

**F. No. 2-7/1998-PE (Part.1)**  
**Government of India/ भारत सरकार**  
**Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change/ पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय**  
**(Project Elephant Division/ हाथी परियोजना विभाग)**  
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**Dated 9<sup>th</sup> May, 2023**

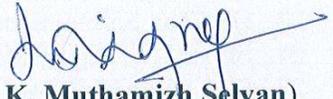
**OFFICE Memorandum**

**Subject: Proceedings of the 18<sup>th</sup> Project Elephant Steering Committee Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> April, 2023 at Mihimiri Hall, Kohora, Kaziranga National Park, Assam-reg.**

The undersigned is enclosing herewith the approved proceedings of the 18<sup>th</sup> Project Elephant Steering Committee meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> April, 2023 at 12:00 Hrs. in Mihimiri Hall, Kohora, Kaziranga National Park, Assam under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister, EFCC.

2. This issue with the approval of Hon'ble Minister, EFCC and Chairman, Steering Committee of Project Elephant.

**Encls: As above**

  
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**Distribution:**

- As per list enclosed.

**Copy to:**

- PS to Hon'ble Minister, EF&CC.
- PS to Hon'ble Minister of State, EF&CC.
- PPS to Secretary, MoEF&CC.
- PPS to DGF&SS, MoEF&CC.
- PPS to ADG (NTCA), MoEF&CC.
- PPS to ADG (Wildlife), MoEF&CC.
- PPS to AS&FA, MoEF&CC.
- PPS to IGF (Wildlife), MoEF&CC.
- PS to IGF& Director (Project Elephant), MoEF&CC.

## **List of Participants**

1. Shri. Bhupender Yadav, Hon'ble Minister of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India.
2. Shri. Ashwini Kumar Choubey, Hon'ble Minister of State, Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India.
3. Shri. Chandra Prakash Goyal, DGF & SS, MoEF&CC.
4. Dr. Satya Prakash Yadav, ADG (PT), MS (NTCA), MoEF&CC.
5. Shri. Pravir Pandey, AS & FA, MoEF&CC.
6. Shri Subhash Chandra, CEO, National Authority (CAMPA)
7. Shri. Ramesh Kumar Pandey, IGF & Director, Project Elephant, MoEF&CC.
8. Dr. Samir Sinha, PCCF & CWLW, Uttarakhand
9. Shri Sandeep Kumar, CWLW, Assam
10. Shri A.K. Dwivedi, RCCF, Mirzapur (Representative of CWLW, Bihar)
11. Shri Sudhir Kumar Agarwal, CWLW, Chhattisgarh
12. Shri Brijesh Kumar, APCCF (Wildlife), Representative of Karnataka
13. Shri Maheep Gupta, CWLW, Maharashtra
14. Shri Sushilesh M. Sahai, CWLW, Meghalaya
15. Shri Sushil Lumar Popli, CWLW, Odisha
16. Shri Praveen Agarwal, CWLW, Tripura
17. Shri Ngilyang Tam, CWLW, Arunachal Pradesh
18. Dr. Manoj Kumar Shukla, Representative of CWLW Uttar Pradesh
19. Shri Ved Pal Singh, CWLW Nagaland
20. Shri Pankaj Goel, CWLW, Haryana
21. Shri Arun Kumar, DCF, Representative of CWLW Punjab
22. Ms. Aruna Sharma, Dy. Commissioner, Dept. of Animal Husbandry & Dairying
23. Dr. K.K. Sarma, Senior Veterinarian, Assam and Member, Steering Committee.
24. Shri P.C. Tyagi, PCCF & HoFF (Retd.), Tamil Nadu, Member, Steering Committee.
25. Shri Virendra Tiwari, Director, WII
26. Shri H.V. Girisha, Addl. Director, WCCB
27. Shri. Manoj Ram Phookun, Assam and Member, Steering Committee.
28. Shri. B.S. Bonal, IFS (retired), Assam and Member, Steering Committee.
29. Dr. Sandeep Kumar Tiwari, WTI, New Delhi and Member, Steering Committee.
30. Dr. Dipankar Ghose, WWF, New Delhi and Member, Steering Committee.
31. Dr. Bibhuti Prasad Lahkar, Aaranyak, Guwahati and Member, Steering Committee.
32. Smt. Shantipriya, CCF, Representative of CWLW, Andhra Pradesh
33. Dr. Lalit Kumar Sharma, Scientist D, ZSI representative of Director, ZSI
34. Dr. Parag Nigam, Scientist G, WII.
35. Dr. Bilal Habib, Scientist F, WII.
36. Dr. K. Muthamizh Selvan, Scientist E, PE Division, MoEF&CC
37. Dr. Rajendra Kumar, Scientist C, PE Division, MoEF&CC.
38. Dr. N. Lakshminarayanan, Project Scientist, WII.
39. Shri Aditya Bisht, Consultant B, MoEF&CC-WII
40. Shri. Udhaya Raj, GIS Specialist, WII.

## Proceedings of the 18<sup>th</sup> Project Elephant Steering Committee Meeting

07<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 12:00 hours in the Mihimiri Hall,  
Kohora, Kaziranga National Park, Assam

The 18<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Steering Committee of the Project Elephant was held on 07<sup>th</sup> April, 2023 at Kohora, Kaziranga National Park, Assam under the Chairmanship of **Shri. Bhupender Yadav**, Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, Government of India and in presence of **Shri. Ashwini Kumar Choubey**, Hon'ble Minister of State, Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, Government of India as Vice Chairman of the Project Elephant Steering Committee.

The list of participants is at **Annexure-1**.

Earlier during the day, Gaj Utsav, 2023 was inaugurated by Smt. Droupadi Murmu, Hon'ble President of India at Kaziranga National Park, Assam in the esteemed presence of Shri Gulab Chand Kataria, Hon'ble Governor of Assam, Shri Bhupender Yadav, Hon'ble Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Himanta Biswa Sarma, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam, Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey, Hon'ble Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Chandra Mohan Patowari, the Environment and Forest Minister, Assam, officials of the Government of India and State Forest Departments of the Elephant Range States and other experts.

During the 18<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee meeting of the Project Elephant, the Chairman of the Steering Committee welcomed all members and participants of the meeting. Following this, **Shri. Ramesh Kumar Pandey**, Inspector General of Forests and Director (PE) & the Member Convener of the Steering Committee of the Project Elephant briefed the members about the major activities carried out since 17<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> August, 2022 at Periyar Tiger Reserve, Kerala and initiated the agenda-specific discussion through a presentation. Copy of his presentation is at **Annexure-2**.

### Overview of major activities carried out by the Project Elephant since 17<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee

- 1. Creation of Elephant Reserves:** Two Elephant Reserves were notified since August 2022. (i) The Government of Tamil Nadu had issued the notification of Agasthiyarmalai Elephant Reserve on 12<sup>th</sup> August, 2022. (ii) The Terai Elephant Reserve was notified by the Government of Uttar Pradesh during December 2022. Presently, the total area covered under the Elephant Reserves has increased to 80776.7 sq.km.
- 2. Ground validation of elephant corridors:** Ground validation of elephant corridors across India has been duly completed in many states and underway in the other states. The Elephant Task Force report 2010 (Gajah) that had listed 88 corridors is being used as the base document. A total of 87 elephant corridors, that include the corridors mentioned in the Gajah report as well as those identified as important by the respective States have been ground validated so far.
- 3. Captive elephant management:** With regard to the creation of the genetic database of the captive elephants, the biological sample collection has been completed for over 270 captive elephants in the States of Delhi, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh, Tripura, and Rajasthan. In line with this activity, an advisory has been issued to the

States on 28th October, 2022 to ensure DNA profiling of captive elephants prior to carrying out any transit/transfer from one place to another. On a parallel development related to captive elephant management, the Ministry has issued an advisory on post-mortem of Elephants by a panel of 3 veterinarians.

4. ***Transnational elephant management issues:*** The Indian Delegation headed by DGF&SS, MoEF&CC attended the 19th CITES CoP during 13th-25th November, 2022 at Panama and made interventions regarding the trade of Asian elephants and underlined the various measures taken to manage captive elephants in the country and the existing legal provisions during the 75th & 76th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee.
5. ***Capacity enhancement towards management of elephants:*** As a routine activity of high importance, the Project Elephant conducted a series of capacity enhancement workshops for frontline staff and other stakeholders. The workshops conducted include (i) three-day workshop for the mahouts & elephant handlers of northern States was conducted at Dudhwa, Uttar Pradesh during December, 2022, which was well received by the participants. (ii) A sensitization workshop for senior Railways officials was conducted at Wildlife Institute of India and Rajaji Tiger Reserve, Uttarakhand in February, 2023. There was a very active participation of the Railways and the workshop was very well received. (iii) A workshop for the managers of the Elephant Reserves was conducted at Wildlife Institute of India and Rajaji Tiger Reserve, Uttarakhand during March, 2023. Further to these three workshops, a refresher course on Elephant Healthcare and Managerial Practices for Veterinarians was supported by the Project Elephant and was coordinated by Prof. K.K. Sarma (Steering Committee member) and conducted at the Agricultural University, Guwahati, Assam.

#### **Agenda-points identified for the 18<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee Meeting**

##### ***Agenda-1: Progress update on tasks identified during the 17<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Steering Committee***

1. The regional coordination meeting of the east-central landscape to address issues facing management of human-elephant conflict was held on 19th January, 2023 at Kolkata, West Bengal. State Forest Departments of Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha participated in the meeting. Best practices adopted by different states in addressing conflict were discussed and ideas were mutually shared. The issues related to interstate elephant movement was also discussed. As done for the east-central landscape, the process of conducting regional meetings with other states has been also initiated with the respective states.
2. A high-level committee was constituted by the Ministry on 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2022 to inspect the recent death of elephants in the States of Jharkhand and Odisha. The committee had visited Odisha on 27th-29th August, 2022 and Jharkhand on 2-4th September, 2022. The final report has been submitted by the committee on 21st November, 2022 and the recommendations of the Committee have been communicated to the Odisha and Jharkhand for consideration and further necessary actions.
3. The inter-ministerial meeting under the chairmanship of Shri. Ashwini Vaishnav, Hon'ble Minister of Railways was held to discuss strategies to minimize train-related wildlife collisions, particularly in elephant and tiger landscapes. The main points discussed during the meeting include (i) 100 sensitive locations for construction of permanent mitigation structures to prevent wildlife-rail collisions identified and communicated to the Ministry of Railways (ii) joint patrolling in

- sensitive locations with the personnel of the Railways to be institutionalized. (iii) technology-based interventions such as seismic sensors and OFC-based detectors to detect elephants along the Railway tracks being evaluated for further piloting in multiple sites. Subsequent meeting under the chairmanship of DGF&SS were organized on 1/06/2022, 13/07/2022 & 11/11/2022 and the issues were thrashed out. As a result, an OM by the Railway Board to all the General Managers, Indian Railways has been issued on 30.09.2022, however further action in the matter is pending at Railways.
4. With respect to the aim of mainstreaming management of the Elephant Reserves, the Project Elephant had sent a communication to the elephant range states to prepare management plans that would be appropriate for managing the Elephant Reserves. Kerala has already prepared a management plan for the Elephant Reserves.
  5. As decided, during the 17<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee meeting, the Gaj Utsav is being celebrated during 7th-8th April 2023 at Karizanga National Park, Assam which has been inaugurated by the Hon'ble President of India.
  6. He informed that the decision to declare Agasthiyamalai ER in Tamil Nadu was ratified and notified as 32nd Elephant Reserve.
  7. The IGF & Director, PE mentioned that the Ministry has sought nominations of mahouts with excellence in service from the State Forest Departments and the prospective nominees will be felicitated during the forthcoming world Elephant Day falling in August 2023.
  8. As envisaged during the 17<sup>th</sup> SC meeting, the CPEMC and CEHWC meetings were duly held before the 18<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee meeting. During the 2nd CEHWC held in January, 2023, means to evaluate the status of elephant rescue centers and camps were deliberated. Preparation of technical guide for preventing spread of infectious diseases was also deliberated. During the 5<sup>th</sup> CPEMC meeting held in March, 2023, Hon'ble Court Orders on (i) notification of elephant corridors in Uttarakhand and (ii) DNA profiling of captive elephants as Ordered by the Hon'ble High Court of Tripura were deliberated among other tasks.
  9. An advisory on implementation of mitigation measures to address power transmission related threats to elephants was issued by Ministry of Power to all DISCOMs and TRANSCOs

### **Agenda-2: Ground validation of the elephant corridors**

The task of completing the corridor ground validation is slated for completion by end of April 2023. Following the field validation, a draft report that lists down the elephant corridors along with the current status of functionality with respect to movement of elephants in different states would be circulated to the Chief Wildlife Wardens by June 2023. After obtaining comments from the Chief Wildlife Wardens of the States, the report would be finalized and circulated to the State government for their protection and conservation.

**Shri. S.K. Popli**, CWLW, Odisha mentioned about the NGT directions to Odisha to notify the corridors and the practical difficulties that state is facing in executing the order. Shri. Popli mentioned that viability of corridor in connecting landscapes without increasing conflict and feasibility to restore corridors first need to be considered before notification. He also requested that field validation of the corridors in Odisha may be done again by the PE Division.

### **Agenda-3: Status on the Synchronized Elephant and Tiger Population Estimation**

Considering the high spatial overlap between elephants and tiger, synchronized elephant and tiger population estimation was envisioned, and being implemented. The Tiger Cell at WII is steering the activity in coordination with the Ministry and the States. Being the

first ever attempt involving new sampling and analytical methods, and in anticipation of delays in both the completion of sampling and finalization of the report, the Ministry has been reviewing the progress closely with WII.

The Chairman sought comments of DGF&SS, MoEF&CC on the progress of the work.

**Shri. Chandra Prakash Goyal**, DGF&SS informed the Committee that he is personally stocktaking the progress of the synchronized elephant estimation and had found that the progress is very slow. The Director, WII has been communicated to expedite the process by involving other scientific institutes, organizations and even local universities.

The Director, WII **Shri. Virendra Tiwari**, informed that the population estimation of elephants under the new sampling approach involves a three-phase process. In this, sample collection pertaining to phase-1 has been completed. The phase-2 process involving standardization of the methods was also finalized during October 2022. The Phase-3 exercise involving mark-capture-recapture using genetic samples (dung) collected from the field has been carried out in two namely Bandipur Tiger Reserve in Karnataka and Bhandavgarh Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh. Shri. Tiwari mentioned that processing samples for extracting genetic information has been a time-consuming process, which is causing inordinate delays. To overcome these time-related concerns, Shri. Tiwari informed that WII has sought proposals from different organizations to process elephant samples to extract genetic information so that the task could be completed at the earliest. He informed that favorable response was received from NCBS and Aaranyak, but also raised concerns that the cost quoted by NCBS is on the higher side. Shri Tiwari further mentioned that the draft report would be completed by December, 2023. He also stated that the Government of India released Rs. 1.5 crore as 1<sup>st</sup> installment during the financial year 2022-2023; the 2<sup>nd</sup> Installment of Rs. 1.5 crore is urgently needed by 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2023 to mobilize the resources.

The Steering Committee member **Shri. P.C. Tyagi**, mentioned that the process of elephant population estimation through genetic sampling would be time consuming process, much costlier and that relying on just one technique before it is fully validated may not be appropriated. Shri. Tyagi suggested that since the exercise is much delayed and there are fund crises and recruiting/ training large nos. of census staff may not be possible, that the states can be asked to continue with the total count approach that was being conventionally followed and thus, well-versed for the field personnel so that population estimates can be immediately assessed into two to three months.

Responding to this suggestion, **Dr. S.P. Yadav, ADG (PT) and MS (NTCA)** mentioned that the conventional approach of total count was seriously flawed prompting innovative and robust sampling-based population approaches.

The Steering Committee member **Dr. Dipankar Ghose** mentioned that many other institutions and universities such as the IISERs that are well-versed in genetic sample-extraction process can be engaged to expedite the task.

ZSI representative informed that ZSI is also having in house facility of DNA analysis and can participate in this work.

Moderating the discussions, the Chairman said that WII may involve other scientific Institutions and local universities for analysis of genetic samples. It was also decided that the additional amount sought by the WII for the elephant estimation would be provided under the National CAMPA. A proposal may be submitted by the WII, in this regard at the earliest. Further, it was decided that the final report of the All India Elephant Estimation shall be submitted by 15th December 2023.

**Agenda-4: Measures taken by the State Forest Departments to prevent elephant deaths due to (i) Electrocution (ii) Train collisions**

**1. Electrocution:** A total of 630 elephants were electrocuted (both transmission and crop-guarding) since 2009. The IGF (PE) informed that sensitization workshop will be conducted by the PE involving power distribution companies through the Ministry of Power and the State Chief Wildlife Wardens.

Steering Committee member **Dr. Bibhuti Lakhar**, mentioned that in Assam most of the cases related to electrocution are related to crop protection and that the transmission related incidences are relatively few.

The CWLW, Odisha **Shri. Popli** mentioned that about INR. 750 crores have been provided by the State to strengthen the power infrastructure in Odisha, which includes insulating the cables passing through elephant habitats. He further mentioned that in lot of sensitive areas, insulating the cables has already been taken up. He also mentioned that possibility of amending CAMPA rules is also being explored to allocate funds towards activities aimed at minimizing electrocution.

Shri. Popli further mentioned that in response to prevailing acute human–elephant conflict situation in Odisha, the State in consultation with Prof. Sukumar (elephant expert of repute) is planning to come-up with a zone-based approach towards elephant conservation.

**Shri. Sudhir Agarwal**, CWLW, Chhattisgarh provided details on the Chhattisgarh conflict situation with respect to electrocution. He mentioned that the number of cases has come down during 2022-23 due to active involvement of local NGOs that assist Forest Department. He also mentioned that interstate elephant movement continues to be an issue, which needs to be addressed.

The Chairman informed that elephant movement across the states should never be curtailed by unplanned creation of barriers, which will seriously undermine elephant conservation in India. He reiterated the need to have active inter-state coordination in resolving longstanding issues between the states to ensure free and unhindered elephant movement along the state boundaries.

The Chairman also took note of the efforts taken by Odisha Forest Department in addressing conflict and informed CWLW, Odisha to make a presentation. The CWLW, Odisha would make presentation before the Hon'ble MEFCC during April 2023.

The Chairman further mentioned that he would like to visit Odisha during April 2023 or in the following months to visit the Similipal – Satkosia corridor and other areas in Odisha. The CWLW, Odisha to coordinate and facilitate the visit by Hon'ble MEFCC.

**2. Train collisions:** A total of 162 elephants have died due to train collisions since 2009. The IGF (PE) briefed the members that technology-based interventions such as seismic sensors and OFC-based detectors to detect elephants along the Railway tracks are being pilot tested in Uttarakhand and West Bengal and are being evaluated for further piloting in multiple sites. After deliberations, the Committee suggested to pilot implement these technologies/ projects at other conflict prone sites/ railway tracks.

The 100 locations that were identified for implementing the OFC-based detection technology to be expedited for implementation and the progress on the efficacy to be coordinated and presented by **Dr. Bilal Habib** during the next Steering Committee meeting.

**Agenda-5: Update on revision of the manual on linear infrastructure with implications for elephant habitats**

The Ministry in collaboration with Wildlife Institute of India had developed the set of best practice guidance - *Eco-Friendly Measures to Mitigate Impacts of Linear Infrastructure on Wildlife*. The guidelines are being updated by the Wildlife Institute of India to improve its overall scope. Dr. Bilal Habib, Scientist F, WII mentioned that revision is nearing completion and that the elephant-specific measures would be featured in the revised version, which can be deliberated during the 19<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee meeting.

**Agenda-6: Ratification of the establishment of Terai Elephant Reserve in Uttar Pradesh**

The Proposal of Government of Uttar Pradesh towards “Terai Elephant Reserve” in the Dudhwa - Pilibhit landscape spanning 3049.3 Sq. Km was ratified by the Committee.

**Agenda-7: Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE) of the Elephant Reserves**

The template/framework for the implementation of “Evaluation of Management Effectiveness for the Elephant Reserves” has been prepared and released on 7th April, 2023 by Hon’ble President of India during the Gaj Utsav, 2023.

Following deliberations by the Steering Committee members, it was decided that the pilot testing may be carried out in any Elephant Reserve across 4 regions. The Ministry would finalize the site for carrying out the pilot testing.

**Agenda-8: Regional Perspective Plan for Managing Human–Elephant Conflict: Proposal by Tamil Nadu**

Tamil Nadu has submitted a concept note on preparation of Regional Action Plan to facilitate holistic understanding and management of human-elephant conflict. As there was no representation from Tamil Nadu for the current Steering Committee meeting, IGF-PE mentioned that there is an urgent need for regional action plans for conservation of elephants and human-elephant conflict management, and that Tamil Nadu’s proposal has been received in this regard.

Following deliberations with the Committee members, the members agreed to the decision that the Ministry in collaboration with the Tamil Nadu Forest Department would conduct a consultation workshop by involving Kerala, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh to granulate the components of the Regional Action Plan.

**Agenda-9: Workshops for Capacity Enhancement**

The IGF-PE briefed the Committee that the Project Elephant Division of the Ministry with support of Elephant Cell, WII had conducted 4 workshops to sensitize various stakeholders including senior railway officials, Elephant reserve managers, veterinary doctors and Mahouts & Elephant care takers. He informed that the feedback and response of the stakeholders about the workshops was very much positive and therefore it has been proposed to conduct the following workshops during the upcoming months:

1. Workshop with the Elephant Reserve managers
2. Minimizing elephant electrocution–workshop for officials from Central Electricity Authority/ Power Grid etc.
3. Preventing the elephant deaths due train collisions: Workshop with Railways

**Dr. S.P. Yadav** , ADG (PT) and MS (NTCA) suggested that the Ministry should review the work done by Railways on the 100 sites identified by MoEFCC for taking measures for mitigation of elephant-train hits.

**Shri. B.S. Bonal**, Member Steering Committee suggested for conducting a sensitization workshop with National Highways Authority of India too.

Following these suggestions, it was decided that MoEF&CC would hold a meeting with Ministry of Railways to review the work done by Railways on the 100 sites identified by MoEF&CC for taking measures for mitigation of elephant-train hits. It was also decided that in addition to the above-mentioned workshops, a sensitization workshop would be organized for NHA also.

#### **Agenda-10: World Elephant Day Celebration Plan for 2023**

The IGF-PE mentioned that World Elephant Day is being celebrated on August 12 every year to create awareness about the conservation and protection of Elephants. The Project Elephant Division arranges the event every year by bringing together different stakeholders. It was deliberated that the site for celebrating the World Elephant Day, 2023 would be decided by the Hon'ble Minister, EF&CC.

#### **Agenda-11 Other items suggested by the Chair**

The Chairman sought one point each from all the participants of the meeting for betterment of elephant conservation and management. The following points were proposed by the Steering Committee members and other invitees:

- i. Preparation of comprehensive management plan for Elephant Reserves
- ii. Identification of the indigenous tribes/ hunters and tap their vast knowledge in field management of elephants and other wildlife
- iii. Regularization of ownership of captive elephants
- iv. Habitat improvement that increases the carrying capacity of the elephant habitats to be taken up
- v. Capacity enhancement of veterinarians by imparting elephant-specific knowledge
- vi. Establishment of more rescue centers that takes care of the weak, sick, injured and captured animals
- vii. Regional level capacity building for management of human–elephant conflict by actively engaging with the Gram Sabhas
- viii. The *ex-gratia* and compensation amount to be made uniform across the country by examining state-specific variations
- ix. Development of regional action plans to manage elephants and human–elephant conflict
- x. Mapping of fodder and water resources in elephant areas and have plans for their augmentation
- xi. Cultivation of oil palm in the North East emerging and need of assessment of necessary action.
- xii. Completion of DNA profiling of captive elephants
- xiii. Assessment of ecological and social carrying capacity of existing elephant habitats
- xiv. Protection of corridors and including them in the management and working plans
- xv. Increase in the budget of Project Elephant
- xvi. Creation of a robust and time-bound central database on human–elephant conflict
- xvii. Timely follow up of the action points / discussions held during various meetings

- xviii. Insurance policy for frontline staff and other personnel working in the field
- xix. Assessing the effect of climate change on elephant habitats
- xx. Adequate representation of members in the Steering Committee from southern part of India as the region supports the largest elephant population in the country
- xxi. Participation of local communities as special invitees in the Steering Committee
- xxii. HEC to be notified as natural disaster by the States.
- xxiii. More financial support for the Elephant Reserves
- xxiv. Legal status to elephant corridors
- xxv. Improving the care and welfare of the captive elephants
- xxvi. Involvement of other scientific institutes like ZSI in elephant population estimation
- xxvii. Registration and capacity building of *mahouts and assistants*
- xxviii. Reviving traditional knowledge and practices in elephant management and welfare
- xxix. Walking in the forest by the officials and staff has reduced. This trend needs to be reversed as on-foot field work provides a better perspective on forests and wildlife.
- xxx. Sensitization of officials and staff of linear infrastructure agencies such as NHAI, Railways, power etc.

**Decisions taken:**

1. The physical validation of all the remaining corridors in Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Karnataka would be completed till end of April, 2023 and the 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the report would be prepared by 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2023 for circulation with States for comments. The Final report would be prepared by 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2023 by incorporating all the comments from the States.
2. WII would also involve other scientific institutes and local universities for analysis of genetic samples. It was also decided that Hon'ble Minister, EF&CC would review the progress in April-May, 2023 and also discuss on the feasibility of conducting the population estimation by hybrid method i.e. by also involving the direct count and dung count methods.
3. The 100 locations that were identified for taking suitable mitigation measures to be expedited for implementation and the progress on the efficacy to be coordinated and presented by Dr. Bilal Habib during the next world elephant day of 2023.
4. Elephant-specific measures would be featured in the revised version of the *Eco-Friendly Measures to Mitigate Impacts of Linear Infrastructure on Wildlife*.
5. The Evaluation of Management Effectiveness for the Elephant Reserves would be pilot tested in any Elephant Reserve across 4 regions. The Ministry would finalize the site for carrying out the pilot testing.
6. The Ministry in collaboration with the Tamil Nadu Forest Department would conduct a consultation workshop by involving Kerala, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh to granulate the components of the Regional Action Plan.
7. The following workshops would be conducted by Ministry with support from Elephant Cell, WII during the upcoming months:
  - a. Workshop with the Elephant Reserve managers
  - b. Minimizing elephant electrocution—workshop for officials from Central Electricity Authority/Power Grid etc.
  - c. Preventing the elephant deaths due train collisions and road accidents—Workshop with Railways and NHAI
8. The Ministry would hold a meeting with Ministry of Railways to review the work done by Railways on the 100 sites identified by MoEF&CC for taking measures for mitigation of elephant-train hits. The progress of the same would be reviewed in the next Steering Committee meeting.
9. Five representatives of the local mahout communities from different parts of the country would be invited during the next steering committee meeting.
10. The Ministry would issue a letter to CWLWs of all the elephant range states, directing them to provide free inter-state passage to elephant movements.
11. The Ministry would develop a long term vision plan for conservation of elephants in

- the country.
12. The progress in suggestion made by the participants during the meeting would also be deliberated during the next Steering Committee meeting.
  13. The 30 points suggested by the participants during the meeting would be deliberated during the next Steering Committee meeting
  14. The site for celebrating the World Elephant Day, 2023 would be decided as per convenience of the Hon'ble Minister, EF&CC.
  15. Co-opted members representing the Southern part of India would be included in the Steering Committee.
  16. CWLW, Odisha to present the works done for preventing the electrocution of elephants in its State in a meeting to be held under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister, EF&CC, tentatively in May 2023.
  17. CWLW, Odisha to facilitate the visit by the Hon'ble Minister, EF&CC to Odisha to see the Similipal — Satkosia corridor and review other activities during April or May 2023.

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

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## Annexure-I

## List of Participants

1. Shri. Bhupender Yadav, Hon'ble Minister of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India.
2. Shri. Ashwini Kumar Choubey, Hon'ble Minister of State, Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India.
3. Shri. Chandra Prakash Goyal, DGF & SS, MoEF&CC.
4. Dr. Satya Prakash Yadav, ADG (PT), MS (NTCA), MoEF&CC.
5. Shri. Pravir Pandey, AS & FA, MoEF&CC.
6. Shri Subhash Chandra, CEO, National Authority (CAMPA)
7. Shri. Ramesh Kumar Pandey, IGF & Director, Project Elephant, MoEF&CC and Member Convener.
8. Dr. Samir Sinha, PCCF & CWLW, Uttarakhand and Member, Steering Committee
9. Shri Sandeep Kumar, CWLW, Assam and Member, Steering Committee
10. Shri A.K. Dwivedi, RCCF, Mirzapur (Representative of CWLW, Bihar)
11. Shri Sudhir Kumar Agarwal, CWLW, Chhattisgarh
12. Shri Brijesh Kumar, APCCF (Wildlife), Representative of Karnataka
13. Shri Maheep Gupta, CWLW, Maharashtra and Member, Steering Committee
14. Shri Sushilesh M. Sahai, CWLW, Meghalaya and Member, Steering Committee
15. Shri Sushil Lumar Popli, CWLW, Odisha and Member, Steering Committee
16. Shri Praveen Agarwal, CWLW, Tripura and Member, Steering Committee
17. Shri Ngilyang Tam, CWLW, Arunachal Pradesh and Member, Steering Committee
18. Dr. Manoj Kumar Shukla, Representative of CWLW Uttar Pradesh
19. Shri Ved Pal Singh, CWLW Nagaland
20. Shri Pankaj Goel, CWLW, Haryana and Member, Steering Committee
21. Shri Arun Kumar, DCF, Representative of CWLW Punjab
22. Ms. Aruna Sharma, Dy. Commissioner, Dept. of Animal Husbandry & Dairying
23. Dr. K.K. Sarma, Senior Veterinarian, Assam and Member, Steering Committee.
24. Shri P.C. Tyagi, PCCF & HoFF (Retd.), Tamil Nadu, Member, Steering Committee.
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28. Shri. B.S. Bonal, IFS (retired), Assam and Member, Steering Committee.
29. Dr. Sandeep Kumar Tiwari, WTI, New Delhi and Member, Steering Committee.
30. Dr. Dipankar Ghose, WWF, New Delhi and Member, Steering Committee.
31. Dr. Bibhuti Prasad Lahkar, Aaranyak, Guwahati and Member, Steering Committee.
32. Smt. Shantipriya, CCF, Representative of CWLW, Andhra Pradesh
33. Dr. Lalit Kumar Sharma, Scientist D, ZSI representative of Director, ZSI
34. Dr. Parag Nigam, Scientist G, WII.
35. Dr. Bilal Habib, Scientist F, WII.
36. Dr. K. Muthamizh Selvan, Scientist E, PE Division, MoEF&CC
37. Dr. Rajendra Kumar, Scientist C, PE Division, MoEF&CC.
38. Dr. N. Lakshminarayanan, Project Scientist, WII.
39. Shri Aditya Bisht, Consultant B, MoEF&CC-WII
40. Shri. Udhaya Raj, GIS Specialist, WII.