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MINUTES OF THE 12TH STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING OF PROJECT ELEPHANT

The 12th meeting of the Steering Committee of Project Elephant was held on February 04, 2010 in Paryavaran Bhawan, New Delhi under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister, Environment and Forests.

List of participants is annexed.

Welcoming all the participants, Hon'ble Minister directed the Member Secretary to take up the agenda items for deliberations.

Agenda Item No. 1- Confirmation of the minutes of the 11th meeting of the Steering Committee.

The minutes of the 11th meeting of the Steering Committee were confirmed.

Agenda Item No. 2- Action taken on the recommendations made in the 11th meeting.

(a) All India Estimation of Elephants (2007-08)

The Hon'ble Minister observed that although there has been an increase in the population of the wild elephants in the 2007-08 as compared to the previous estimation of 2002, he desired that the methodology being used may be examined, if it requires further refinement, as has been done in the case of tiger. Smt. Maneka Gandhi expressed reservation on the reported increase of elephant population in Kerala. IGF (PE) explained that this increase was because of the fact that at the time of the estimation, large Karnataka population was in Kerala. This has been confirmed by independent sources and is also reinforced by the fact that Karnataka has reported decline in population by more than 1800. Smt. Gandhi also suggested that experts from Africa can be invited for imparting training to our officers on counting methodology.

(b) Declaration of elephant reserves

The Hon'ble Minister wanted update from the State's representatives on the status of declaration of elephant reserves in Chhatisgarh, Meghalaya and Orissa. The representative from Meghalaya informed that the notification was in the final stages of issuance. The Chief Wildlife Warden, Chhatisgarh informed that the State Government is likely to issue notification for one reserve. Since CWLW, Orissa was absent, the status in respect of two ERs in Orissa could not be ascertained.

Agenda Item No. 3- Government of Karnataka has submitted a proposal to include 868.36 sq km of area of Bhadra WLS and its adjoining area in the Mysore Elephant Reserve.

The CCF (WL), Karnatka informed that there is a connectivity between Bhadra and Mysore Elephant Reserve and thus the proposal of the State Government to include the Bhadra Wildlife

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Sanctuary and its adjoining area in the existing Mysore Elephant Reserve should be agreed to. The Hon'ble Minister directed that decision be taken in consultation with DGF & SS.

Agenda item No. 4- Initiative undertaken by the Ministry to prevent death of elephants in train accidents and to mitigate human - elephant conflict.

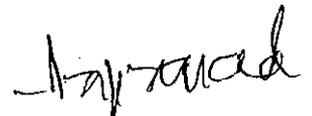
IGF (PE) informed that after the last meeting taken by the Hon'ble Minister, several initiatives on the lines of Rajaji NP have been taken jointly by the West Bengal Forest Department and Railways to minimize the death of elephants due to train accidents. He further informed that the estimates for construction of civil structures are under progress. Smt. Maneka Gandhi drew the attention at recent death of elephants in train accidents in Assam. Hon'ble Minister assured that he has personally taken up the matter with the Railway Minister and directed the matter to be pursued.

Agenda item No. 5 -To revisit National Action Plan on Conservation of Indian Elephants (NAPCIE)

There was general agreement to revisit the Plan. Smt Maneka Gandhi also raised concern for captive elephants and wanted the Ministry to take actions on many like banning of elephants from temples, zoos, circuses, polo and Sonapur mela etc. She said that she would mail all the issues on which she wants urgent action to IGF (PE) after the meeting.

Agenda item No. 6- Agenda Item suggested by Members, Steering Committee

The various agenda's were taken up for discussion one by one. The Hon'ble Minister appreciated all the issues raised by the Members of the Steering Committee and solicited their views on how to bring more focus to elephant conservation as has been done in case of tiger. The Secretary (E&F) suggested constitution of a Task Force for Project Elephant which can look into the entire issue comprehensively and suggest actions. The proposal was appreciated by all and the Hon'ble Minister declared that Ministry will constitute a Task Force within a week. He requested Shri Ajay Desai for the draft TOR for the Task Force.



(A.N. Prasad)

Inspector General of Forests and Director (PE)

February 22, 2010

Copy forwarded for information and necessary action:

- 1 Smt. Maneka Gandhi
Hon'ble Member of Parliament (LS)
14, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110 001.
- 2 All Members of the Steering Committee of Project Elephant
3. Chief Wildlife Wardens of PE States

List of participants

1. Shri. Jairam Ramesh, Hon'ble Minister of State (I/C)
2. Smt. Maneka Gandhi, Hon'ble M. P., Special Invite
3. Shri Vijai Sharma, Secretary
4. Dr. P. J. Dilip Kumar, DGF & SS
5. Shri M. B. Lal, ADGF (WL)
6. Shri A. N. Prasad, IGF & Director (PE)
7. Dr. Rajesh Gopal, MS (NTCA)
8. Dr. Anmol Kumar, DIG (WL)
9. Shri. S. Jagannathan, Director (IFD)
10. Dr. P. S. Easa, Member, Kerala
11. Shri N. K. Bhagat, PCCF (WL), Chhattisgarh
12. Shri Ajay Desai, Member, Karnataka
13. Dr. S. Vincent, Member, Chennai
14. Shri S. Rajanna, CCF (WL), Karnataka
15. Shri Y. V. Jhala, WII, Dehradun
16. Shri S. K. Sharma, CCF (WL & Bio), Jharkhand
17. Shri Vinod Rishi, Member, Dehradun
18. Dr. D. S. Srivastava, Member, Jharkhand
19. Shri Ziley Singh, Consulstant, Planning, Government. of Meghalaya, Meghalaya House, New Delhi.
20. Shri R. Sundara Raju, CWLW, Tamil Nadu
21. Shri K. K. Srivastava, PCCF (WL) and CWLW, Kerala
22. Dr. K.S. Shashidhar, Addl. PCCF & CWLW, Nagaland