, the Standing Committee decided to recommend the proposal with the mitigation measures suggested by the Committee (enclosed as **ANNEXURE-II**) and the following conditions:

A. Conditions imposed by the Chief Wild Life Warden:

1. Protection & Mitigation measures for wild life should be ensured as per guidelines of Government of India (MOEFCC).
2. User agency (Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd.) should provide the funds for reduction in negative impact for conservation and Eco-development activities of wild life and habitat as proposed by the PA manager.
3. Land shall not be used for any purpose other than that specified in the proposal.
4. Rules and regulations of the concerned departments for establishing the project shall be complied with.
5. The instructions/orders passed by the State/Central Govt. and the directions passed by Hon'ble High Court/Hon'ble Supreme Court/ National Green Tribunal from time to time regarding such project shall be complied with.

6. User agency will ensure that the project personnel engaged in the project shall observe the provision of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 and Rules made there under.
 7. Construction waste materials shall not be thrown and dumped inside the sanctuary area or movement corridor of the wildlife.
 8. User agency will take all precautions including technical measures to contain the noise and air pollutions within limit and protection from fire due to construction activities.
 9. NPV as per guidelines issued by Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India and Government of Uttar Pradesh shall be borne by the user agency,
 10. The project proponent shall obtain required consent to establish and to operate project activities from UP Pollution Control Board and effectively implement all the conditions stipulated therein.
 11. The project proponent shall undertake plantation work by planting the native species as proposed by DFO/WLW in the area adjacent to project area / sanctuary on its own cost.
 12. No labour camp shall be established in the sanctuary/forest area or other sensitive area.
 13. The project will only be done after sunrise and before sunset.
 14. Five GPS sets and five-night vision cameras shall be provided to DFO, Pilibhit Tiger Reserve, Pilibhit by the user agency for the survey and demarcation of the sanctuary boundaries.
 15. The user agency shall make under pass and over pass at different places of the railway line and change linking on the both side of railway track falling inside the reserve forest area of the Pilibhit Tiger Reserve on its own cost as advised by DFO, Pilibhit Tiger Reserve, Pilibhit.
- B. The annual compliance certificate on the stipulated conditions should be submitted by the project proponent to the State Chief Wild Life Warden and an annual compliance certificate shall be submitted by the State Chief Wild Life Warden to Government of India.

62.2.3 Construction of Campierganj Branch Canal in between km. 51 to 62.106 under Saryu Nahar Pariyojna in District: Maharajganj, Uttar Pradesh.

The Member Secretary briefed the Standing Committee and stated that the proposal is for use of 21.864 ha land for construction of Campierganj Branch Canal in between km. 51 to 62.106 under Saryu Nahar Pariyojna in District: Maharajganj. The Standing Committee in the 61st meeting had decided that the NTCA shall study the area and suggest site specific mitigation measures and deferred the matter. The comments from NTCA have been received. As per NTCA, the proposed area for construction of Campierganj Branch in between km 51 to 62.106 under Saryu Nahar Pariyojna District,

Maharajganj does not fall in any Tiger Reserve or Tiger Corridor. Therefore, the NTCA has no objection to clearance of the said proposal.

Decision Taken: After discussions, the Standing Committee decided to recommend the proposal with the following conditions.

A. Conditions imposed by the Chief Wild Life Warden:

1. The land shall not be used for any other purpose than specified be ensured in the interest for the purpose in the proposal.
2. The personnel working on the site should be well aware and will be bound to follow the provision of Wild Life (Protection) Act.
3. The project also involved 0.4 ha. of protected forest land and 40 number of trees are also required to be cut, therefore Forest Clearance as per provisions of Forest (Conservation) Act 1980 will also be required.
4. The user agency will comply with all the conditions imposed in the forest clearance under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.
5. Amount of Net Present Value (N.P.V.) shall be paid by the User Agency as per directions contended in G.O. No writ 526/14-2-2008 dated- 22-8-2008 of U.P.
6. User agency shall provide 2% of the proportionate cost of the project area falling in eco-sensitive zone or Rs.22.00 lacs for mitigation of negative impact as suggested by protected area manager whichever is more.
7. The user agency will ensure that no labour camp shall be established inside the sanctuary are any other sensitive area in eco-sensitive zone. Neither firewood nor any other forest produce from the forest will be used.
8. The user agency will arrange all the necessary equipments necessary for survey & demarcation.
9. The user agency will keep firefighting equipments as well as equipments to control ready for minimizing air and noise pollution at the site.
10. During the construction period, the user agency will establish one temporary forest check post along with the required manpower on its own cost.
11. The excavated pit shall be properly fenced so as to avoid injury/death of the wild animals in the sanctuary/forest area. These pits shall be levelled upon completion for the work so that there is no hindrance to the movement of wild animals.
12. User agency will fix sign board at appropriate point of the project.

13.No work shall be allowed between sunset to sunrise.

- B. The annual compliance certificate on the stipulated conditions should be submitted by the project proponent to the State Chief Wild Life Warden and an annual compliance certificate shall be submitted by the State Chief Wild Life Warden to Government of India.

62.2.4 Issue of Upgradation of Laldhang to Chillarkhal road in buffer zone of Rajaji Tiger Reserve, Uttarakhand.

The Member Secretary briefed that the Standing Committee in the 61st meeting had decided to defer the matter till the submission of report by the committee comprising of Dr. Sukumar, representatives of NTCA, WII and NHAI and representative of Government of Uttarakhand to the Ministry. He mentioned that though a report has been received from Chief Conservator of Forests, Garhwal on 30th March, 2021, it did not contain the views of all the members of the committee. He said that once the report of the committee is received, it will be examined and placed before the Standing Committee.

Decision taken: After discussion, the Standing Committee requested the committee to submit the report at the earliest and deferred the matter.

62.2.5 Proposal for collection of Minor Minerals from Song 1, 2, 3 and Jakhan 1, 2 of Dehradun Forest division, Uttarakhand.

The member Secretary briefed that the standing committee in the 61st Meeting had decided that Ministry shall seek comments from NMCG on the proposal and decided to defer the proposal till the certificate of compliance for Sustainable Sand Mining Management Guidelines 2016 and Enforcement and Monitoring Guidelines for Sand Mining, 2020 in the state of Uttarakhand is submitted by the State Government. The Member Secretary requested the DIG(WL) to explain the contents of the report submitted by the Chief Wild Life Warden, Uttarakhand.

DIG (WL) apprised the Standing Committee that the compliance certificate regarding the guidelines was required to be submitted by the State Government of Uttarakhand. However, the Chief Wild Life Warden has submitted a report of Uttarakhand regarding the provisions of the guidelines which are being followed by the Uttarakhand Forest Development Corporation. He further explained that the report was silent with respect to several provisions of the guidelines to be complied by the State Government.

The Chairman stated that the States/Union Territories should comply with the Sand Mining Guidelines issued by the Ministry in the year 2020 and no project for sand mining shall be recommended unless certificate of compliance of these guidelines is submitted by the State/Union Territories.

Decision taken: After discussion, the Standing committee decided to defer the matter and requested the State Government of Uttarakhand to submit the certificate of compliance for Sustainable Sand Mining Management Guidelines 2016 and Enforcement and Monitoring Guidelines for Sand Mining, 2020.

62.2.6 400kV D/C Jaunpur Obra Transmission Line, Uttar Pradesh

The member Secretary briefed that the Standing Committee in the 61st Meeting had decided that ministry shall constitute a committee. The Ministry has constituted a committee comprising of Dr. Sukumar, representatives from Wildlife Institute of India, Central Electricity Authority and Power Grid Corporation of India Limited to examine the matter and suggest site-specific mitigation measures within a period of 30 days. The report of the committee is yet to be received.

Decision taken: After discussions, the Standing Committee decided to defer the matter.

AGENDA ITEM No. 3

(Policy Matters, Court Orders/Rationalization of Boundaries of Protected Areas)

62.3.1 Guidelines on Ecotourism in Forest and Wildlife Areas 2021

The Member Secretary briefed the Standing Committee and stated that these Guidelines are aimed at promoting better understanding of nature and wildlife conservation while generating income and opportunities for the local communities in an ecologically, culturally and economically sustainable manner. The objectives of these Guidelines include promotion of low impact nature tourism, traditional ecological knowledge and heritage values of India's wilderness, engagement of local communities in nature tourism, partnerships amongst various stakeholders and finally enhancing potential of India as a global eco-tourism destination. He further stated that the FC Division of the Ministry felt the need to examine the Guidelines further with respect to the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

The Member Secretary informed that the comments from the FC division of the Ministry are yet to be received and inputs from the members of the Parliamentary Consultative Committee attached to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change have been sought.

Dr. Sukumar suggested that the guidelines should also address the operation of existing infrastructure for eco-tourism in the eco-sensitive zones in sustainable manner with respect to environment issues.

The Secretary, EF & CC stated that the guidelines would be applicable for eco-tourism in protected area, forest areas and eco-sensitive zones.

Decision Taken: After discussions, the Standing Committee decided to defer the matter.

The Chairman stated that indiscriminate establishment of solar panels will render land beneath solar panel unusable in future. Chairman also mentioned that establishment of solar panel should be consistent with afforestation/restoration works.

The Chairman expressed his concern over the death of wild animals due to trains accidents. He suggested that a research should be conducted to suggest measures to minimize deaths of wild animals due to train hit and use of suitable technology at wild animal crossing in hot spot areas for long term sustainability of wild animals.

Dr H S Singh, Member stated a technology called TRI-NETRA is being developed by Indian railways and is currently under trial. The TRI-NETRA comprises infrared camera, optical camera, and radar assisted imaging system for assisting loco pilots in identifying obstructions/wildlife on tracks, mainly in foggy conditions. This technology can be used for minimize the death of wild animals along with railway tracks. The Standing Committee opined that the railway authorities be consulted about the efficacy of the technology.

Dr H S Singh, Member stated that for linear projects such as railway line/roads appropriate animal passage plan should be prepared by a committee consisting of the Chief Wildlife Warden or his representative in the state, representative of the project proposal agency, local wildlife officials and local NGO/scientist or member of wildlife committee for Protected Area or Member State Wildlife Board to conduct the study before preparing the animal passage for the particular area.

He further mentioned that denotification or rationalization of boundaries of Protected Areas should be done for conservation of wildlife and consolidation of boundaries should not be done without field investigation of a committee headed by the Member of the National Board of Wildlife. Legal opinion may be sought from the Legal Department to know who is the competent authority for taking decision regarding rationalization of boundaries of protected area.

The Standing Committee noted the suggestions of Dr H.S. Singh.

AGENDA No. 4.

(Fresh Proposals Falling Inside / Outside the Protected Area)

62.4.1 Proposal for diversion of 0.1602 ha. land of Dadra and Nagar Haveli Wildlife Sanctuary for laying of 160,125 & 90 mm dia MDPE natural gas pipeline from our proposed/existing pipeline near Dapada DRS in village Dapada to connect Chikhli, Surangi, Khadoli, Khanvel, Kala & Kherdi village & its surrounding area, Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

The Member Secretary briefed the Standing Committee and stated that the Proposal for diversion of 0.1602 ha. land of Dadra and Nagar Haveli Wildlife Sanctuary for laying of 160,125 & 90 mm dia MDPE natural gas pipeline from our proposed/existing pipeline near Dapada DRS in village Dapada to connect Chikhli, Surangi, Khadoli, Khanvel, Kala & Kherdi village & its surrounding area, Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

The proposal has been recommended by the Chief Wild Life Warden and State Board for Wildlife has also recommended the proposal with suggestion to the project proponent to lay pipeline through tunnelling method at a depth of 2m.

Decision Taken: After discussions, the Standing Committee decided to recommend the proposal with the conditions of the State Board for Wild Life and subject to the following:

A. Conditions imposed by the Chief Wild Life Warden:

The user agency and project personnel will comply with the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 and any other conditions that may be applicable.

B. The annual compliance certificate on the stipulated conditions should be submitted by the project proponent to the State Chief Wild Life Warden and an annual compliance certificate shall be submitted by the State Chief Wild Life Warden to Government of India.

62.4.2 Diversion of 10.84 ha of forest land from Wild Ass Sanctuary for laying of 30" dia Crude Oil pipeline (from Mundra, District Kachchh, Gujarat to Rajasthan Refinery at Pachpadra, District Barmer, Rajasthan) along with OFC.

The Member Secretary briefed the Standing Committee and stated that the proposal is for diversion of 10.84 ha of forest land from Wild Ass sanctuary for laying of 30" dia Crude Oil pipeline (from Mundra, District Kachchh, Gujarat to Rajasthan Refinery at Pachpadra, District Barmer, Rajasthan).

The proposal has been recommended by the Chief Wild Life Warden and the State Board for Wild Life.

Decision Taken: After discussions, the Standing Committee decided to recommend the proposal subject to following:

A. Conditions imposed by the Chief Wild Life Warden:

1. The user agency shall not violate any regulatory provisions under section-9,17 A, 27,29,30,31 & 32 of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
2. The user agency shall not harm or destroy wildlife habitat including fauna and flora of the sanctuary.
3. The user agency shall ensure that there would be no oil/Gas spillage in the work site and will not create any dumping site within the Protected Area.
4. The user agency shall not use the area for any other work other than the work permitted.
5. The user agency shall not establish any temporary or permanent labour camp in the sanctuary.
6. The user agency or its contractor shall not create any fire places inside the sanctuary.
7. All the material required for the work shall be prepared outside the sanctuary.
8. The work in the sanctuary will be allowed only in the day time from 8 AM to 6 PM.
9. Approval under Forest (conservation) Act, 1980, if required, shall be obtained separately for use of forest land.
10. The user agency shall deposit NPV for the use of land of Protected Area as per the existing rates before initiating any work on the land.
11. The user agency shall restore the land in its original form after completion of the work.

- B. The annual compliance certificate on the stipulated conditions should be submitted by the project proponent to the State Chief Wild Life Warden and an annual compliance certificate shall be submitted by the State Chief Wild Life Warden to Government of India.

62.4.3 Diversion of 8.0976 Ha of forest land from Wild Ass Wildlife Sanctuary for construction of 18" Ø LPG Pipeline from Kandla-Gorakhpur in (Kandla-Viramgam & Viramgam-HPCL Sardhav) in Kutch & Morbi District, Gujarat.

The Member Secretary briefed the Standing Committee and stated that the proposal is for Diversion of 8.0976 Ha of forest land from Wild Ass Wildlife Sanctuary for construction of 18" Ø LPG Pipeline from Kandla-Gorakhpur in (Kandla-Viramgam & Viramgam-HPCL Sardhav) in Kutch & Morbi District, Gujarat.

The proposal has been recommended by the Chief Wild Life Warden and the State Board for Wild Life.

Decision Taken: After discussions, the Standing Committee decided to recommend the proposal subject to following:

A. Conditions imposed by the Chief Wild Life Warden

1. The user agency shall not violate any regulatory provisions under section-9,17 A, 27,29,30,31 & 32 of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.
 2. The user agency shall not harm or destroy wildlife habitat including fauna and flora of the sanctuary.
 3. The user agency shall ensure that there would be no oil/Gas spillage in the work site and will not create any dumping site within the Protected Area.
 4. The user agency shall not use the area for any other work other than the work permitted.
 5. The user agency shall not establish any temporary or permanent labour camp in the sanctuary.
 6. The User Agency or his contractor shall not create any fire places inside the sanctuary.
 7. All the material required for the work shall be prepared outside the sanctuary.
 8. The work in the sanctuary will be allowed only in the day time from 8 AM to 6 PM.
 9. Approval under Forest (conservation) Act, 1980, if required, shall be obtained separately for use of forest land.
 10. The user agency shall deposit NPV for the use of land of Protected Area as per the existing rates before initiating any work on the allotted land.
 11. The user agency shall restore the land in its original form after completion of the work.
- B.** The annual compliance certificate on the stipulated conditions should be submitted by the project proponent to the State Chief Wild Life Warden and an annual compliance certificate shall be submitted by the State Chief Wild Life Warden to Government of India.

62.4.4 Proposal for development of Sonwade-1x2.50 MW HPP at Warna LBC escape at village-Chandoli Budruk, Tal. Shirala, Dist. Sangli, in favour of Executive Engineer, Kolhapur Irrigation Division (North), Maharashtra. The project site is 0.155 km. aerial distance away from the Core /Critical Tiger habitat of Sahyadri Tiger Reserve. (6-141/2020 WL, FP/MH/HYD/1676/2017)

The Member Secretary briefed the Standing Committee and stated that the proposal is for development of Sonwade-1x2.50 MW HPP at Warna LBC escape at village-Chandoli Budruk, Tal. Shirala, Dist.Sangli, in favour of Executive Engineer, Kolhapur Irrigation Division (North), Maharashtra. The proposed project area is located within the buffer zone inside the boundary of Sahyadri Tiger Reserve and within the proposed Eco-sensitive area of Sahyadri Tiger Reserve. The project site is 0.155 km. aerial distance away from the Core /Critical Tiger habitat of Sahyadri Tiger Reserve.

The proposal has been recommended by the Chief Wild Life Warden the State Board for Wild Life and NTCA.

Decision Taken: After discussions, the Standing Committee decided to recommend the proposal subject to following:

A. Conditions imposed by the Chief Wild Life Warden:

The State CWLW has recommended with the condition that the project proponents shall deposit 2% of the cost of proposed project (Rs.1261 lakhs) with the Conservator of Forest & Field Director, Sahyadri Tiger Reserve, Kolhapur for the habitat improvement of the Sahyadri Tiger Reserve, Kolhapur and adjoining forests.

- B. The annual compliance certificate on the stipulated conditions should be submitted by the project proponent to the State Chief Wild Life Warden and an annual compliance certificate shall be submitted by the State Chief Wild Life Warden to Government of India.

62.4.5 Diversion of 0.95 Ha of Forest Land for the establishment of One Border Out Post on Indo Bhutan Border at AP Salami inside Pangolakha Wildlife Sanctuary, East Sikkim by 69th Bn SSB.

The Member Secretary briefed the Standing Committee and stated that the proposal is for use of 0.95 ha land between km 13+500 to Km 130+073 of Forest Land for the establishment of One Border Out Post on Indo Bhutan Border at AP Salami inside Pangolakha Wildlife Sanctuary, East Sikkim by 69th Bn SSB.

The proposal has been recommended by the Chief Wild Life Warden and the State Board for Wild Life.

Decision Taken: After discussions, the Standing Committee decided to recommend the proposal subject to following:

A. Conditions imposed by the Chief Wild Life Warden:

1. The user agency has to ensure that as far as possible the biodiversity of the area should not be damaged and there should be sensitization

of the army personnel at all level regarding the protection and conservation of the natural habitat of the area.

2. The SSB should install Bio Digesters can help to mitigate the sewage waste problem.
 3. Waste water should not flow into the wetlands and waterbodies.
 4. No unusual naming of the natural area like lakes and peaks and mountains etc which are not in the interest of local community.
 5. No construction of religious structures
 6. No defacing of rocks.
 7. Proper stone boundary demarcation of the diverted area.
 8. The area is a home to the Himalayan Black Bear and any case of Man-animal conflict arising in that area due to throwing of food waste, improper disposal of garbage, food godowns should be borne by the SSB since the cost of trapping, tranquilizing of wild animals is expensive.
 9. No works should be started in field before prior clearance under FCA, 1980d.
- B. The annual compliance certificate on the stipulated conditions should be submitted by the project proponent to the State Chief Wild Life Warden and an annual compliance certificate shall be submitted by the State Chief Wild Life Warden to Government of India.

62.4.6 Diversion of 0.98 Ha. of Forest Land for the establishment of one Border Out Post on Indo Bhutan Border at Denchukla inside Pangolakha Wildlife Sanctuary inside, East Sikkim by 69th Bn SSB. (6-28/2021)

The Member Secretary briefed the Standing Committee and stated that the proposal is for use of 0.98 Ha. of Forest Land for the establishment of one Border Out Post on Indo Bhutan Border at Denchukla inside Pangolakha Wildlife Sanctuary inside.

The proposal has been recommended by the Chief Wild Life Warden and the State Board for Wild Life.

Decision Taken: After discussions, the Standing Committee decided to recommend the proposal subject to following:

A. Conditions imposed by the Chief Wild Life Warden:

1. The user agency has to ensure that as far as possible the biodiversity of the area should not be damaged and there should be sensitization of the army personnel at all level regarding the protection and conservation of the natural habitat of the area.

2. The SSB should install Bio Digesters to mitigate the sewage waste problem.
 3. Waste water should not flow into the wetlands and water bodies.
 4. No unusual naming of the natural area like lakes and peaks and mountains etc which are not in the interest of local community.
 5. No defacing of rocks.
 6. Proper stone boundary demarcation of the diverted area.
 7. The area is a home to the Himalayan Black Bear and Man-animal conflict arising in that area due to throwing of food waste, improper disposal of garbage, food godowns. Such disposals should be managed with proper management plan.
 8. No works should be started in field before prior clearance under FCA, 1980.
- B. The annual compliance certificate on the stipulated conditions should be submitted by the project proponent to the State Chief Wild Life Warden and an annual compliance certificate shall be submitted by the State Chief Wild Life Warden to Government of India

62.4.7 Diversion of 1.5278 ha of forest land from Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary for construction of Sevoke Rangpo New BG Rail Line project of North East Frontier Railway. (6-41/2021 WL, FP/WB/RAIL/40708/2019).

The Member Secretary briefed the Standing Committee and stated that the proposal is for use of 1.5278 ha of forest land from Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary for construction of Sevoke Rangpo New BG Rail Line project of North East Frontier Railway. Proposal for survey for construction of new broad gauge railway line by North Frontier Railways from Sevoke in West Bengal to Rangpo at Sikkim over 32.586 ha within Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary, West Bengal.

The proposal has been recommended by the Chief Wild Life Warden. However, the recommendations of the State Board for Wild Life have not been provided. The State Government has mentioned that since the elections to the Legislative Assembly have to take place, the State Board for Wild Life is not in place. The State Government has now submitted a mitigation plan (**Enclosed as ANNEXURE-III**).

Decision Taken: After discussions, the Standing Committee decided to recommend the proposal subject to the implementation of the mitigation plan submitted by the State Government and following conditions:

A. Condition imposed by the Chief Wild Life Warden:

Sufficient precautions should be taken to avoid any kind of accident to wildlife and damage to wildlife habitat.

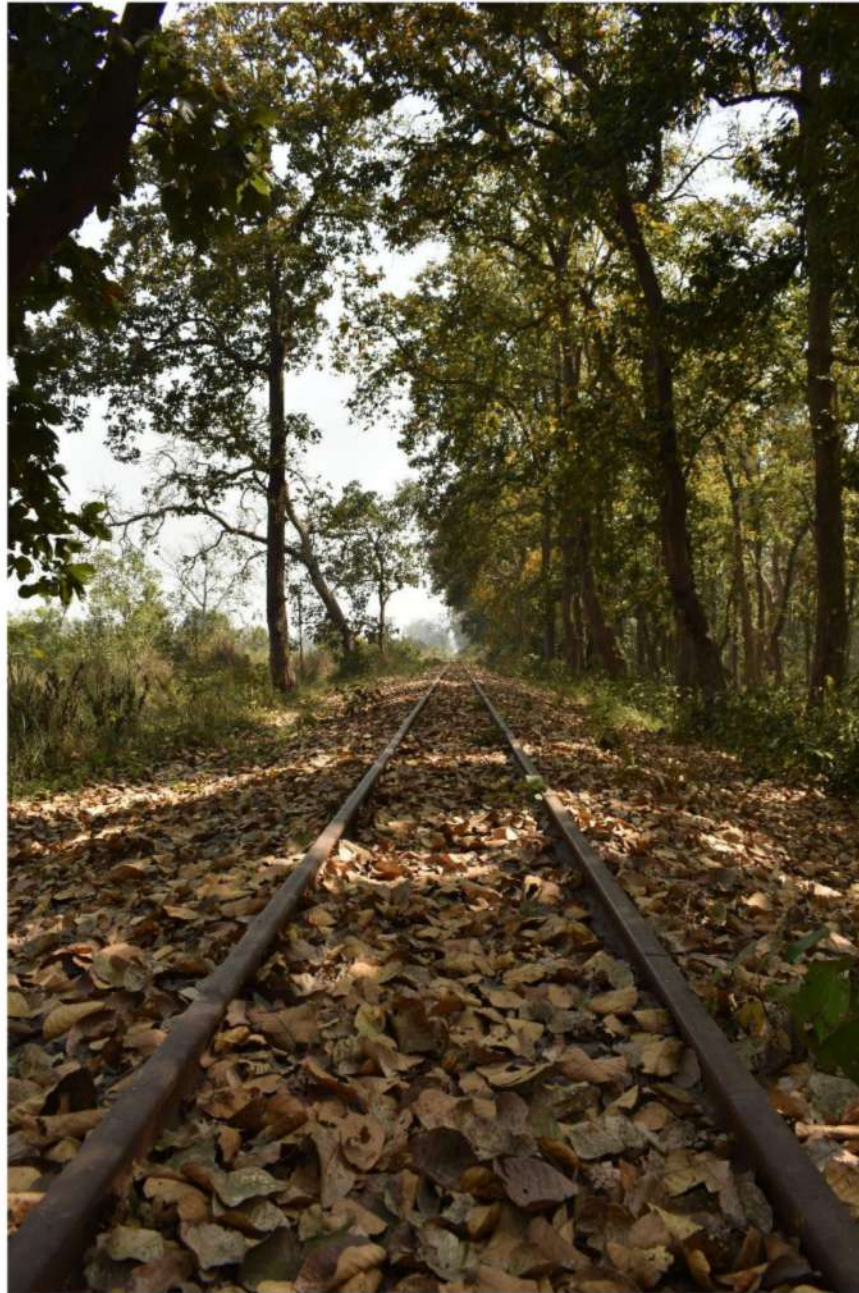
- B. The annual compliance certificate on the stipulated conditions should be submitted by the project proponent to the State Chief Wild Life Warden and an annual compliance certificate shall be submitted by the State Chief Wild Life Warden to Government of India.

ANNEXURE I**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

1	Shri Prakash Javadekar, Hon'ble Minister for EF&CC	Chairman
2	Shri R P Gupta, Secretary, MoEF&CC	Member
3	Shri Sanjay Kumar, DGF&SS, MoEF&CC	Member
4	Shri Soumitra Dasgupta, AGF(WL), MoEF&CC	Member Secretary
5	Prof R Sukumar, Member, NBWL	Member
6	Dr H S Singh, Member, NBWL	Member
7	Shri R D Kamboj, Member, NBWL	Member
8	Dr Dhananjay Mohan, Member, NBWL	Member
9	Ms. Imtiela Ao, DDG, IRO, Shillong	Invitee
10	Shri Dr. Amit Mallick, IG (NTCA)	Invitee
11	Shri Rohit Tiwari, IGF(WL)	Invitee
12	Mr Brijendra Swaroop, IGF(PE)	Invitee
13	Shri M.K. Yadava, Chief Wild Life Warden, Assam	Invitee
14	Shri. Shyamal Tikedar, Chief Wild Life Warden, Gujarat	Invitee
15	Shri Nitin Kakodkar, Chief Wild Life Warden, Maharashtra	Invitee
16	Shri. D.C. Nepal, Chief Wild Life Warden, Sikkim	Invitee
17	Shri Sunil Pandey, Chief Wild Life Warden, Uttar Pradesh	Invitee
18	Shri J.S. Suhag, Chief Wild Life Warden, Uttarakhand	Invitee
19	Shri Rakesh Kr Jagenia, DIGF(WL), MoEF&CC	Invitee
20	Shri Surender Gugloth, Scientist D, MoEF&CC	Invitee

Mitigation measures for proposal involving use of 6.704 ha of reserve forestland from Pilibhit Tiger Reserve for Mailani- Pilibhit Gauge Conversion chainage 212.520-213.070 KM and 242.310-250.140 KM (8.38 KM) between Kuriya Dudhiyakhurd and Sandai Mala, Uttar Pradesh State

(Joint Committee report submitted to Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife)



March 2021

Background of the constitution of the committee and terms of reference: The Ministry of Railways (MoR) as a part of its 'Uni-Gauge Policy' (1992) has been converting all the Meter Gauge (MG) railway lines to Broad Gauge (BG). Distance between Lucknow and Pilibhit is approximately 262 km and conversion of the most of the railway track till Mailani has already been completed. Since 8.38 km of the existing MG in between Mailani and Pilibhit passes through the core tiger habitat of Pilibhit Tiger Reserve [about 7.83 km in Mala Range in between Mala and Sandai Halt stations and about 550 m in Haripur Range in between Kuriya and Dudhiya Khurd] (**Fig.1**), permission for wildlife clearance has been sought by the Ministry of Railway and User Agency (Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd., RVNL). Uttar Pradesh State Board for Wildlife in its 9th meeting held on November 04, 2019 has recommended the project to the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) for approval. The proposal was discussed at the 59th meeting of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife (SC-NBWL) held on October 5, 2020 and the mitigation plan prepared by the Uttar Pradesh Forest Department (UPFD) was communicated to the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) for vetting. WII suggested a revisit of the plan since the original plan was not appropriate. Subsequently the matter was discussed in the 60th meeting of SC-NBWL held on January 5, 2021 and a Committee was constituted (vide MoEFCC WL Division OM F.No.6-4/2020WL (pt.1) dated February 9, 2021) with a mandate to visit the site and suggest the mitigation measures. The committee comprises of the members as below:

1. Sh. Naveen Khandelwal, DFO Pilibhit Tiger Reserve, representative from Uttar Pradesh Forest Department (UPFD) as member
2. Sh. R.K. Saxena, Sr. DGM, representative, Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd. (RVNL), Lucknow as member and
3. Dr. Kausik Banerjee, Research Scientist, Wildlife Institute of India (WII), Dehradun as member convenor

Fig. 1: Location of the railway track within Pilibhit Tiger Reserve. Green color represents core (critical tiger habitat) of the Tiger Reserve.



Field Visit: The committee made site visit on March 06 and 07, 2021 and inspected the entire stretch of the railway alignment passing through Tiger Reserve area (**Fig. 2**) along with following officials of Uttar Pradesh Forest Department, RVNL and WII:

Name	Designation
Sh. Ayan Sadhu	Project Associate, Tiger Cell, WII
Sh. Umesh Chandra Rai	SDFO, Mala, Pilibhit Tiger Reserve
Sh. Ramji	RFO, Mala Range, Pilibhit Tiger Reserve
Sh. Sunil Kumar Verma	Dy. GM, RVNL, Lucknow
Sh. Vinod Tiwari	Sr. Manager, RVNL, Lucknow

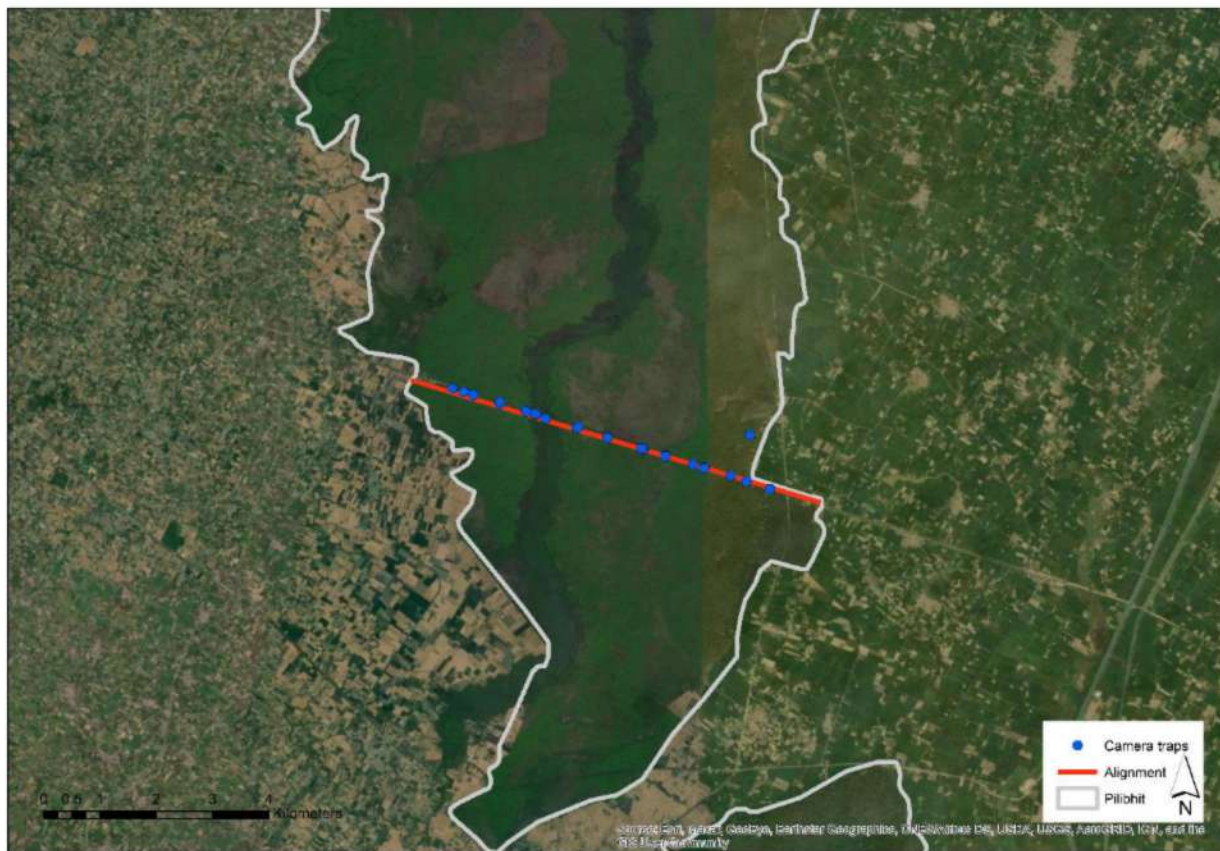
Fig. 2: Glimpses of the Committee and other officials carrying out the site appraisal



Methodology adopted:

1. Joint site visit and inspection of the entire stretch of the railway track passing through Pilibhit Tiger Reserve.
2. Detailed discussion among the team members regarding placement of mitigation structures and their engineering feasibility and ecological efficacy.
3. Thorough scrutiny of the existing structures and proposed structures by the team members for their effectiveness of being useful animal passages.
4. Placement of 22 camera traps for 10 days (220 trap nights) on the animal trails on both sides along the entire stretch of the track by Uttar Pradesh Forest Department (**Fig. 3**) to identify animal passage hotspots. It was attempted to deploy one camera trap every 250 - 300 m of the track length, however additional camera traps were also deployed if more than one potential site was observed within 250 m.
5. Sign survey ¹ (effort = 9.2 km) of the entire track passing through forest by WII team using M-STrIPES android mobile application to understand animal usage of the track and adjoining areas.

Fig. 3: Locations of camera traps deployed by Uttar Pradesh Forest Department for 10 days along the existing railway track in Sandai – Mala section



Findings & observations:

1. During the visit, the committee observed signs of major carnivores (such as tigers, leopards and sloth bears) (**Fig. 4 and Fig. 5**) and herbivores on and within 100 m from the track indicating extensive use of the railway track by wildlife for movement.
2. 324 photo-captures of 13 mammalian species were recorded during the camera trap exercise along the railway track (**Table 1, Fig. 5 and Fig. 6**). Nine photo-captures of tigers were recorded during the exercise. Although leopard was not photo-captured during the camera trap exercise, its presence was recorded during sign survey exercise.

Table 1: Summary of wild mammalian species photo-captured during the camera trapping exercise

Species	Photo-captures
Tiger	9
Nilgai	15
Chital	222
Wild pig	20
Langur	2
Porcupine	20
Rhesus macaque	16
Sloth bear	9
Small Indian civet	2
Hog deer	5
Fishing cat	1
Common palm civet	2
Rusty spotted cat	1
Total	324

3. Hotspots of animal activity/presence were visualized by overlapping all animal signs and photo-captures using kernel density analysis in GIS-platform (**Fig. 7**). This information was used to delineate potential animal crossing zones.
4. The team observed that embankment height was about 1 m for majority of the railway alignment except a few places (like locations of Bridge (minor) numbers 255, 256 having bank height of about 3 m and Bridge (major) number 257 having bank height of about 5-6 m). The ruling gradient for the current section is 1:400 which means that for elevating the track for 1 m, the alignment needs to be raised for 400 m on both sides of the elevated stretch. With the current gradient and formation for track, the Committee observed that elevating the entire track would require more base width (about 28 m for elevating the track for 5 m, **Annexure 1**) not only for the elevated stretch but 2 km on either side of Mala and Sandai which entails more diversion of forest land, removal of trees and construction time.

Fig. 4: Carnivore signs (tiger and leopard pugmarks, leopard scats) observed by the Committee along the railway track during site inspection



Fig. 5: Locations of large carnivore presence (based on sign survey and camera trap) along the existing railway track in Sandai – Mala section

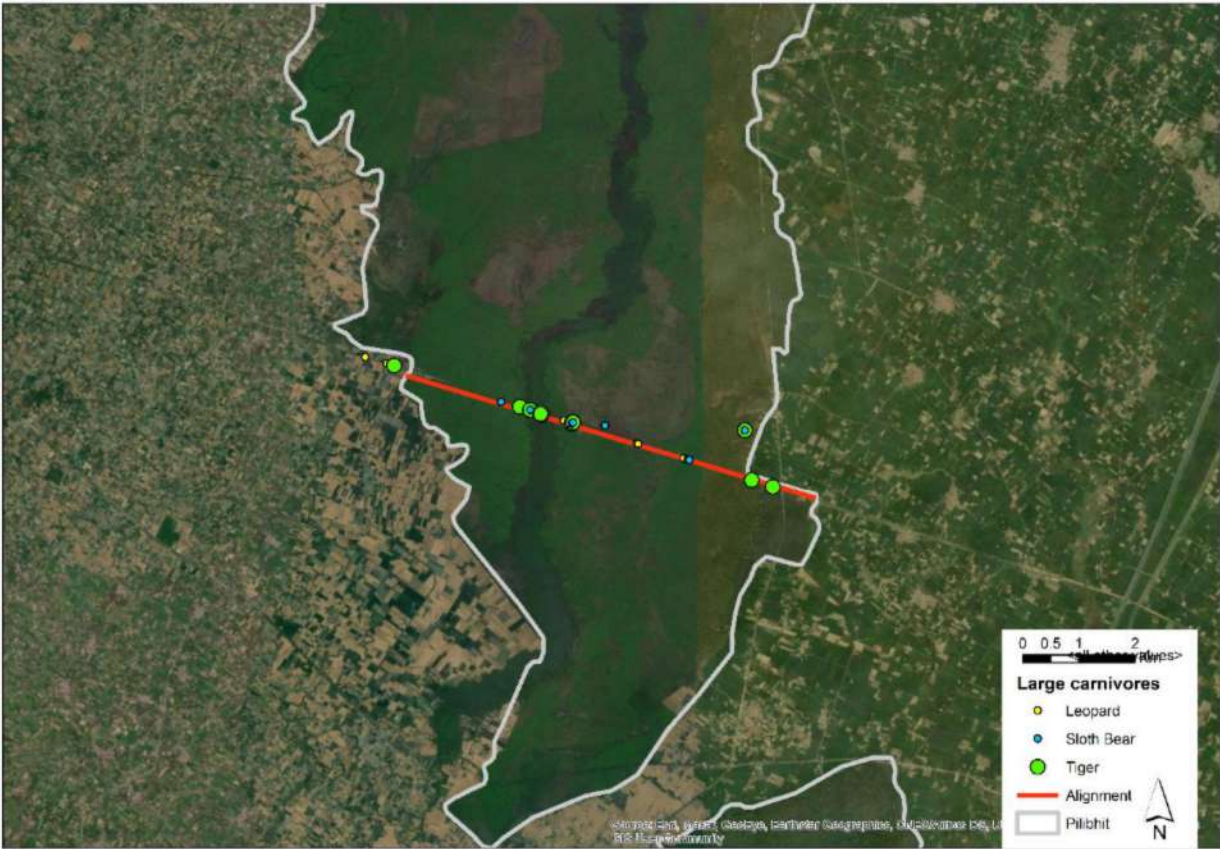


Fig. 6: Camera trap images of some of the mammals photo-captured during the camera trap exercise

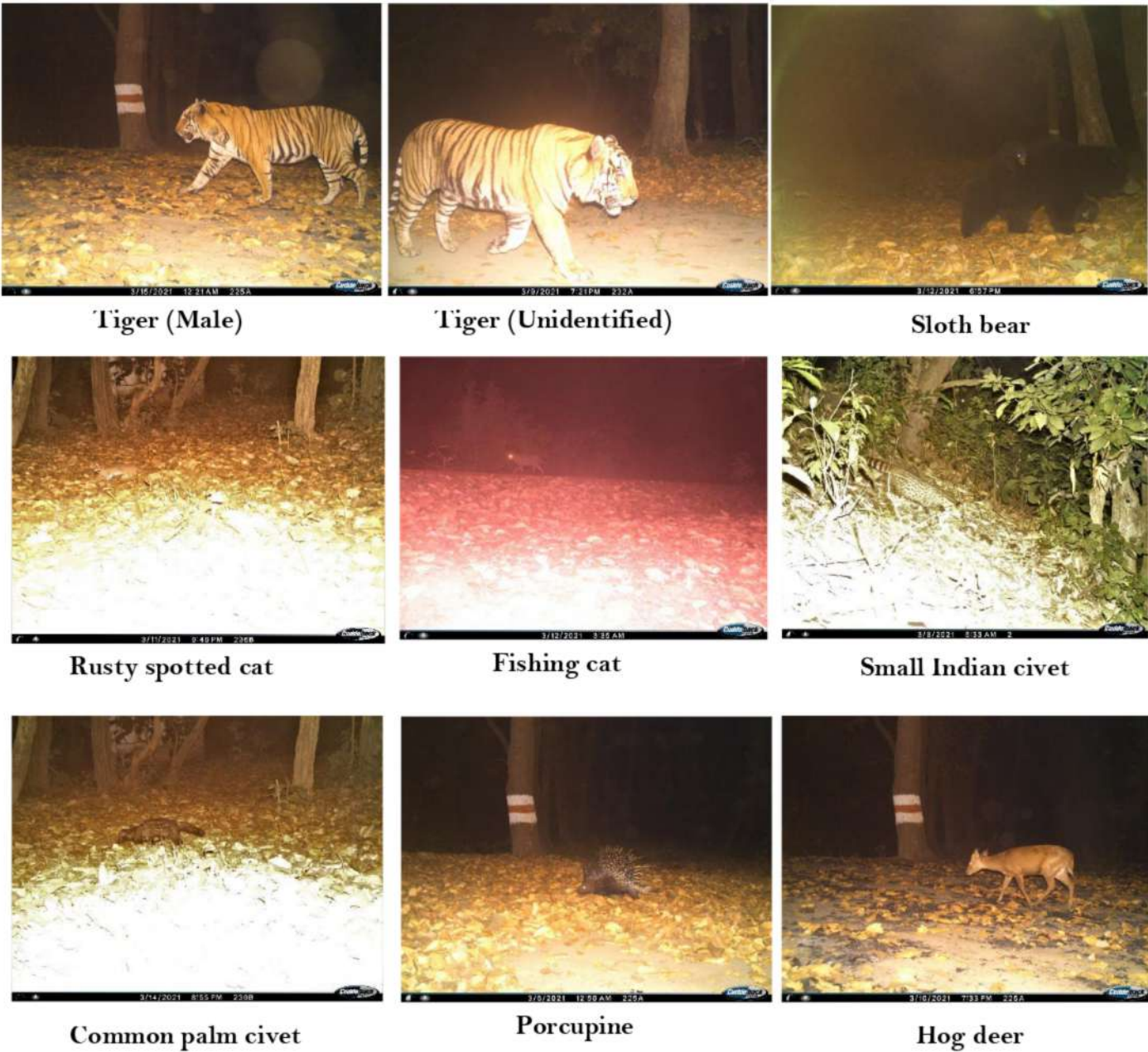
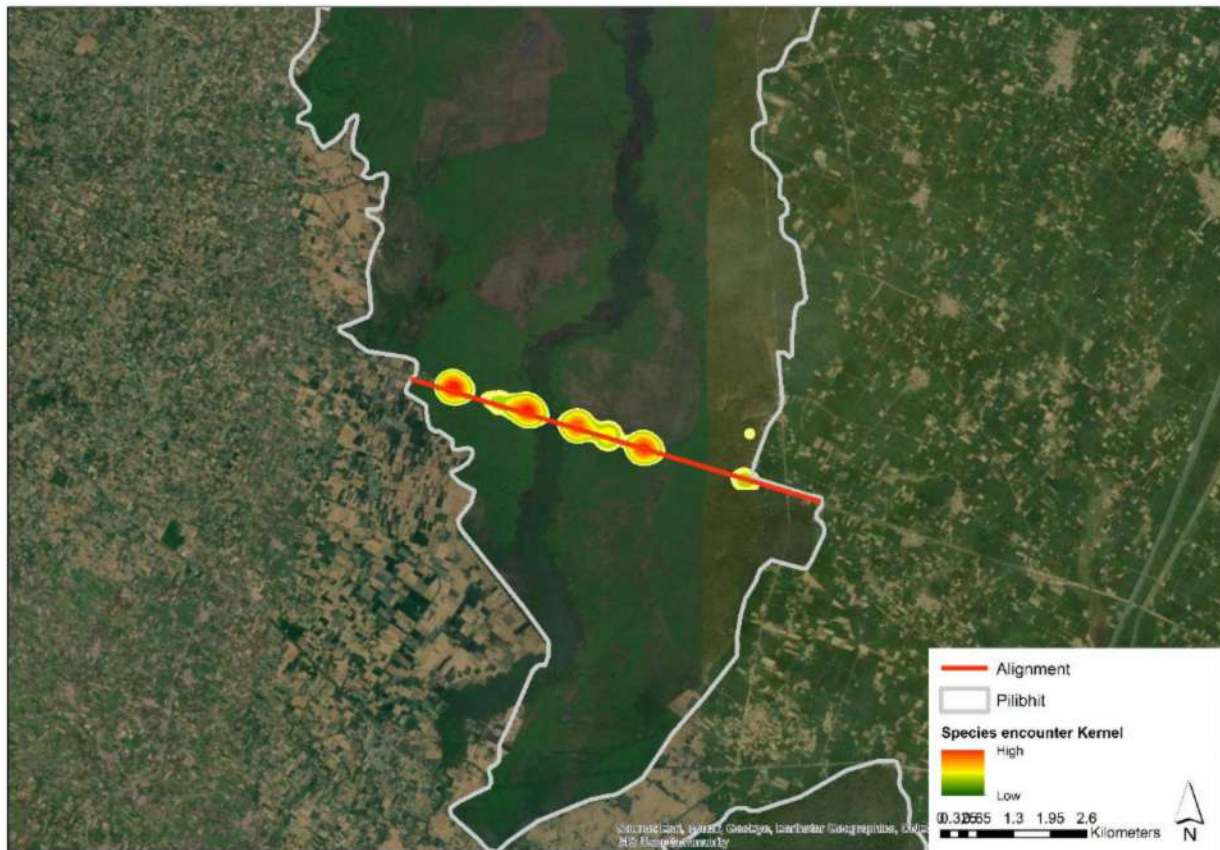


Fig. 7: Mammalian hotspots identified along the railway track in between Sandai and Mala section



Recommendations:

Based on the above observations and findings, the Committee arrived at the following suggestions as possible mitigation measures:

A. Underpasses

1. There are two existing minor bridges (bridge number 255 and 256) which currently serve as underpasses for animal passage. However, the current dimensions are inadequate and the structures need to be retrofitted based on WII guidelines ².
2. The existing major bridge (Bridge number 257) on river Mala needs to be demolished and removed entirely. The Committee proposed construction of an open web girder bridge in a manner that additional span of length on both sides of Mala river (beyond Highest Flood Level) should serve as animal passages during the monsoon (**Annexure 2**).
3. Two additional new underpasses have been proposed on either sides of Mala river as per WII guidelines.

4. Dimensions of all proposed underpasses should be such that the 'openness ratio' of at least 2.0 ³ so that animals get an unobstructed view of the habitat.
5. Proposed underpasses need to be fortified with visual and sound barriers to prevent any disturbance to wildlife that could potentially use these structures for passage across the infrastructure.
6. Surface of the underpasses (RCC Boxes) should be covered with soil. Railway should ensure no waterlogging of these underpasses during monsoon.
7. Details of the proposed underpasses are in **Table 2** and **Fig. 8**.

Table 2: Details of the proposed underpasses on railway track in Sandai – Mala section

Bridge Structure /	Chainage	Existing/New	Proposed Span (m) (height x length x width)	Proposed Structure type	Openness Ratio
Bridge no 255	244.847	Existing (1x1.83 m arch)	3 x 10 x 8	RCC box	3.75
Bridge no 256	245.808	Existing (1x5.00 m RCC slab)	3 x 10 x 8	RCC box	3.75
---	247.450	New	3.6 x 5 x 8	RCC box	2.25
Bridge no. 257	247.593	Existing (4x12.20+1x18.30)	5.5 x 91.44 x 8 (both sides)	Open Web Girder (OWG)	14.43*
---	247.800	New	3.6 x 5 x 8	RCC box	2.25

* Length of span on both sides of Mala river (5.5 x 21 x 8) will be used as animal passage as there may be water flowing below the main bridge

Fig. 8: Proposed underpasses and fencing along the railway track in Sandai Mala section



B. Fencing

1. In order to avoid animal crossing and prevent wildlife mortality, the Committee proposed about 2.05 km fencing (chain link with a height of 10 feet) along the track in two stretches (**Fig. 8**):
 - a. From chainage 242.550 to 243.850 (1,300 m near Sandai Halt) to be provided on forest side of the railway track
 - b. From chainage 249.32 to 250.070 (750 m near Mala station) to be provided on both sides of the railway track

C. Wildlife crossing ramps

Railway should construct seven, 10 m wide level crossing like structures (crossing ramps) at certain intervals along the railway track in between Sandai and Mala. Murram can be used as construction materials for these ramps and annual maintenance of these structures should be carried out by Railway. As mentioned before, locations of these structures have been delineated based on hotspots of animal presence. Locations of these structures are in **Table 3**.

Table 3: GPS locations of the proposed wildlife crossing structures

S. No.	GPS Coordinates
1	28°35'11.42" N, 79°56'24.0" E
2	28°35'2.89" N, 79°56'56.97" E
3	28°34'49.31" N, 79°57'47.56" E
4	28°34'43.91" N, 79°58'7.74" E
5	28°34'28.86" N, 79°59'4.03" E
6	28°34'22.66" N, 79°59'29.41" E
7	28°34'19.27" N, 79°59'40.91" E

The Committee found that with implementation of underpasses, fencing and wildlife crossing structures, about 29% of the railway track in between Sandai and Mala would be under mitigation structures.

D. Speed restrictions

Railway will impose a PSR (Permanent Speed Restriction) of 20 km/hour for all trains passing through the core area of Pilibhit Tiger Reserve (for both Mala and Haripur stretch in between km chainage of 242.550 to 250.100 and 212.500 to 213.100). Technology aided surveillance systems such as wireless sensors should be in place to monitor this speed restriction and information in real time should be shared with UPFD. Railway should nominate a nodal person for overseeing this speed restriction. With absence of any curve in this section, the Committee felt that imposition of the speed restriction would assist substantially in minimizing wildlife mortality on the railway track.

E. Mitigation measures during construction phase

- a. Construction work should be done during daytime and no night camp of labors and contractor / RVNL officials should be allowed within forest area. User agency should also monitor that no labour gets involved in extraction of forest products. Local RFO and forest staff should pay regular and sudden visits to the construction sites for monitoring these.
- b. RVNL should ensure that the construction period within Pilibhit Tiger Reserve is kept minimal since construction work continued for a longer duration might completely decimate the wildlife populations in the area beyond recovery.
- c. RVNL should not construct any approach road for transport of construction materials. Patrol routes of UPFD may be used for transport of the same.
- d. No construction material should be procured from forest. Construction debris should be disposed outside the forest area.
- e. Railway should provide UPFD with 2 watchers/km of the track during the construction phase and 1 watcher/km of the track during running phase for monitoring.
- f. Railway will issue a “look out caution” and it will be incorporated in railway working time table for the section of railway track passing through the Eco-sensitive zone of Pilibhit Tiger Reserve.

F. Monitoring

- a. A joint team comprising of watchmen of forest and railway departments (equipped with wireless sets) should patrol entire stretch of the track regularly and warn the train drivers whenever necessary.
- b. A separate team needs to be engaged for disposing food waste and other garbage from the tracks regularly which otherwise might attract animals to approach the track.
- c. A publication after analyzing 40 years' data on tiger trafficking inferred that rail routes being preferred more by the poachers than highways ascribing this to minimal presence of enforcement agencies in the trains as compared to buses [‡]. A joint patrolling team comprising of Railway Protection Force, UPFD and officials from regional centers of Wildlife Crime Control Bureau should regularly conduct surprise checking in the trains plying in between Mailani and Pilibhit and passing through wildlife areas.

- d. The Chief Wildlife Warden, Uttar Pradesh and Field Director, Pilibhit Tiger Reserve shall ensure that the current Committee shall visit the site once during the construction phase and once after the operationalization of railway to oversee the compliance of the mitigation measures suggested herein and submit report to Chief Wildlife Warden, Uttar Pradesh and WL Division of MoEFCC.
- e. A quarterly joint meeting of the officials from Railway and UPFD be called to address conflict and mortality issues and if anything appears to be urgent be decided in consultation with the National Tiger Conservation Authority and WL division, MoEFCC.

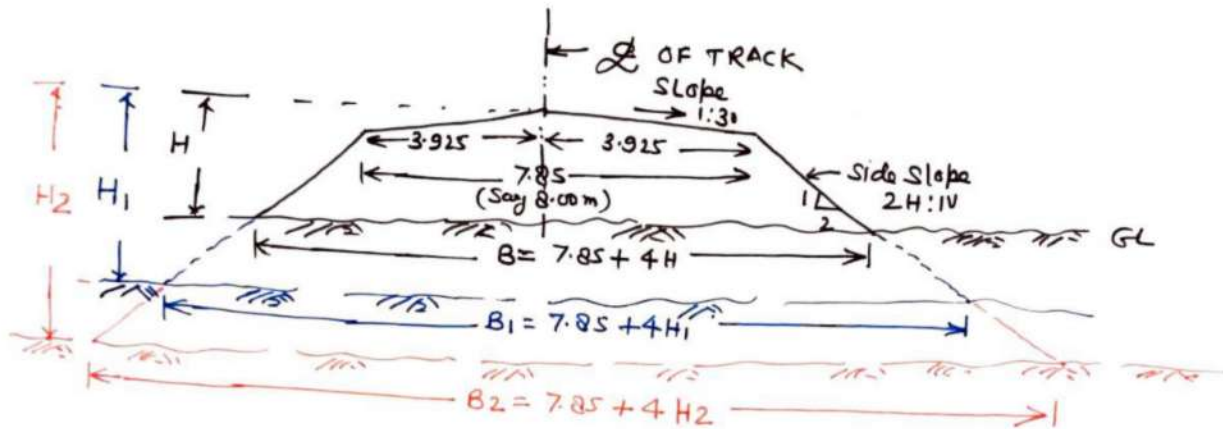
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3. Watson, M. and Klingel, J. 2000. *Literature summary assessing methods for reducing deer-vehicle accidents*. New Mexico Department of Fish and Game Website.
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Annexure 1

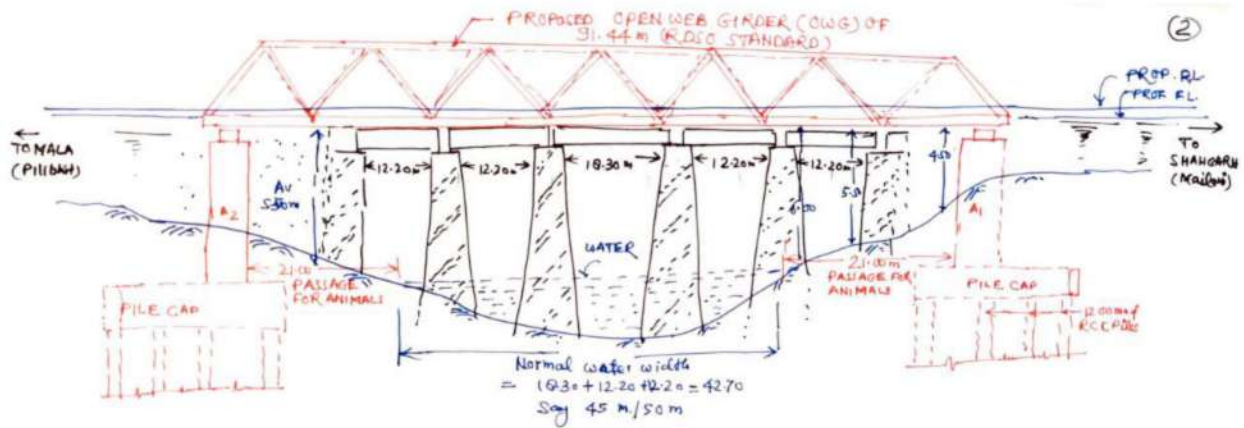
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CROSS SECTION OF FORMATION FOR TRACK



- ⇒ Top width of Formation Bank = 7.85m (Min) Say - 8.00m
- ⇒ Base width of Formation is dependant upon bank height - H.
- ⇒ Side slope desired for track formation = 2(Hor) : 1(Ver)
- ⇒ As illustrated above, base width for-
 - (i) $H = 1\text{m}$, $B = 7.85 + 4 \times 1 = 11.85\text{m}$ Say 12.00m.
 - (ii) $H_1 = 2\text{m}$, $B_1 = 7.85 + 4 \times 2 = 15.85\text{m}$ Say 16.00m.
 - (iii) $H_2 = 5\text{m}$, $B_2 = 7.85 + 4 \times 5 = 27.85\text{m}$, Say 28.00m
- ⇒ Thus more bank height will require more base width, of forest area, and more trees to remove.

Annexure 2



SKETCH SHOWING PASSAGE ARRANGEMENT
WITH LARGER SPAN (WITHOUT OBSTRUCTION)
AT MALA NADI (MALA RIVER)

NOTES:-

1. EXISTING SPAN - $4 \times 12.20 + 1 \times 18.30 = 67.10 + 18.30 = 85.40m$ (Overall)
2. NORMAL WATER WIDTH = $2 \times 12.20 + 18.30 + 3.00 = 45.70m$, Say 50.00m
3. PROPOSED SPAN ARRANGEMENT = 31.44m clearspan, as per R.D.S.C. DB.
4. PASSAGE AVAILABLE IN BOTH SIDES OF STREAM = 230.00m (Approx)
5. HEIGHT OF PASSAGE WILL INCREASE BY PROVIDING OWG.
6. CLEARANCE HEIGHT AT PASSAGES = 5.50m (Av)

Wildlife Passage Plan for Animal Crossing under the Sevoke- Rangpo BG Railway Project

Animal Passage Plan is proposed at two places: 1) between Gulma station and 1/4 anti- poaching tower, and 2) between 1/4 anti-poaching tower and Sevoke railway station as per the guidelines provided by Wildlife Institute of India and approval by PCCF/WL & CWLW West Bengal. The construction of Animal Passage Plan will be done by Railway authorities.

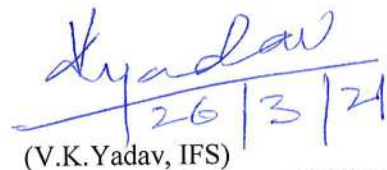
The Sevoke-Rangpo railway line project will connect Sevoke Railway Station in Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary to the Rangpo in Sikkim. The Sevoke Station is connected to New Jalpaiguri Railway Station. The railway line from New Jalpaiguri to Sevoke is a feeder line to Sevoke-Rongpo railway line. The new Jalpaiguri to Sevoke railway line passes through the Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary from Gulma Railway Station to Sevoke Railway Station.

The operation of the Sevoke-Rongpo line is expected to increase the traffic on the section passing from Gulma to Sevoke. The wildlife moving inside the Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary and surrounding forest areas will need to cross the railway line at several places in the Gulma-Sevoke section.

It is felt that Wildlife needs to be provided safe passage across the railway line without any risk of collision with trains. Two overhead safe passages, following the guidelines of Wildlife Institute of India (WII) and Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change should be constructed by Railways, at the following locations:

1. One overhead passage between Gulma station (entry into Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary) and 1/4 anti- poaching tower.
2. One overhead passage between 1/4 anti-poaching tower and Sevoke railway station.

The width and height of the overhead passage should be such that large herbivores like Elephants and Gaurs can cross the line through the overhead passage by providing gentle slope on both sides of the overhead passage. The designing, estimation and execution may be done by Railways in consultation with the Chief Wildlife Warden.



(V.K.Yadav, IFS)

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Wildlife &
Chief Wildlife Warden, West Bengal