

**MINUTES OF 5<sup>th</sup>  
MEETING OF THE  
EXPERT COMMITTEE  
HELD ON  
10<sup>th</sup> JULY, 2013**

**Ministry of Environment & Forests  
(RE Division)**

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**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FIFTH (5<sup>th</sup>) MEETING OF THE EXPERT COMMITTEE ON ECO-SENSITIVE ZONE.**

The fifth meeting of the Expert Committee on Eco-sensitive Zones (ESZ) was held on 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2013 in the Ministry of Environment and Forests to discuss ESZ proposals as received from the Government of Goa. The list of participants is attached along with leave of absence.

2. To begin with, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests and Chairman of the Expert Committee welcomed the members of the Committee, representatives of the Government of Goa and Special Invitees from the Ministry and briefed them about the context of the days' meeting.

3. The minutes of the last meeting on the proposals of the Government of Goa were confirmed subject to correction in para 5 (ii) by inserting the following before State Level Eco-sensitive Zone Monitoring Committee:

"with the prior approval of the State Government on the recommendation of"

4. The Chairman, thereafter, informed the Committee members that the proposals of Government of Goa for declaration of ESZ was last considered by the Expert Committee during its meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2013 and thereafter on the basis of the decision taken therein, information on the objective criteria and scientific basis for demarcating the extent of ESZ around the protected areas in respect of the proposals submitted by the Government of Goa was sought. The response of the State Government has been received. The State Government has not stated specifically on the issue of the objective criteria and scientific basis for delineation of boundary of the ESZ. However, they have reiterated the basis for delineation of boundaries for ESZ as stated in their earlier letter of 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2012 stating that while delineating the boundaries of the ESZ around the national park and sanctuaries, the concept of natural barriers like river or water bodies was taken into consideration. Further, the State Government has also stated that the State would not allow any mining or renewal of mining leases within the ESZ.

5. The Committee also deliberated the comments of Wildlife Division prepared in consultation with Wildlife Institute of India on the response of the State Government regarding delineation of boundaries of each ESZ based on natural barriers on North, South and East and noted as following:

- (i) The State of Goa has protected areas in a continuous stretch of forest along its eastern length, providing continuity between northern and southern parts of Western Ghats.

- (ii) The forest in this continuous stretch provides sufficient buffer to these protected areas on three sides viz. North, South and East. The protected areas cover most of the biodiversity rich forest and form a strong continuous corridor in the Sahyadri region of Western Ghats, connecting the forest of Karnataka in South to Maharashtra in North.
- (iii) On Eastern Side, though Goa is separated by a ridge of Western Ghats from Karnataka, the area is also under forest and thus provides further continuity to this stretch of forest and thus facilitating the free movement of wildlife.
- (iv) The entire continuum thus facilitates unhindered movement of all life forms including wildlife in North, South and Easterly directions.

6. The Committee noted that in some of the proposals, the delineation of Eco Sensitive Zone Boundary was shown along the middle of the water body and also excluded the rivers in certain places. The Committee strongly felt that the river in itself is an Ecologically Sensitive area as it harbours varieties of aquatic flora and fauna and therefore, opined that in all such cases the distal end of the water body should be considered as the boundary of ESZ.

7. The Committee also took note of the fact that Goa is having geographical area of 3702 km<sup>2</sup>, of which 1224 km<sup>2</sup> i.e. 33% is under government forest including 20% of the area protected under Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, 4% area under private forest, 5% area under CRZ and 40% under agriculture. Moreover, the state of Goa had set up protected areas in a continuous stretch of forest along its eastern length, providing continuity between northern and southern part of the Western Ghats. The nature in itself by way of formation of ridges and forest in this continuous stretch provides sufficient buffers to these protected areas on three sides. The protected areas cover most of the biodiversity rich forest and form a strong continuous corridor in the Sahyadri region of Western Ghats, connecting the forest of Karnataka in South to Maharashtra in North. Further, the proposals by the Government of Goa are state specific and site specific and intended to conserve its natural heritage in a sustainable manner so that the future economic and social development needs would also be pursued.

8. In view of the above, the Committee was of the opinion that the extent of ESZ as proposed by the State Government viz. (i) 0 to 1km from the boundary of the protected area, (ii) distance of adjacent natural boundaries like river or water body from the boundary of the protected area and (iii) 0 to 1 kilometre or distance of adjacent natural boundaries like river or water body from the boundary of the protected area, whichever is lower, may be adequate. However, the Committee recommended that wherever, the natural boundaries like river or water body are included as boundary of the ESZ, in such cases the distal end of

the water bodies should be included as boundary of the ESZ.

9. The committee after detailed deliberations and discussions recommended the proposals of the Government of Goa for issuing draft ESZ notifications based on the natural and manmade features such as ridges, contours, valleys, water bodies, highways, roads, habitation etc. The protected area specific recommendations of the Committee are as under:

- i. **Dr. Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary:** This sanctuary is located in Village Chorao in Tiswadi Taluka having an area of 1.78 km<sup>2</sup>. The Sanctuary is bounded on three sides i.e, North, West and South by river and the village Chorao is located towards the Eastern side. The area proposed for ESZ including water body (rivers) is approximately 0.59km<sup>2</sup> and the extent of the ESZ from the boundary of the Sanctuary is 100 meters (0.1 km) on Eastern side where the Chorao Village is located. The Committee recommended the proposal for issuing the draft notification to the extent of the ESZ as 100 meters (0.1 km) on Eastern side where the Chorao Village is located from the existing boundary of the Sanctuary and on the three remaining sides i.e., North, West and South around the sanctuary the distal ends of the rivers should be included in the ESZ and the activities like movement of ships and barges etc. should be regulated.
- ii. **Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary and National Park:** This sanctuary and national park is located in Eastern Part of the Goa and having an area of 240 km<sup>2</sup> (133 km<sup>2</sup> of Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary +107 km<sup>2</sup> of Bhagwan Mahaveer National Park). The total area of the proposed ESZ is approximately 42.98 km<sup>2</sup> comprising of twelve villages and the extent of ESZ from the boundary of the sanctuary and national park ranges from 0 to 1.0 km. The ESZ is bounded by Madei Wildlife Sanctuary on North, Netravali Wildlife Sanctuary on South, Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary and National Park on East and nearest water body or 1.0 km from the boundary of the protected area, whichever is nearer towards West. Most of the areas in ESZ are private holdings with some government areas. The Committee recommended the extent of ESZ from 0 to 1.0 kilometre or distance of adjacent natural or manmade features like river or dam including their distal end, whichever is nearer, from the existing boundary of the sanctuary and national park.
- iii. **Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary:** This sanctuary is located in Cotigao and Poinguinim villages of Canacona Taluka.. The total area of the sanctuary is 85.65 km<sup>2</sup>. The

proposed ESZ area is approximately 21.60 km<sup>2</sup> and the extent of ESZ from the boundary of the sanctuary ranges from 0 to 1.0 km (zero kilometre where there is natural water body serving as a barrier). The ESZ is bounded towards North by the ESZ of Netravali Wildlife Sanctuary, in South by border of the Karnataka State, in West remaining part of Cotigao, Poinguinim and Gaodongrem Villages and in the East by the Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary. The Committee recommended the extent of ESZ from 0 to 1.0 kilometre or distance of adjacent natural or manmade features like river or dam including their distal end, whichever is nearer, from the existing boundary of the Sanctuary.

- iv. **Bondla Wildlife Sanctuary:** This sanctuary is located in three villages of Sattari, Darvondara and Ponda Talukas. The total area of the sanctuary is 7.98 km<sup>2</sup>. The proposed area of ESZ is approximately 15.02 km<sup>2</sup> and the extent of ESZ from the boundary of the sanctuary varies from 0.8 to 1.0 km (water body or one kilometre whichever is closer is taken as boundary). The most of the area in the ESZ is forest and is under the forest department. The Committee recommended the extent of ESZ up to 1.0 kilometre, from the existing boundary of the Sanctuary.
- v. **Madei Wildlife Sanctuary:** This sanctuary is located in 29 villages of Sattari Taluka. The total area of the sanctuary is 208.48 km<sup>2</sup>. The proposed ESZ of the area is approximately 47.14 km<sup>2</sup> comprising of 36 villages and the extent of ESZ from the boundary of the sanctuary ranges from 0 to 1.0 km. The ESZ is bounded by Maharashtra State towards North, ESZ of Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary and National Park towards South, Madei Wildlife Sanctuary towards East and nearest water body or one kilometre from the boundary of Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary and National Park, whichever is nearer towards West. The Committee recommended the extent of ESZ from 0 to 1.0 kilometre or distance of adjacent natural or manmade features like river or dam including their distal end, whichever is nearer, from the existing boundary of the Sanctuary.
- vi. **Netravali Wildlife Sanctuary:** This sanctuary is located in 16 villages of Sanguem and Quepem Talukas. The total area of sanctuary is 211.05 km<sup>2</sup>. The proposed ESZ comprises of twelve villages and has an area of approximately 75.05 km<sup>2</sup>. The extent of ESZ from the boundary of the sanctuary ranges from 0 to 1.0 km. The ESZ is bounded by the ESZ of Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary towards North, ESZ of Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary towards South, Netravali

Wildlife Sanctuary towards East and nearest water body or one kilometre from boundary of Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary and National Park, whichever is nearer towards West. The Committee recommended the extent of ESZ from 0 to 1 kilometre or distance of adjacent natural or manmade features like river or dam including their distal end, whichever is nearer, from the existing boundary of the Sanctuary.

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

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**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

<b>Sl.No.</b>	<b>Name of Members &amp; Address</b>	<b>Designation</b>
1.	Shri Hem K. Pande, Addl. Secretary, MoEF	Chairman
2.	Dr. G.V. Subrahmaniam, Advisor, MoEF	Member
3.	Prof. S P S Kushwaha, Group Director, Indian Institute of Remote Sensing, Dehradun.	Member Representative
4.	Ms. Anjali Pancholy, Associate TCP, TCPO, Ministry of Urban Development, New Delhi.	Member Representative
5.	Dr. R.S Rawal, Scientist-F, GB Pant Institute of Himachal Environment & Development, Almora Uttrakhand	Member Representative
6.	Dr. Paramjit Singh, Scientist-F, ICFRE Dehradun.	Member Representative
7.	Dr. Gautam Talukdar, Scientist-D, Wild Life Institute of India, Dehradun	Member Representative
8.	Dr. R. M Bhardwaj, Senior Scientist, Central Pollution Control Board, New Delhi.	Member Representative
9.	Shri Abhay Kumar Saxena, Assistant Director, Forest Survey of India, Dehradun	Member Representative
10.	Dr. D K Singh, Botanical Survey of India, Kolkata	Member Representative
11.	Representative of Department of Land Resources, Government of India	
12.	Zoological Survey of India( <b>sought leave of absence</b> )	
13.	Dr. S.K Khanduri, IGF (WL), MoEF	Special Invitee
14.	Shri Vivek Saxena, DIG(WL), MoEF	Special Invitee
15.	Dr. S.C. Garkoti, Director, MoEF	Member Secretary
16.	Dr. H. Kharkwal, Deputy Director, MoEF	MoEF
	<b>Representatives of the Government of Goa</b>	
17.	Shri D N F Carvalho, Conservator of Forests, Wildlife & Eco-Tourism Goa.	