

**Ministry of Environment and Forests
Wildlife Division**

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Minutes of the 12th Meeting of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) convened on 18th August, 2008 at 11.00 A.M. in Room No.403, Paryavaran Bhavan, New Delhi under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister of State for Forests and Wildlife.

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The 12th Meeting of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) was convened on 18th August, 2008, at Paryavaran Bhavan, New Delhi under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister of State for Forests and Wildlife. List of participants is at **Annexure-I**. Dr. Asad Rahmani and Shri B.K. Talukdar have intimated their inability to attend the meeting.

At the outset, Hon'ble Minister of State (F&WL) while welcoming the members emphasized the need of objective and judicious approach in taking a decision while discussing diversion of land for development projects keeping interests of wildlife conservation in mind. It was followed by discussions on agenda items.

Agenda Item No.1 : Confirmation of the Minutes of the last meeting of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) held on 22nd May, 2008

The last meeting of the Standing Committee of NBWL was held on 22nd May, 2008. Additional Director General of Forests (WL) and Member Secretary informed the members that no comments from any member except from Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh have been received. While taking a note of the comments of Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh, the Standing Committee of NBWL unanimously confirmed the minutes of the last meeting held on 22nd May, 2008.

Agenda Item No.2 : Action taken report on the recommendations of the Standing Committee of NBWL meeting held on 22nd May, 2008

2(3.2) : Diversion of Tale Sanctuary for Lower Subhansri Hydro Electric Project by NHPC

Additional DGF(WL) and Member Secretary informed the members that as decided in the last meeting, both State Government and National Hydro Power Corporation (NHPC)

Ltd. have complied with the observations of the Standing Committee of NBWL. NHPC has confirmed in writing that all the three projects namely. Lower Subhansri , Middle Subhansri and Upper Subhansri H.E. Projects were three independent projects which were not interlinked or inter-connected with one another. The Lower Subhansri and Upper Subhansri Projects were located on river Subhansri whereas the Middle Subhansri H.E. Project was on river Kamla, a tributary of Subhansri.

State Government has informed that they were not in a position to declare 500 sq. kms of reserved forests in Subhansri Catchment area as Protected Area because of opposition from the local people. However, State Government was ready to declare Kamla reserve forest (168 sq. kms) as Protected Area. The main reason for not declaring other areas of the Sanctuary was interspersed settlement of tribal villages and families on the area under consideration. The Principal Secretary (Power), Aurnachal Pradesh confirmed the submissions made by both the State Government and NHPC and requested the Standing Committee of NBWL to approve the project

Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh again insisted that the impact assessment of all the projects should be submitted. Principal Secretary (Power), Arunachal Pradesh however, drew the attention of the committee to the detailed deliberations held during last meeting and that the positions desired by the committee during last meeting has already been clarified by the State Government/ National Hydroelectric Power Corporation and therefore the 2 conditions under reference be waived.

The matter was discussed at length and Hon'ble Member Parliament, Shri Chander Kumar also emphasized that this project is being discussed for a very long time and therefore we must decide the case at the earliest.

The member Secretary submitted that if committee approves, the request of State Government could be agreed subject to condition that they atleast issue preliminary notification for 168 km² of forest area committed so far for declaring Protected Area and that there will be no commitment for future power projects as each project will be decided on case to case basis on its own merits. The members present were by and large in agreement with the suggestions except that Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh mentioned that final notification for Protected Areas should be issued instead of preliminary notification by the State Government.

The final decision was however deferred for the next meeting for want of opinion of all the members.

I.A. No.106 : Issuance of final notification of the Gangau Sanctuary of Madhya Pradesh.

As decided in the last meeting, PCCF, M.P. informed the Standing Committee that the State Government had identified 1659 ha. Of Protected Forests for inclusion in the Gangau Sanctuary. It was also informed that no reserve forest was available and with great difficulty this patch of forest has been identified. It was also informed by PCCF that this proposal of inclusion of 1659 ha of Protected Area in Gangau Sanctuary was yet to be approved by the State Board for Wildlife.

While appreciating the efforts made by the State Government, Standing Committee of NBWL unanimously decided to consider this proposal in the next meeting after approval of the State Board for Wildlife for proposed inclusion of additional area in Gangau Sanctuary.

3.3.21 : Construction of new alignment of NH-1A from Km. 95.200 to Km. 199.100 by NHAI in Jammu and Kashmir.

It was informed that Ministry of Law and Justice has not forwarded their comments in the matter of applicability of provision of the Wildlife (Protection) Act to the conservation reserves and community reserves of Jammu and Kashmir. After deliberations, it was decided to request Ministry of Law and Justice to expedite the matter. CWLW, J&K suggested to move the proposal to Central Empowered Committee (CEC) for their consideration. The Committee unanimously observed that it was for the State Government to take a decision/action in this regard and the Standing Committee of NBWL need not to refer the proposal to CEC.

3.2(1-5) : Diversion of forest land from Changthang Cold Desert Sanctuary for construction of roads in Jammu and Kashmir.

As decided in the last meeting, Dr. Asad Rehmani and Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh had conducted the site inspection of all the proposed five roads. The inspection report was received in the Ministry on 18.8.08 only. Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh while briefing the Standing Committee informed that the inspecting team had recommended only 4 out of 5 proposed roads which were as follows:-

- i) Charste to Point 4433 (53 ha)
- ii) Koyal to Zarsar (144 ha)
- iii) Phobrang to Marsimikla (27 ha); and
- iv) Phobrang to Charste (72 ha).

These recommendations were subject to the following conditions for compliance by the project proponents coupled with conditions recommended by Chief Wildlife Warden of Jammu and Kashmir.

- a) Poaching: Any form of poaching by anyone, particularly by the road construction workers, who mostly come from outside Ladakh, will be strictly prevented. Any case of poaching during the construction of the roads, the ITBP/BRO as the case may be, would be held responsible. This is being mentioned because of reported killing of marmots by road workers.
- b) Pastures, wetlands and marshes would be avoided by diverting the road routes to skirt the pastures. These habitats are important not only to wildlife but also to local people whose livestock have been sustained by these pastures and wetlands for ages.
- c) Littering: It has been noticed that wherever roads come up, non degradable waste is littered. The ITBP would see that littering of any kind is strictly avoided by its staff and also by construction workers. All waste material such as plastics, tar barrels, gunny sacks, bottles, tin cans etc. would be properly disposed off. No waste material will be left either near or away from the road in the Sanctuary.
- d) Cutting of local vegetation: As the shrubs and bushes grow very slowly in the cold desert, the ITBP will see that minimum damage is done to the local flora. Cutting of local flora by construction worker would be strictly prohibited. The concerned officials of the ITBP would conduct surprise checks, in collaboration with the Regional Wildlife Warden or his representative to see that no damage is done to the flora and fauna.
- e) Environmental Monitoring Committee: An Environmental Monitoring Committee should be constituted comprising the representative of the user agency and Wildlife officials under the Chairmanship of the Regional Wildlife Warden, Ladakh including representatives of environmental NGOs working in Ladakh.

- f) Collaboration between agencies: Since conservation in remote areas like Ladakh can only be achieved by cooperation between the armed forces, para-military forces and the state authorities, there must be regular meetings where common issues could be resolved and the cooperation and commitment of the forces posted in forward and wildlife areas could be attained. In fact, it would be best if a Coordination Committee representing these organizations could be established so that they could meet on a regular basis and sort out problems and work out common strategies for wildlife conservation. The armed forces could make invaluable contribution in this regard. The roads that may come up and those existing must be made available for usage to the Wildlife Department of the State so that they could visit these forward areas on a regular basis.
- g) Charste to Point 4433 (53 ha): Since this road would be skirting the Pangong Lake shore, there should be no adverse impact on the inflow of water into the Lake nor the quality of the water both during construction and its subsequent usage. This would particularly apply to disposal of the debris, which would result during construction.
- h) Koyal to Zarsar (144 ha): This road from Zarsar comes to Baktsang, where it is joined by the road from Hanle to Zarsar. Then the combined road goes over Narbu La to Chushmule. The road from Hanle to Zarsar which now goes through Kalak Tartar must be diverted, because Kalak Tartar is the best place for the Tibetan Gazelle in Ladakh. The Hanle road must go over the Kyongma Chumik La and then join the Zarsar-Koyal road at Sangnakpo. This is a necessary pre condition for approval. There are only about 60 Tibetan Gazelle left in Ladakh.
- i) Phobrang to Marsimikla (27 ha): Recommended subject to the compliance of the general conditions given by above and also the conditions given by the Chief Wildlife Warden. In fact, this road should be taken further to its logical conclusion which is the Hot Spring on Changchenmo, and which is the last outpost of India facing the Chinese, who have already built a pucca gravel road on their occupied side.
- j) Phobrang to Charste (72 ha): Considering the importance of this border road, it was recommended for the approval with the general conditions given above and also the conditions by the Chief Wildlife Warden.

In addition, the Chief Wildlife Warden has recommended the proposal with the following conditions which should also be complied:-

1. The user agency, while implementing the road construction project, will abide by the orders to be issued by the Hon'ble Supreme Court and follow provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Wildlife Protection Act, 1978 (amended upto 2002) strictly.
2. The user agency should follow the Eco-friendly Engineering practices during the construction.
3. The user agency will report compliances regularly to the Department of Wildlife Protection.
4. The project staff and labourers involved in the construction will be informed about the do's and don'ts in Changthang Wildlife Sanctuary.
5. Local people should be given preference in employment to minimize the impact on Wildlife due to influx of outside people.
6. The construction debris or muck generated due to the construction of road will be disposed off in an environmentally friendly manner in consultation with the Regional Wildlife Warden, Ladakh, Leh or his representative.
7. Environment Monitoring Committee will be constituted comprising of representatives of the user agency and Wildlife officials under the Chairmanship of the Regional Wildlife Warden, Ladakh, Leh.
8. User Agency will pay 5% of the cost of the project to the Department of Wildlife Protection, Jammu and Kashmir Government for Conservation and Preservation of Wildlife and its habitat in the Changthang Wildlife Sanctuary.

Regarding road from Karzok to Chumar, the inspecting team observed that an existing road which was shorter route was already in existence. Therefore, there was no need to consider the proposed road and the project proponents could send an alternative proposal for consideration of the Standing Committee. The recommendations of the inspecting team were also agreeable by ITBP and CWLW, Jammu and Kashmir.

After deliberations, the Standing Committee unanimously approved the recommendations of the inspecting team i.e. recommending four roads namely Charste to

Point 4433 (53 ha); Koyal to Zarsar (144 ha); Phobrang to Marsimikla (27 ha); and Phobrang to Charste (72 ha) subject to the compliance of conditions mentioned in the preceding paras.

3.2(6-7) 3-D : Seismic Survey for oil exploration by ONGC and Focus Energy Limited.; and

3.2(8-18) : Diversion of forest land from Desert National Park for construction of Gravel Roads for connecting different villages.

Member Secretary informed that in both of these cases, site inspection was yet to be carried out. Therefore, the Standing Committee of NBWL decided to discuss these items in the next meeting after receipt of site inspection report.

3.2(23) : Diversion of 0.6708 ha of forest land from Mount Abu Wildlife Sanctuary for parking facilities in Mount Abu.

ADG(WL) and Member Secretary informed that a clarification from the State Government about de-notification of Mount Abu town from the boundary of the Sanctuary without the approval of the Standing Committee of NBWL was yet to be received. Shri R.N. Mehrotra, CWLW, Rajasthan informed that the clarification has already been sent. However, the Member Secretary requested him to send it again as the same was not received in the Ministry so far.

3.2(24): Diversion of 2.2 ha of forest land from Sawai Man Singh Wildlife Sanctuary for construction of B.T. Road to Neemli Kalam from Sawai Man Singh Sanctuary.

ADG(WL) and Member Secretary informed that comments of National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) had not so far been received in this matter as the area in question was a part of the tiger reserve. Dr. Rajesh Gopal, Member Secretary, NTCA informed that a report would be submitted by NTCA soon after carrying out the site inspection at the earliest.

3.2(25): Diversion of 4.17 ha of forest land from Jamwa Ramgarh Wildlife Sanctuary for construction of missing link of National Highway-11 (Dausa-Manoharpur), Rajasthan.

Site inspection report has not been received. Therefore, it was decided to expedite the site inspection in this case.

3.2(27) : Diversion of 260 ha of forest land from Ranthambore National Park for construction of Tiger Safari Park.

Shri R.N. Mehrotra, Chief Wildlife Warden, Rajasthan, informed that in view of the observations made by the Standing Committee during its last meeting, the proposal has been withdrawn by the State Government.

3.2(30) : Survey and investigation for construction of Chambal Development Scheme (4 Hydropower Projects), Rajasthan.

ADG(WL) and Member Secretary informed that site inspection was yet to be carried out and on receipt of report, the matter would be placed before the Standing Committee of NBWL in its next meeting.

5.00 : Delisting of Edible Nest Swiftlets from Schedule-I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

ADG(WL) and Member Secretary informed that in pursuance of decision of the Committee during last meetings comments from the members of Animal Committee had been obtained by Director, WII on delisting of Edible Nest Swiftlets from Schedule-I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and have been circulated among the members of the Committee. The delisting has been supported by all the members. He suggested to examine whether down grading this species from Schedule-I to lower schedules rather than delisting it from schedules could serve the purpose or not. During deliberations, it was pointed out that for trade in the produce of wildlife, it has to be outside the Schedules of Wildlife (Protection) Act. Therefore, delisting was necessary. Dr. Ravi Shankaran, Director, SACON also briefed the members about their efforts in collaboration with State Wildlife Wing and local people for conservation of Swiftlets. Since this species i.e. *Collacalia fusciphaga* was found only in Andamans, no adverse impact in other areas could take place by its delisting and the trade in Edible Nests of these birds was a big incentive for its conservation to the local populace.

After deliberations, the Standing Committee of NBWL unanimously agreed for delisting of Edible Nest Swiftlets (*Collacalia fusciphaga*) from Schedule-I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act for a period of three years only. However, CWLW, Andaman and Nicobar Islands would apprise the Standing Committee about the mechanism of measures put in place by the State Government to ensure that delisting did not affect the conservation of this

species negatively. These modalities developed by CWLW, Andaman and Nicobar Islands would be put up before the Standing Committee of NBWL in its next meeting.

6.00 Rationalization of boundaries of Protected Areas – Proposals of Himachal Pradesh.

ADG(WL) and Member Secretary informed the members that in the last meeting, the proposal of rationalization of boundaries of Protected Areas of Himachal Pradesh was agreed to in principle and it was decided to communicate the inspection reports along with maps to all the members of the Standing Committee individually seeking their comments, if any. Accordingly, inspection reports and maps were circulated to all members. However, no comments from the members except Director, WII have so far been received. Shri Chander Kumar, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, H.P. requested the members to consider this proposal sympathetically and clear it without further delay. Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh also supported the proposal of H.P. Director General of Forests and Special Secretary (DGF&SS), however, observed that the important point was why these Protected Areas were constituted and what was the need of denotification now. CWLW, H.P. submitted that in past these Protected Areas were not declared judiciously and in the intervening period things have further changed to a worse situation with heavy biotic pressure etc. He also informed that as a result of rationalization, total area under Protected Areas network in the State was increasing and better areas had been proposed to be integrated in the protected area network.

After detailed discussions, it was unanimously decided that Wildlife Division may once again write to all the members to send their comments within a period of 45 days in the matter failing which it would be presumed that they agreed to the proposal. Accordingly the Standing Committee would take a final view in the next meeting on getting response/suggestion of the members as above.

Agenda Item No.3 : Proposals regarding Wildlife Conservation

3.1.1. : Translocation of Tiger to Sariska Tiger Reserve, Rajasthan

ADG(WL) and Member Secretary apprised the members about translocation of tigers to Sariska Tiger Reserve from Ranthambore in Rajasthan. A brief presentation, in this connection, was made by Shri P.R. Sinha, Director, WII, Dehradun. The presentation detailed the whole process of identification of tigers for translocation from Ranthambore to

Sariska. First a male tiger followed by a tigress was translocated to Sariska with the help of helicopter. Director, WII informed that it was a scientifically well thought long term reintroduction programme. It involves long term monitoring of both the introduced animals. Whole exercise was a great learning experience in itself. Director, WII put on record his appreciation both to CWLW, Rajasthan and Member Secretary, NTCA for extending full cooperation in this programme. The Committee unanimously appreciated this initiative.

Shri Chander Kumar, M.P., however, observed that Sariska was still having problems of roads passing through the National Park. It required to be addressed appropriately. Mr. R.N. Mehrotra, CWLW, Rajasthan informed that State Government has taken appropriate steps for addressing these problems. He informed that existing road is going to be closed and a by-pass has been recommended in lieu of present road. State Government has already relocated one village successfully. Relocation of other four villages is also under progress. In the current financial year, two more villages are likely to be relocated. He also apprised the Committee of regulating temple tourism by State Government. It would involve time bound tourism in a restricted area. He also ensured Standing Committee to apprise from time to time of the relocation programme and other initiatives to be taken by State Government in this area.

3.1.2 : Translocation of Lions to Kuno Palpur Sanctuary, M.P.

Additional Director General of Forests (WL) and Member Secretary briefed the Committee about the programme of re-introduction of lions in Kuno Palpur Sanctuary of Madhya Pradesh. Asiatic Lion is confined only to Gujarat State. Considering the risks due to natural calamities/epidemics etc., the wildlife experts in the country suggested reintroduction of lion to other suitable habitats, thus creating an alternate home. It may be mentioned here that earlier the Asiatic lions were found not only in Gujarat, but also in other parts of the country, like Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and adjoining northern belt. The Wildlife Institute of India carried out an evaluation of different habitats and recommended Kuno Palpur Sanctuary (in Shivpur Kalan District of Madhya Pradesh) as the most appropriate habitat for reintroduction of lions. However, the State of Gujarat decided not to part with lions found in Gir. Thereafter, it was decided to undertake a programme of soft release of zoo bred Asiatic lions in Kuno Palpur. The Government of Madhya Pradesh had agreed for this proposal and action in this regard has been initiated.

PCCF, M.P. informed that it was a long term project required commitment for 10-15 years. Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh while appreciating the work of Ministry of Environment and Forests, Forest Department, M.P. and WII expressed his concern about reintroduction of captive bred lions in wild. He informed that nowhere captive bred animals have been introduced in the wild. Further, these animals were not trained to capture their prey, they will poach on cattle, increasing human-animal conflict. Therefore, there was every likelihood of getting this experiment failed. He also showed his apprehension about the genetic purity of zoo bred lions. He also advised to wait till the Hon'ble Supreme Court directs State of Gujarat to cooperate in translocating lions from wild from Gujarat to Kuno Palpur.

At this juncture, Member Secretary, NTCA intervened and informed that zoo bred animals were not proposed to be released immediately. Release of animals would take place only in F-2 (second filial) and F-3 (third filial) generations of zoo bred lions who could be trained to develop their natural instinct of hunting. The whole programme was scientifically well thought and assistance of appropriate consultant as and when required was also proposed to be undertaken.

Standing Committee appreciated the initiatives.

Agenda Item No.3.2 : Items proposed by Dr. Divyabhanusinh Chavda, Member, Standing Committee of NBWL.

ADG(WL) and Member Secretary informed about the three agenda items as proposed by Dr. Divyabhanusinh Chavda, Member, NBWL. These were discussed one by one as follows :-

(i) Creation of new Sanctuary at Girnar Forests, Gujarat and translocation of Lions to Banda Hills, Gujarat

ADG(WL) and Member Secretary informed that CWLW, Gujarat, could not attend the meeting to make a presentation on this subject. However, he has sent a note on different steps undertaken by Gujarat State for lion conservation. DIG(WL) briefed the members about various steps taken by Gujarat Government for lion conservation. It was informed that Government of Gujarat was pursuing lion conservation in Greater Gir Region adopted as a Brihad Gir concept. The region includes Gir National Park, Gir Wildlife Sanctuary, Paniya

Wildlife Sanctuary, Mithiyala Wildlife Sanctuary, Girnar Wildlife Sanctuary, Coastal area in the region and Grass lands in Savarkundla, Liliya and Gariadhar talukas of Amreli districts and Mahuva and Palithana talukas of Bhavnagar district. There was great enthusiasm among the local people to support this initiative. A new Sanctuary namely Girnar Sanctuary covering an area of 178.87 sq. kms has already been notified on 31st May, 2008. Further necessary action to develop Barda Wildlife Sanctuary by increasing prey base in the area has already been taken.

The Committee unanimously appreciated the efforts of Gujarat State Government for conservation of lions.

(ii) Chain linked fencing within Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, M.P.

Dr. Divyabhanusinh Chavda, Member, Standing Committee, NBWL showed his concern on the introduction of chain linked fencing in Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, M.P. leading to check the movement of wildlife in the area. Dr. P.B. Gangopadhyay, PCCF, M.P. clarified that the main reason for erecting such fencing was presence of a tiger with two cubs in that area. Since the habitat was very close to the human habitation in Tale, it was necessary to check the movement of tigers in the vicinity of the village. Therefore, fencing has been erected. Presently, one male tiger has shifted to other parts of the park but tigeress with other male was still there. Therefore, fencing as a management tool to avoid Man-Animal Conflict was necessary. He also informed that the length of the fencing was only about 2 kms long around the periphery of the National Park. Therefore, ample space for movement of wildlife was available.

ADG(WL) and Member Secretary observed that a strict regular monitoring was highly required. PCCF, M.P. informed that regular monitoring including daily evening reports on the movement of animals were being collected.

(iii) Corridors of Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve between Keladevi and Ranthambhore and Sawai Mansingh Sanctuary and Ranthambhore.

ADG(WL) and Member Secretary requested Shri R.N. Mehrotra, CWLW, Rajasthan to apprise the Committee of the status of corridors/connectivity between Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve and other adjacent areas. Shri Mehtrotra informed the Committee that

Ranthambhore National Park was having Banas river in north and Chambal river on eastern side. The important areas from the point of view of connectivity were Keladevi Sanctuary, Sawai Mansingh Sanctuary, both in Rajasthan and Kuno Palpur Sanctuary in M.P. He informed that on the northern side, there were three villages which need to be relocated and after relocation, about 600 sq. kms area of Keladevi Sanctuary and adjoining forests would be available for tiger conservation. He also informed that Keladevi Sanctuary was very important habitat for tigers since long. Earlier, it was known as nursery of tigers because of high density of tigers. He emphasized that future of Ranthambhore depends on its connectivity with Keladevi Sanctuary.

Member Secretary, NTCA submitted before the Committee that one of the most important statutory requirement by the State Government was identification of buffer areas followed by reviving corridors. Unfortunately, no action in this regard has been taken by the State Government.

Standing Committee while appreciating the efforts of both PCCF, M.P. and CWLW, Rajasthan urged them to take appropriate action for identification of buffer areas as mentioned by Member Secretary, NTCA.

Agenda Item No.3.3 : Fresh Proposals for diversion of National Parks and Sanctuaries.

While introducing the fresh proposal for diversion, ADG(WL) and Member Secretary informed that two proposals from Rajasthan, one from Tamilnadu and one from Uttarakhand had been received. All the four proposals were discussed as follows :-

(i) Diversion of forest land 0.33 ha from Nahargarh Wildlife Sanctuary for construction of road from Akeda Doongar to Sisyawas, Rajasthan.

The Committee observed that the proposal was for diversion of only 0.33 ha of forestland from Nahargarh Wildlife Sanctuary for construction of road from Akeda Doongar to Sisyawas, Rajasthan. CWLW had recommended the proposal with certain conditions. It was also informed that the proposal was only for upgradation of present kacchha road to gravel road.

Considering the extent of area to be diverted and recommendation of CWLW, the Committee unanimously recommended the proposal subject to the compliance of following conditions as envisaged by CWLW in his recommendation.

- i) No night camping shall be allowed during the construction of road by labour and construction activity will be permitted only during daytime only.
- ii) Speed breakers will be constructed at an interval of 500 mts in sanctuary area by user agency.
- iii) No tree cutting will be allowed.
- iv) The construction material for road will be brought from the area outside the sanctuary.
- v) The user agency will clear all the debris left after construction activity.
- vi) The user agency will put and maintain sign board on both sides of the road mentioning that the road is passing through Nahargarh Wildlife Sanctuary and drivers should be watch full about Wildlife Sanctuary and drive cautiously.

(ii) Diversion of 21 ha of forest land from Desert National Park for construction of road Khabdala to Bachiya.

Since the area involved was 21 ha in Desert National Park, Standing Committee unanimously decided to carry out a site inspection after which the proposal would be reconsidered by the Committee. Since other inspections in the Desert National Park were also to be undertaken, this site inspection would also be carried out by the same team and they will submit the report. The proposal will be considered again in the next meeting of the Standing Committee.

(iii) Reconstruction of bridge in km.29/2 at Thalaikundah – Kalhatty – Theppakadu road in Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary, Tamilnadu

ADG(WL) and Member Secretary informed that the proposal did not have the approval of the State Board for Wildlife which was a mandatory and statutory requirement for any activity under Section 29 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act. However, since the proposal was only for reconstruction of bridge, the Committee agreed in principle for

reconstruction. However, CWLW, Tamilnadu would take prior approval of the State Board for Wildlife before resubmitting the proposal in the next meeting of the Standing Committee.

(iv) Setting up a 365000 TPA Zinc Dust and 36500 TPA CGG Plant at SIDCUL, Haridwar, Uttarakhand by Hindustan Zinc. Ltd.

ADG(WL) and Member Secretary informed that this proposal was considered in the last meeting of the Standing Committee and did not find favour by the Committee. Since the Minister of Industries, Uttarakhand had written to reconsider the proposal on merits, the project proponents have resubmitted the proposal. The site was inspected by DIG(WL) as directed by the Hon'ble Chairman. It was noted that Uttarakhand Government has declared about 1780 acres of land adjacent to Rajaji National Park as State Industrial Development Corporation Limited (SIDCUL). More than 500 industrial plots have already been allotted to various industries along with incentives of tax benefits etc.

Project proponents, M/s Hindustan Zinc Limited has also been allotted a plot (No.2 2D/1 in sector 10). The industrial plant proposed to convert cathode metal sheet of zinc into zinc ingots. The process involves physical transformation of the metal i.e. Zinc from one physical form to another by melting and cooling without involving any chemical process. The project proponents informed that no impact of pollution on water or air quality was caused during the process as they are taking all precautions. It was also informed that average distance of the plant was 480 meters from Rajaji National Park. Member Secretary informed that the area in question was outside Rajaji National Park and Ministry of Environment & Forests has accorded environmental clearance to the project under the Environmental Impact Assessment notification dated 14.9.2006 subject to obtaining of prior permission from the NBWL. It was also informed that this reference to the Committee was the outcome of the direction of Hon'ble Supreme Court in W.P. No.460/2004 vide order dated 4th December, 2006 in which the Hon'ble Court has directed MoEF to refer all such cases where environmental clearance has already been given within 10 kms from the boundary of Protected Areas to the Standing Committee of the NBWL, although in this case the Environmental Clearance has been given after the issuance of said order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court. It was also informed that Government of Uttarakhand has not declared any eco-sensitive zones so far. However, State Pollution Control Board has also issued consent to establish and to operate the project.

Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh, Member, Standing Committee, however, stressed that the clearance of Central Pollution Control Board should be obtained to the effect that there will be no impact of pollution of Air & Water. The representative of user agency submitted that there will be no such impact of pollution because of the project as all the limits laid down by State Pollution Control Board/ Central Pollution Control Board shall be ensured and complied as stipulated in the environmental clearance accorded by MoEF.

After detailed discussions, the committee taking into consideration the fact that the environment impact assessment has already been done while giving environmental clearance, agreed to convey no objection to the project with the observation that confirmation of Central Pollution Control Board should be obtained to the effect that there will be no impact of pollution on Air & Water quality. It was decided to inform I.A. Division accordingly.

Agenda Item No.4 : Cases referred by IA Division in pursuance to the order of Hon'ble Supreme Court dated 4th December, 2006.

In pursuant to the order dated 4th December 2006 from Hon'ble Supreme Court mentioned in the preceding agenda item, I.A. Division of the Ministry has to refer all the cases in which environmental clearance within 10 kms from the boundary of Protected Areas has been given. ADG(WL) and Member Secretary briefed the Committee about this background. He informed that in 2002, IBWL adopted Wildlife Conservation Strategy, 2002 in which lands falling within 10 kms from the boundaries of Protected Areas were to be notified as Eco-Sensitive Zones under the Environment (Protection) Act. However, State Governments like Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and Goa raised concerns about the practicability of declaration as eco sensitive zones within 10 kms from Protected Area boundary. Considering these objections, NBWL on 17th March, 2005 decided that the delineation of eco sensitive zone was to be site specific regulating the specific activities. However, in a Public Interest Litigation filed by Goa Foundation (W.P. No.460/2004) before the Hon'ble Supreme Court, the Hon'ble Court vide their order dated 4th December, 2006 directed Ministry of Environment & Forests to refer the cases where environmental clearance had already been granted within 10 kms from the boundary of Protected Area to the Standing Committee of NBWL.

Only one proposal was received from I.A. Division. It was given environmental clearance on 1st December, 2006. The proposal was for Dagota Jharna Soapstone Mining Project with the targeted production capacity of mine as 90,000 tones per annum of soapstone with a life of 11 years.

Considering the fact that the mine was only at a distance of 25 mts from the boundary of Jamua Ramgarh Sanctuary with the targeted production of 90,000 tones per annum which would cause all sorts of pollution and disturbances to the wildlife in the Sanctuary, the Committee unanimously decided not to agree to the proposal. It was decided to inform IA Division accordingly.

Additional Agenda- Item No. I- Proposal for Diversion of land from National Parks/Sanctuaries.

ADG(WL) and Member Secretary informed that 8 proposals related to diversion of forestland from Protected Areas were included after approval of Hon'ble Chairman as additional agenda. These were discussed as follows:-

(i) Diversion of 0.41 ha land in Marine Sanctuary for the construction of Waterman Ship Training Centre by Indian Navy.

ADG(WL) and Member Secretary informed the Committee that this proposal was considered during the last meeting also and the Committee rejected the proposal observing that it was not site specific. However, Indian Navy has resubmitted the proposal stating that it was site specific. It was followed by a presentation by Commandant of I.N.S. Valsura of Indian Navy. During the presentation, it was informed that only very small area of 0.41 ha from the existing land was required by Indian Navy for establishing a storage and boat launching facility to be used by their trainees. Trainees both from Air force and Navy were trained by this facility. It was close to the training facility of Navy. Therefore, the need was site specific. This facility would provide support to local administration also and ensure that no adverse effect on the existing flora and fauna was caused. CWLW, Gujarat has also recommended the proposal with the condition that the movement of water in the adjacent creek along with marine life and mangroves forests would not be adversely affected by the activities of Navy.

Considering the presentation of Indian Navy, Committee unanimously approved the proposal subject to the compliance of conditions proposed by CWLW, Gujarat.

(ii) 4/6 laning of National Highway No.7 from km.627 to 635.70 on the periphery of Mowgali Pench Sanctuary of Pench Tiger Reserve Seoni, M.P.

This proposal was earlier put up before the Standing Committee of NBWL in its 9th meeting held on 10th September, 2007 but was not considered as it was not approved by the State Board for Wildlife. Now the proposal has been resubmitted after approval of the State Board for Wildlife for consideration of Standing Committee of NBWL. The project proponents (NHAI) made a presentation informing that the area required for diversion was only 16.737 ha covering distance of 8.7 kms for upgrading and widening of the existing road. It was also informed that it was a part of the North South Corridor development of National Highways. Necessary provision of under-pass and over-pass etc. have been made to facilitate the movement of wildlife. Dr. Divyabhanusinch Chavda observed that PCCF and CWLW, M.P. in his recommendation has given contradictory statement on impact of project on wildlife and requested PCCF, M.P. to clarify. Shri P.B. Gangopadhyay, PCCF, M.P. while responding to Dr. Chavda informed that prima facie the project was not beneficial to wildlife. However, alternative route which could be possible, involves diversion of about 80 ha of forest land. This is very high as compared to about 16 ha involved in the present proposal. However, incorporation of measures like under-passes, over-pass etc. in the current proposal was beneficial for wildlife.

Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh observed that it was a very important corridor. Dr. Rajesh Gopal, Member Secretary, NTCA highlighted the importance of this area and suggested to reject the proposal out-rightly. He also clarified that in the alternative route the forest area involved was of degraded nature while the area to be diverted in the present proposal was of pristine forest. Dr. Chavda also supported his view. PCCF, M.P. informed that even in following the alternate route the existing route/road would be used by motorists as the alternate route, if at all, developed would increase the distance by 70-80 kms. Therefore, while taking a decision for alternate route, existing road should be closed.

After detailed discussions, Committee unanimously decided not to approve the proposal and agreed to maintain status-quo i.e. to maintain only the existing road passing through the Protected Area.

(iii) Proposal for diversion of forest land from Gangotri National Park and Askot Wildlife Sanctuary for construction of roads to be used by ITBP.

ADG(WL) and Member Secretary informed the Committee that five proposals from Uttarakhand have been received for diversion of land for construction of roads to be used by ITBP. However, these proposals were not approved by the State Board for Wildlife. CWLW, Uttarakhand confirmed this position. Since the proposals were not approved by the State Board for Wildlife, Committee unanimously decided not to consider these proposals till the recommendations of the State Board for Wildlife are submitted.

(iv) Proposal for border fencing between Border Post 79-81 in Yangoupokpi Lokchao Wildlife Sanctuary at Indo Myammar Border in Manipur.

CWLW, Manipur informed that the proposal was for diversion of 10 ha of forestland for border fencing between Border Posts 79-81 at Indo Myammar Border in Manipur. It was followed by submission made by Principal Secretary (Home), Manipur emphasizing the need of immediate approval in the light of illegal drugs and arms trade and movement of outlaws through this portion of international border.

Considering the national security concerns, Committee unanimously approved the proposal subject to the compliance of the following conditions as envisaged by CWLW, Manipur.

- (i) The user agency shall have to comply strictly with the directions from the MoEF, Government of India, Forest Department, Manipur etc. in this regard. The user shall not initiate any activity unless the clearance is given to them in writing.
- (ii) The user agency shall not establish any camp, undertake construction of any road or bridge or divert the waterways and put any fire inside the Sanctuary adjacent to the area for which clearance is to be provided to them.

- (iii) The user agency shall not use very heavy and noisy machinery or cause any pollution from oil depot, etc. in the area adjacent to the Wildlife Sanctuary.

Additional Agenda Item No.II

Deletion of Plant Species from the Schedule of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972

ADG(WL) and Member Secretary informed the Committee that during the 2nd meeting of the NBWL, it was decided to constitute two Committees, viz, the Animal Committee under the Chairmanship of the Additional Director General of Forests (WL) and the Plants Committee under the Chairmanship of the Director General, ICFRE to review the schedules of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. The Committees were to look into the criteria for inclusion of species in the Schedules of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and also for rescheduling of the species, if required. The Committees had held many meetings, workshops and interactive sessions with experts in the concerned fields and has submitted the reports. The Plant Committee in its report have recommended for deletion of the following plant species from the Schedule of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

- (i) Blue Vanda (*Vanda coerulea*)
- (ii) Kuth (*Saussurea costus* (lappa)
- (iii) Paphiopedilium Species (Except *Paphiopedilium druryi* and *Paphiopedilium insigne*)
- (iv) Red Vanda (*Rananchera imschootiana*).

Concurrence of Standing Committee was sought for deletion of these plant species.

After detailed discussion, it was decided to seek comments of CWLWs on the report of Plant Committee before taking any decision.

Additional Agenda Item No. III

On the request of CWLW, Assam, Hon'ble Chairman agreed to consider two more proposals namely; Improvement and strengthening of existing road passing through Borail

Wildlife Sanctuary in Assam and laying of optical cable over a length of 8 km adjacent to National Highway passing through Kaziranga National park.

After discussions, it was decided to carry out site inspection in both the cases by a team, consisting of a Member of Standing Committee and a representative of the Ministry.

Miscellaneous Item

ADG(WL) and Member Secretary brought to the notice of the Committee a letter and E.mail received from Mr. Biswajit Mohanty, Member, NBWL from Orissa regarding development of Dhamra Port in the vicinity of Gahirmata Sanctuary effecting the turtle habitat. Mr. Mohanty had requested to make a presentation before the Committee in this regard himself. Therefore, this is not being put up in this meeting & would be put up in the next meeting of Standing Committee of NBWL.

Meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

Annexure-I**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS ATTENDING THE MEETING OF STANDING
COMMITTEE OF NBWL HELD ON 18th August 2008**

1.	Shri S. Regupathy, Hon'ble Minister of State for Environment & Forests (F&WL)	Chairman
2.	Prof. Chander Kumar, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha)	Member
3.	Shri Vijay Sharma, Secretary (E&F), MoEF	Member
4.	Shri P.R. Mohanty, DGF&SS, MoEF	Member
5.	Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh	Member
6.	Dr. Divyabhanusinh Chavda	Member
7.	Shri P.R. Sinha, Director, WII, Dehradun	Member
8.	Shri S. Chandola, CWLW, Uttarakhand	Member
9.	Shri B.K. Patnaik, CWLW, Orissa	Member
10.	Shri. M.B. Lal, Addl.DGF(WL), MoEF	Member-Secretary
11.	Shri R.B. Lal, IGF(WL), MoEF	Invitee
12.	Dr. Rajesh Gopal, Member Secretary, NTCA	Invitee
13.	Dr. Anmol Kumar, DIG(WL), MoEF	Invitee
14.	Shri DS. Poonia, Principal Secretary (Home), Manipur	Invitee
15.	Shri Vinay Tandon, CWLW, Himachal Pradesh	Invitee
16.	Shri A.K. Srivastava, CWLW, Jammu & Kashmir	Invitee
17.	Shri A.K. Rana, CWLW, Manipur	Invitee
18.	Shri D.V. Negi, CWLW, Arunachal Pradesh	Invitee
19.	Shri Paliwal, Principal Secretary- (Power), Arunachal Pradesh	Invitee
20.	Dr. R.N. Mehrotra, CWLW, Rajasthan	Invitee
21.	Shri R. Sundararaju, Addl. PCCF, Tamil Nadu	Invitee
22.	Dr. P.B. Gangopadhyay, PCCF(WL) & CWLW, Madhya Pradesh	Invitee
23.	Shri B.S. Bonal, CCF(Wildlife), Assam	Invitee
