

Minutes of the 3rd Meeting of Central Wetland Regulatory Authority (CWRA) held on 27-04-2012 at 11.00 AM in Conference Room No.402, Paryavaran Bhawan, New Delhi under the chairmanship of Dr. T. Chatterjee, Secretary (E&F)

3rd Meeting of the Central Wetland Regulatory Authority (CWRA) was held on 27-04-2012 at 11.00 AM in Conference Room No.402, Paryavaran Bhawan, New Delhi under the chairmanship of Dr. T. Chatterjee, Secretary (E&F). The list of participants is annexed.

The chairman in his introductory remarks while welcoming the members expressed concern about the status of wetlands in the country. He requested state governments to come forward with notification of those wetlands which have not been notified as yet so that they come under the ambit of the regulatory framework for better results.

Special Secretary Shri MF Farooqui, emphasized on importance of wetlands and their role for charging of aquifers. He was of the opinion that list of wetlands sent by the state government for notification should be taken up immediately.

Thereafter Members were asked to debate on various issues so that regulatory process is put on a fast track for execution and implementation.

After elaborate discussions agenda items were taken up one by one and following decisions emerged:

Agenda Item No.1:- Confirmation of the minutes of second meeting of CWRA held on 22-09-2011.

The minutes of the second meeting of Central Wetland Regulatory Authority were circulated to all the members of the Committee. Copy of the minutes is enclosed at Annex-I. Since no comments have been received from any member, the minutes may be confirmed.

Agenda Item No.2:- Notification of new wetlands under wetland conservation rules 2010 on the proposal received from the stage governments.

18 proposals were received from Govt. of Punjab out of which 12 are natural wetlands and 6 were manmade wetlands. From Assam list of 10 wetlands was received which contained 3 complex wetlands.

Authority in principle agreed to notify as many wetlands as desired by the state government falling under the ambit of law irrespective of its size. Information on wetlands to be notified to be sent by the state government officially with all the details as per process of identification of wetlands under different categories under section 6. This process needs to be completed in a month's time so that a next meeting of CWRA is convened to discuss and finalise notification of listed wetlands.

- Information from atlases compiled by SAC Ahmedabad need to be collated and a brief document as per rule 6(3) be sent alongwith the names of wetlands for the notification to ministry without any further delay.
- Since the regulatory process includes political issues the information for notification of wetlands has to come from the state government with official seal.
- Though there are conflict of interest in all the wetlands, we need to go ahead with notification process and whatever rectification measures are to be taken up for those

wetland can be taken up simultaneously in consultation with concerned state governments.

- Size of the wetland was not a criteria for some of the eligible sites where we could notify them under rule 3(6) 3(5), 3(1), 3(2).
- The universities to be identified for making a brief document alongwith survey works to be identified by the concerned state governments and later approved by the authority for further course of action.
- State governments have to be careful about identifying area of zone of influence with ample justification for which enough literature is already available on survey and satellite imageries also supplement it with other authentic details.
- While surveying wetlands care needs to be taken to amply exhibit water sheet in wetlands for both summer and monsoon period to provide more presentable status of wetlands in question which needs to be factually correct upto certain extent.
- Lands under revenue records need to be handed over to the concerned departments/at the state level and issues pertaining to land owned by private people to be sorted out through constant dialogues with state governments from time to time.

There was a general consensus that an orientation workshop needs to be held in Delhi where all state government representatives will be invited to participate so that they can deliberate on issues related to notification process in the concerned states. Honourable Minister of Environment & Forests to inaugurate this workshop in Delhi as per dates convenient to her.

Agenda Item No. 3:- Finalisation of draft guidelines.

Sub-Committee consisting of Prof. E.J. James, Prof. C.K. Varshney, Dr. Asad R. Rahmani and Dr. Sidharth kaul was constituted to deliberate on draft guidelines made by Advisor (Wetlands). After finalizing these draft guidelines by the sub-committee they will be sent to various state governments to get their inputs. Guidelines to be finalised and sent to various user agencies for implementation and execution after finalization by the authority.

Office order to be issued for the constitution of the sub-committee and TA/DA for non-official members to be borne by Ministry of Environments and Forests as per rules to hold meetings of the committee either in Delhi or outside Delhi in any of the States as and when required.

Agenda Item No. 4:- Any other agenda item with permission of the chair.

Some suggestions were sent by a member of the authority to visit various state governments and sensitize officials about importance of wetland regulation. However it was felt by the members that it will be more effective if government machinery is involved and some government official alongwith a few experts could visit various state governments to discuss in details about mudus operandi of the wetland regulation and notification. This will help state governments to clear their doubts about the notification process and also in conserving their wetlands in a more pragmatic manner.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the chair.

List of participants

1. Dr. Tishya Chatterjee, Secretary, MoEF. - Chairman
2. Shri M.F. Farooqui, Special Secretary, MoEF.
3. Dr. S. Kaul, Advisor, MoEF.
4. Shri R.P.S. Kahlon, Principal Secretary, Environment, West Bengal.
5. Dr. Asad Rahmani, Director, BNHS, Mumbai.
6. Smt. Ranjana Gupta, Chief Conservator of Forest, Assam.
7. Shri Arijit Banerjee, CTO, East Kolkata Wetlands & Director, West Bengal.
8. Shri Yashvir Singh, Director, Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India.
9. Shri J.S. Kamyotra, Member Secretary, CPCB.
10. Prof. A.R. Yousuf, Department of Environmental Sciences, Kashmir University
11. Dr. Neelima Jerath, Executive Director, PSCST, Chandigarh.
12. Dr. S.K. Saxena, Principal Scientist, PSCST, Chandigarh.
13. Shri S.K. Mohiddin, SC(WO), Water Quality Division, MoWR.
14. Shri Chandan Singh, Scientific Officer, MoEF.