

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 27TH EXPERT COMMITTEE FOR DECLARATION OF ECO-SENSITIVE ZONE (ESZ) AROUND WILDLIFE SANCTUARIES/ NATIONAL PARKS HELD ON 11^H OCTOBER, 2017

A meeting of the Expert Committee for declaration of Eco-Sensitive Zones around Wildlife Sanctuaries/ National Parks was held in the Ministry on 11th October, 2017 under the Chairpersonship of Dr. Amita Prasad, Additional Secretary. The list of participants is annexed. The following nine (9) proposals were considered for finalization of Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) notifications:

| Sl. No. | Protected Area | State | Status |
|----------------|------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. | Narsingarh Wildlife Sanctuary | Madhya Pradesh | Fresh proposal |
| 2. | Orccha Wildlife Sanctuary | Madhya Pradesh | Fresh proposal |
| 3. | Sohelwa Wildlife Sanctuary | Uttar Pradesh | Fresh proposal |
| 4. | Surinsar Mansar Wildlife Sanctuary | Jammu & Kashmir | Fresh proposal |
| 5. | Nagarahole Wildlife Sanctuary | Karnataka | Fresh proposal |
| 6. | Inderkila National Park | Himachal Pradesh | Deferred proposal |
| 7. | Parvati Arga Wildlife Sanctuary | Uttar Pradesh | Revised proposal |
| 8. | Nandini Wildlife Sanctuary | Jammu & Kashmir | Revised proposal |
| 9. | Ramnagar Sanctuary | Jammu & Kashmir | Deferred proposal |

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the members of the Expert Committee and representatives of the State Governments of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Himachachal Pradesh. Thereafter, the Chairperson invited one by one the representatives of the States to make presentations on their proposals.

3. Fresh Proposals:

3.1. Eco-sensitive Zone around Narsingarh Wildlife Sanctuary, Madhya Pradesh

Shri. Alok Kumar, APCCF (WL), Govt. of Madhya Pradesh apprised the Committee about the proposal. The draft notification was published on 26.04.2017. The salient features of the draft Eco-sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA : 57.19 Sq. Km
Proposed ESZ area : 140.71 Sq. Km
Proposed Extent : 100 metres to 2 kms.

It was mentioned that the Narsingharh Wildlife Sanctuary is a small Protected Area situated in Rajgarh district in Madhya Pradesh and has number of lakes and wetland areas with an artificial perennial lake. This lake is a major source of water to wild animals throughout the year and also a attraction for tourists.

No comments were received from the stakeholders/public. It was informed that the ESZ extent is 100 metres towards the Northern side due to Township in that area. Chairperson enquired about the promotional measures taken up by the State for biodiversity. In this context, it was mentioned that several Samitis are being created under the Madhya Pradesh State Biodiversity Board for promotion of awareness about the importance of biodiversity.

Some Members enquired about the prohibited and regulated activities within 1 kilometre zone. The Chairperson mentioned that it is a general norm followed in all Notifications. Chairperson also emphasized for public consultation and submission of proceedings along with the dates of consultations held with the public. After detailed deliberations, the Committee recommended the finalization of the draft Notification.

3.2. Eco-sensitive Zone around Orccha WLS, Madhya Pradesh

Shri. Alok Kumar, APCCF (WL), Govt. of Madhya Pradesh apprised the Committee about the proposal. The draft notification was published on 26.05.2017. The salient features of the draft Eco-sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

| | | |
|-------------------|---|--|
| Area of PA | : | 45.36 Sq. Km |
| Proposed ESZ area | : | 24.84 Sq. Km |
| Proposed Extent | : | Zero to 2 kms (Zero extent towards Interstate boundary of Uttar Pradesh) |

It was mentioned that the Orccha Wildlife Sanctuary is located in Tikamgarh district in Madhya Pradesh and is connected with Orchha territorial range and Babina range in Uttar Pradesh. The Sanctuary is extremely rich in flora and fauna and contains 4 tortoises species, 16 fish species, 97 bird species and 4 vulture species.

No comments were received from the stakeholders/public. It was informed that minimum extent of 100 metres has been kept in areas having thick township population. Representative of the State Government stated that Orccha Wildlife Sanctuary is a tourist place and the region is being promoted for active eco-tourism activities which in turn enhances the livelihood of the common people. It was mentioned that the Protected Area shares interstate boundary with Uttar Pradesh.

After detailed deliberations, Committee recommended for finalisation of the Draft Notification.

3.3. Eco-sensitive Zone around Sohelwa WLS, Uttar Pradesh

Shri Kuruvilla Thomas, CCF (WL), Gonda, Forest and Wildlife Department, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh apprised the Committee about the proposal. The draft Notification was published on 20th July, 2017. The salient features of the draft Eco-sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Area of Sanctuary | : 452.47 sq km |
| Area of Proposed ESZ | : 194 sq km |
| Extent of Proposed ESZ | : 1 km around PA Boundary |

It was mentioned that Sohelwa Wildlife Sanctuary also known as Suheldev Wildlife Sanctuary is situated along the Indo-Nepal International Border in the Balrampur and Shravasti Districts of Uttar Pradesh. Approximately, 42 Species of flora from 7 families and 65 species of fauna from 8 families have been recorded from the sanctuary.

No comments were received from the stakeholders/public on draft Notification. It was mentioned during presentation that an extent of 1.0 km all around the sanctuary is proposed as Eco-sensitive zone except on the Northern and Western side where it is international border with Nepal.

The chairperson desired that the State Governments should adopt landscape approach while recommending the ESZ area rather than deciding on administrative divisions. The committee suggested extension of ESZ area towards Eastern side by inclusion of adjoining reserve forest. The Committee also advised the State Government to take road as the boundary on the southern side of the eco-sensitive zone.

After detailed deliberations, the Committee asked the State Government to re-examine the proposal for revising the ESZ extent and re-submit for further consideration.

3.4. Eco-sensitive Zone around Surinsar Mansar WLS, Jammu & Kashmir

Shri Manoj Pant, Chief Wildlife Warden, Govt. of Jammu & Kashmir apprised the Committee about the proposal. The draft Notification was published on 20th July, 2017. The salient features of the draft Eco-sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

| | | |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Area of PA | : | 97.82 sq kms |
| Proposed ESZ area | : | 21.277 sq km |
| Proposed Extent | : | 0 to 1.663 km (0 extent on North east and Eastern side) |

It was mentioned that Surinsar Mansar Wildlife Sanctuary is located between River Tawi in the north and north-west, Udhampur-Samba road in South-East, Surinsar lake in North-west and Mansar lake in South-east

direction in the State of Jammu & Kashmir. No comments were received from the stakeholders/ public on the draft Notification. The committee inquired about the status of local consultations on keeping zero extent towards North east side and eastern side, to which the CWL replied that the consultations with locals were done on this issue.

The committee suggested extension of ESZ area towards Southern side by inclusion of adjoining reserve forest. Accordingly, the State has been asked to revise and resubmit the proposal.

3.5. Eco-sensitive Zone around Nagarahole WLS, Karnataka:

Shri P Ravi, Addl. Chief Secretary, Govt. of Karnataka apprised the Committee about the proposal. The draft Notification was published on 25.07.2017. The salient features of the draft Eco-sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

| | | |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Area of PA | : | 847.41 Sq. Km |
| Proposed ESZ area | : | 568.88 Sq. Km |
| Proposed Extent | : | Zero to 7.44 km (Zero extent towards interstate boundary) |

During presentation, it was mentioned that Nagarahole Tiger Reserve is situated in Mysore (Hunsur, Periyapatna and H.D.Kote Talukas) and Kodagu (Virajpet taluka) districts of Karnataka. The National Park area was notified as an extension of the Bandipur Tiger Reserve landscape bringing it under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme Project Tiger Nagarahole Tiger Reserve is also notified as Core/Critical Tiger habitat.

Several comments received from several stakeholders were discussed during the meeting. The State Government representative mentioned that the buffer area of the tiger reserve has been declared as the eco sensitive zone. He also mentioned that there are a large number of villages falling in the area.

Committee was of the view that the State Government may explore to enhance the ESZ outside the buffer area of the Tiger Reserve also.

After detailed deliberations, the Committee deferred the proposal for consideration.

4. Deferred/ Revised Proposals

4.1. Eco-Sensitive Zone around Inderkila National Park, Himachal Pradesh:

Shri T.R. Sharma, DFO Wildlife Kullu, Govt. of Himachal Pradesh apprised the Committee about the proposal. The draft Notification was published on 21st July, 2016. The salient features of the Inderkila National Park as per draft Notification are:

Area of PA : 2317.25 sq. km
Proposed ESZ area: 17 sq. Km
Proposed Extent : upto 2.70 km

The Inderkila National Park is situated in Kullu District of Himachal Pradesh which provides home to a variety of endemic flora and fauna. The proposal was listed for discussion in Expert committee meeting held on 27th February 2017 and on 7th July 2017, but State Govt sought deferment on both the occasions.

DFO stated that the earlier calculation of area of PA and ESZ was incorrect and after seeking verification the correct figures are:

Revised Area of PA : 104 sq km
Revised Area of ESZ : 47.2 Sq km
Revised proposed Extent: 469 m to 2.125 Km

Accordingly, as per the revised proposal area of ESZ shall be 47.2 Sq km with an extent varying from 469 m to 2125m. The geo-coordinates of PA & ESZ have also been revised accordingly. It was also mentioned that the public consultations have been done on the revised proposal.

No comments were received from the stakeholders/public on draft Notification. After detailed deliberation the Expert Committee recommended the proposal for Final notification subject to submission of dates of public consultation(s) along with the minutes.

4.2. Eco-sensitive Zone around Parvati Arga Bird Sanctuary, Uttar Pradesh

Shri Kuruvilla Thomas, CCF (WL), Gonda, Forest and Wildlife Department, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh apprised the Committee about the proposal. The draft Notification was published on 3rd June, 2016. The salient features of the draft Eco-sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA : 10.84 sq km
Area of ESZ : 37.5 sq km
Extent of ESZ : Up to 1 km around PA Boundary

The state representative mentioned that Parvati Arga Bird Sanctuary is located at Tarabganj Tehsil, about 40 km from Gonda District near Mankapur-Nawabganj Road in Uttar Pradesh. Around 37 Species from 7 families of flora and 64 species from 7 families of fauna are recorded in the Parvati Arga Bird Sanctuary.

The proposal was earlier discussed in 26th Expert Committee meeting held on 7th July 2017 where the Committee observed that the area of the ESZ

and the range of extent (Minimum and Maximum) is not clearly defined by the State. The Committee deferred the proposal and advised the State to re-submit the modified proposal along with following details:

- I. A proper legible map shall be provided by incorporating location points of Protected Area, ESZ and the list of settlements correctly tallying with list of Geo-coordinates in a tabular form.

No Public comments/ objections have been received on the draft notification. It was mentioned during presentation that the WLS comprise of two Lakes Parwati and Arga situated about 1.5 Km apart. He further mentioned that an extent of 1.0 km all around the sanctuary covering both the lakes is the proposed Eco-sensitive zone and that is why the total area of ESZ is more. He also requested to change the name of the district as Gonda instead of Mainpuri which is mentioned in the draft notification.

After detailed discussion, the Committee recommended for finalization of the draft Notification.

4.3 Eco-sensitive Zone around Ramnagar WLS, Jammu & Kashmir:

Shri Manoj Pant, Chief Wildlife Warden, Govt. of Jammu & Kashmir, apprised the Committee about the proposal. The draft Notification was published on 18th March, 2016. The salient features of the draft Eco-sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

| | | |
|-------------------|---|---------------|
| Area of PA | : | 12.75 sq kms |
| Proposed ESZ area | : | 10.73 sq km |
| Proposed Extent | : | 0 to 1.850 km |

Ramnagar Wildlife Sanctuary is located on the Northern fringe of Jammu city and the northern part is Keranwali Rakh.

The proposal was earlier discussed in the expert committee meeting held on 4th July 2016. Committee suggested inclusion of River Tawi on eastern side and submit a revised proposal. The State submitted the revised proposal by including river Tawi on the eastern side in the ESZ.

No comments were received from the stakeholders/public on the draft Notification. The representative of the State mentioned that Zero extent is proposed towards Jammu city due to substantial urban settlements. Chairperson asked the States to also take in to consideration the Bio-diversity index while preparing ESZ proposals. The committee advised the State Government to include two green patches in ESZ area shown on the map on western side of the PA.

After detailed deliberation the Expert Committee recommended the Proposal for Final notification Subject to Submission of following information by the State:

- (a) Revised map by including two green patches as suggested above.
- (b) Response of State on public consultation on the revised proposal along with the dates of consultation process

4.4. Eco-sensitive Zone around Nandini WLS, Jammu & Kashmir:

Shri Manoj Pant, Chief Wildlife Warden, Govt. of Jammu & Kashmir, apprised the Committee about the proposal. The draft Notification was published on 27th April, 2016. The salient features of the Eco-sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|------------------|
| Area of PA | : | 33.34 Sq km |
| Proposed ESZ area | : | 15.80 sq km |
| Proposed Extent in draft | : | 0.75 to 1.904 km |

Nandini wildlife sanctuary is located about 28 kilometres North of Jammu town. The Jammu-Srinagar National Highway passes through a part of the sanctuary dividing it into two unequal halves. A rich faunal and floral variety has been recorded from the PA. About 45 species of plants, 14 species of mammals and more than 65 species of birds have been recorded from Nandini wildlife sanctuary.

The proposal was recommended for finalisation in the Expert committee meeting held on 27th February 2017 subject to submission of revised map after including river zone on the southern side of ESZ, and details of geo co-ordinates of PA, ESZ and habitations/ villages falling within the ESZ.

During review meeting held with the State Government on 14th June 2017, the State mentioned that the proposal is being revised and the same will be submitted for re-consideration. In the process the state Government submitted for revised ESZ extent varying between 0.296 KM and 1.904 Km.

No comments were received from the stakeholders/public on draft Notification. After detailed deliberation the Expert Committee recommended the proposal for Final notification subject to submission of (a) revised land use map with physical features and (b) response of State on public consultations on the revised proposal along with the dates of consultation process.

5. Rationalisation of Proposals by the State Government after Draft Notification:

Shri Lalit Kapur, Adviser briefed that while processing the Eco-sensitive Zone (ESZ) proposals in the Ministry, it has been noticed that in some cases after the publication of the Draft ESZ Notifications the State Governments are proposing changes in the ESZ Extent, ESZ Area / Number of villages inside the

Eco-sensitive Zone during the ESZ Expert Committee meeting for the consideration of the Experts/ Members of the Committee.

Based on the approval of the Committee, State Government submits revised proposal for publishing the Final Notification. To some extent such practice lacks transparency and may have several consequences on the stakeholders. In such process, the stakeholders are not having the opportunity to know exactly about the Area, Extent and the Villages that would be notified under ESZ. Also, it lacks the opportunity to provide feedback and comments on their concerns on such changes.

To make the ESZ Notification process more transparent and inclusive the Ministry would be exploring the provisions and consulting legal division for the proposals that are deviating from the Draft ESZ Notification in terms of Area, Extent and Villages.

6. Based on the draft notifications, comments received, presentations made on the proposals and discussions, the Expert Committee recommended (6) proposals; Deferred three (3) proposals:

| Sl. No. | Protected Area | State | Decision |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|---|
| Fresh Proposals | | | |
| 1. | Narsingarh Wildlife Sanctuary | Madhya Pradesh | Recommended |
| 2. | Orccha Wildlife Sanctuary | Madhya Pradesh | Recommended |
| 3. | Sohelwa Wildlife Sanctuary | Uttar Pradesh | To be revised by State |
| 4. | Surinsar Mansar Wildlife Sanctuary | Jammu & Kashmir | To be revised by State |
| 5. | Nagarahole Wildlife Sanctuary | Karnataka | Deferred/to be re-notified |
| Deferred/Revised Proposals | | | |
| 6. | Inderkila National Park | Himachal Pradesh | Recommended subject to submission of additional information |
| 7. | Parvati Arga Wildlife Sanctuary | Uttar Pradesh | Recommended subject to submission of additional information |
| 8. | Nandini Wildlife Sanctuary | Jammu & Kashmir | Recommended subject to submission of additional information |
| 9. | Ramnagar Sanctuary | Jammu & Kashmir | Recommended subject to submission of additional information |

6. Meeting ended with vote of thanks to and from the Chair.

27th Expert Committee Meeting on ESZ held on 11th October, 2017

List of Participants

Members of Expert Committee:

1. Dr. Amita Prasad, Additional Secretary, Chairperson.
2. Shri. Lalit Kapur, Adviser, MoEF&CC.
3. Shri. B. K. Sinha, Scientist 'F', Botanical Survey of India, Kolkata.
4. Dr. Sarnam Singh, Dean (Academies), IIRS, ISRO.
5. Shri Sourmitra Dasgupta, IG (WL), MoEF & CC.
6. Dr. S. A. Hussain, Scientist 'G', WII, Dehradun.
7. Dr. J C Kuniyal, Scientist 'F', GB Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment & Development, Kullu.
8. Dr. Rajiv Pandey, Scientist 'E', ICFRE.
9. Dr. G. Mahesvaran, Scientist 'E', Z.S.I., Kolkata.
10. Dr. Sejal Worah, Program Director, WWF India.
11. Shri. Sanjay K. Agarwal, Assistant Director, Forest Survey of India, Dehradun.
12. Shri P. K. Duria, Town Planner, Town & Country Planning Organisation, Govt. of India, MoUD.
13. Shri Roy P Thomas, Joint Director (WL), MoEF&CC.
14. Shri Goldin Quadros, Sr. Scientist, SACON (Sálim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History).
15. Shri. Dheeraj Singhal, Assistant Director, NMCG, MoWR, RD&GR.
16. Shri G. Sajeevan, Dy. Director, DoWR.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, GOI:

17. Shri Subrata Bose, Additional Director (SC-'E'), MoEF & CC.
18. Shri Pankaj Verma, Joint Director (SC-'D'), MoEF & CC.
19. Dr. Veenu Joon, Deputy Director, (SC-'C'), MoEF & CC.
20. Dr. Susheel Kumar, Deputy Director, (SC-'C'), MoEF & CC.
21. Ms. Jafrin Farha Hussain, Research Assistant, MoEF & CC.
22. Dr. Shaikhom Inaotombi, Consultant, MoEF&CC.

Officials of Government of Madhya Pradesh

23. Shri. Alok Kumar, APCCF (WL), M.P, Forest Deptt., Govt. of Madhya Pradesh.
24. Shri. Faizan Rasheed, Project Manager, EPCO, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.
25. Shri. O.P. Uchadiya, C.F. Tilanagar, Forest Deptt., Govt. of Madhya Pradesh.
26. Shri. Aashish Kumar, Computer Operator, Forest Deptt., Govt. of Madhya Pradesh.

27. Shri. R. N. Verma, C.F. Rajgarh, Forest Deptt., Govt. of Madhya Pradesh.

28. Shri. J.S, Rathore, Superintendent, WLS Ngeur, Forest Deptt.

Officials of Government of Karnataka

29. Shri. Punati Sridha, PCCF (WL), Karnataka, Forest Deptt., Govt. of Karnataka.

30. Shri. P. Ravikumar, Addl. Chief Secretary, Govt. of Karnataka.

Officials of Government of Uttar Pradesh

31. Shri Kuruvilla Thomas, CCF (WL), Gonda, Forest and Wildlife Deptt., Govt. of Uttar Pradesh.

32. Shri Rahul Srivastva, Computer Operator, Sohelwa WLS Forest Deptt., Govt. of Uttar Pradesh.

Officials of Government of Himachal Pradesh

33. Shri. Tilak Raj Sharma, DFO(WL), Kullu, Forest Deptt., Govt. of Himachal Pradesh.

Officials of Government of Jammu & Kashmir

34. Shri. Manoj Pant, Chief Wildlife Warden, Govt. of Jammu & Kashmir.

35. Md. Sajid Sultan, I.F.S, Regional Wildlife Warden, Ladakh.

36. Shri. Pankaj Raina, Wildlifel Warden, Ladakh.
