

**MINUTES OF 34<sup>th</sup> ESZ EXPERT COMMITTEE MEETING FOR THE DECLARATION OF ECO-SENSITIVE ZONE (ESZ) AROUND WILDLIFE SANCTUARIES/NATIONAL PARKS HELD ON 6<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2019 IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST & CLIMATE CHANGE.**

The 34<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Expert Committee for Eco-Sensitive Zone was held under the Chairmanship of Shri A. K. Jain, Additional Secretary on 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2019 in the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, New Delhi. List of participants is annexed.

2. At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the Members and the participants from Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and the Members of the ESZ Expert Committee. In his brief address, Chairman mentioned about public consultation to redress the concerns/apprehension of the local people. He elaborated that for those ESZ Draft Notifications where stakeholder comments were received, those need to be addressed with proper consultation. After brief introduction of the participants, Chairman invited the representative of the States to present their proposals as per Agenda.

3. Following 24 proposals listed in the Agenda were considered for discussion. The representatives of respective State Governments presented their ESZ proposals for consideration of the Expert Committee:

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Protected Area/ZMP</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Status</b>
1.	Draft Zonal Master Plan of Bhagirathi ESA	Uttarakhand	Draft Proposal
2.	Draft Zonal Master Plan for Doon Valley Notification	Uttarakhand	Draft Proposal
3.	Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary	Uttarakhand	Draft Proposal
4.	Kedarnath Musk Deer Sanctuary	Uttarakhand	Draft Proposal
5.	Ramnabagan Wildlife Sanctuary	West Bengal	Draft Proposal
6.	Bibhutibhusan Wildlife Sanctuary	West Bengal	Draft Proposal
7.	Mudumalai Tiger Reserve	Tamil Nadu	Draft Proposal
8.	Therthangal Bird Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Draft Proposal
9.	Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Draft Proposal
10.	Srivilliputhur Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Draft Proposal
11.	Kanjirankulam Birds Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Draft Proposal
12.	Vettangudi Birds Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Draft Proposal
13.	Vallanadu Blackbuck Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Draft Proposal
14.	Melaselvanur-Kelaselvanoor Bird	Tamil Nadu	Draft Proposal

S. No.	Protected Area/ZMP	State	Status
	Sanctuary		
15.	Kanyakumari Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Draft Proposal
16.	Gulf of Mannar National Park	Tamil Nadu	Draft Proposal
17.	Megamalai Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Draft Proposal
18.	Gangaikondan Spotted Deer Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Draft Proposal
19.	Point Calimere Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Draft Proposal
20.	Nellai Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Draft Proposal
21.	Kodaikanal Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Draft Proposal
22.	Pulicat Bird Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Before Publishing Draft
23.	Samaspur Bird Sanctuary,	Uttar Pradesh	Draft Proposal
24.	Tungareshwar Wildlife Sanctuary,	Maharashtra	Draft Proposal

#### 4. Discussion on the ESZ Proposals

### UTTARAKHAND

#### 4.1 Eco-sensitive Zone around Bhagirathi Eco-Sensitive Area:

Shri Monish Mullick, PCCF & CWLW, Department of Forest, Government of Uttarakhand made a presentation on the proposal. The concerns relating with the Zonal Master Plan (ZMP) for Bhagirathi Eco-sensitive Zone (BESZ) were apprised to the Committee, as under:

- a. Draft Notification for BESZ was issued with an area of 40 sq km. Later, the final Notification was declared on 18th December, 2012 with an area of 4179.59 sq. km based on the River Basin approach and the study carried out by the Indian Institute of Remote Sensing (IIRS).
- b. Hon'ble National Green Tribunal (NGT) considering the Original Applications (OA) 151/2013 of Legal Aid Committee, National Green Tribunal Bar Association Vs. Union of India & Ors. and 80/2015 Keshar Singh Panwar & Ors. Vs. Union of India & others, issued directions to the State Government to prepare the ZMP urgently and implement the notification of BSEZ in letter and spirit.
- c. As required under the BESZ Notification, and directed by the Hon'ble NGT, the State Government submitted ZMP in March, 2016 which was considered by the ESZ Expert Committee of MoEFCC on 31st August, 2016. During the meeting, the State of Uttarakhand highlighted certain reservations it had regarding the Notification of BESZ. However, the Expert Committee recommended for revising the ZMP.

- d. State Government of Uttarakhand submitted revised ZMP on 24th October, 2016 which was neither rejected nor accepted, but a Counter Affidavit was filed on behalf of the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation (MOWR, RD & GR) and Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF & CC) and it was mentioned before NGT that the ZMP submitted by the State Government is not acceptable in view of the provisions contained in the Notification.
- e. Hon'ble NGT in its order dated 26th July, 2017 constituted a nine Members Committee headed by Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Environment and Forest, Government of Uttarakhand to prepare and submit a report of the proposed plan for approval of MoEF & CC/ MoWR, RD & GR.
- f. The Committee so constituted by the Hon'ble NGT held various discussions on BESZ Notification on the concerns raised by MoEF & CC and MoWR, RD & GR in its joint affidavit, and had an in detailed analysis of different aspects of ZMP in light of BESZ Notification. The Government of Uttarakhand vide their letter dated 27th September, 2018 had submitted the ZMP to MoEF & CC. Also, with regard to some provisions in the Notification, it has suggested for some exemptions.
- g. Considering the request of the State Government, MoEF & CC, amended the BESZ Notification on 16.04.2018 with relaxation of the provisions related to development on hill slope, land use change etc. However no decision was taken on small hydropower projects and River bed Mining (RBM).
- h. As there was no consensus among the Members regarding small hydro power projects Government of Uttarakhand decided to honor the provisions of BESZ Notification and also to reiterate its commitment to conserve and maintain the ecology and sanctity of holy river Bhagirathi, by restricting hydro-electric project upto two (2) megawatt, sacrificing the investment potential of around Rs 739.96 crores and the sunk cost of about Rs 90.16 crores.
- i. Further, based on the recommendation of the Hon'ble NGT constituted Committee, State Government sought few amendments, from prohibited activities to regulated activities eg commercial use of firewood, establishment of hotel and resorts to accommodate home stay, introduction of exotic species in the BESZ Notification etc.

Advisor (ESZ) taking cognizance of the order of Hon'ble NGT with regard to Zonal Master Plan informed that the requisite approval of MoWR, RD & GR is still awaited. In the absence of the approval of the MOWR, RD & GR, it would not be advisable to make recommendations on the proposal. However, if any suggestions from the Committee members are there for incorporation in the ZMP may be informed to the State Government, so that the same could be considered while reconsidering the proposal.

It was noted that the ZMP has different chapters including: Forest & Wildlife, Watershed Management, Agriculture, Rural Development, Urban Development, Irrigation, Energy, Public Health & Sanitation, Tourism, Road Infrastructure & Communication development, Disaster Management and Skill Development. However, to address the environmental issues the mitigative measures to combat the

environmental impact have not been included in the plan. The State Government was advised to incorporate the same as an addendum to ZMP.

Based on the presentation made and discussion held, the consideration of the proposal was deferred pending approval of MOW, RD & GR. Additionally the State Government was advised to provide a plan to mitigate the adverse environmental impact as an addendum to the ZMP.

#### **4.2 Draft Zonal Master Plan for Doon Valley Notification:**

Shri. S.K. Pant, Town and Country Planning Department, Government of Uttarakhand made a presentation on the proposal. It has informed that there is an urgent need for a sustainable and equitable development of the city. The representatives of the State urged to finalize the Zonal Master Plan for expediting the process of planning.

Attention of State Government was drawn to the previous Expert Committee meetings wherein it was recommended that the Master Plan prepared by all the three authorities namely Special Area Development Authority (SADA), Mussoorie Dehradun Development Authority (MDDA) and Haridwar Rishikesh Development Authority (HRDA) should be considered for approval of the Zonal Master Plan. However, it has been noted that the State Government is again requesting for considering the plan in isolation. The Committee opined that since all the three zones are contiguous to each other, instead of considering three plans for the Notified area, in isolation, an integrated plan be prepared and submitted to MoEF&CC. Based on the presentation made and discussions held, the Committee reiterated its earlier decision and the State Government was asked to submit the integrated Zonal Master Plan of SADA, MDDA and HRDA to MOEFCC for consideration.

#### **4.3 Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary, Uttarakhand:**

Shri. Arvind Singh Hyanki, Secretary, Forest and Environment Government of Uttarakhand sought the deferment on the proposal. The Committee agreed to defer the proposal based on the request of the State Government.

#### **4.4 Eco-sensitive Zone around Kedarnath Musk Deer Sanctuary, Uttarakhand:**

The Ministry has informed to the Committee members that the proposal of Kedarnath Musk Deer Wildlife Sanctuary was discussed in the ESZ Expert Committee Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2018. The Committee recommended for finalization of draft Notification subject to submission of revised map, boundary description and co-ordinates of the ESZ Area. After follow-up with the State, the required information was received from the Government of Uttarakhand on 11/12/2018. Thereafter, when the requisite approval and processes for publishing the Final Gazette Notification was completed, this Ministry received a letter from Additional Chief Secretary, Government of Uttarakhand, enclosing fresh inputs with respect to finalisation of ESZ of Kedarnath Musk Deer Wildlife Sanctuary on 17/01/2019.

In the given proposal, Government of Uttarakhand sought several changes in the Notification with respect to ESZ area, ESZ co-ordinates, and removal of some villages from ESZ area. In addition, it has also proposed changes in the ZMP, construction activity, solid waste management, Hill slope, commercial hotels, eco-friendly transport etc. Later, Secretary, Government of Uttarakhand in his letter dated 21.01.2019 mentioned that fresh inputs of 17/01/2019 to be considered for incorporation in supersession of earlier input sent by Uttarakhand. Accordingly, It was decided that the matter be considered in the next meeting of the ESZ Expert Committee.

Shri Sandeep Kumar, DFO Uttarkashi, Forest Department, Government of Uttarakhand made a presentation on the revised proposal and it was informed that the draft Notification was published on 13.12.2017. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA	:	975.2 sq. km
Proposed ESZ area	:	451.15 sq. km
Proposed Extent	:	Zero to 11.60 km

It was mentioned that the proposed Eco-sensitive Zone for Kedarnath Musk Deer Sanctuary covers a peripheral area of 45115.02 hectare which include 39 villages and the extent of ESZ ranges from zero (Gangotri National Park towards north) to 11.60 km across the boundary of the Sanctuary.

On the proposed changes, the representative of the State mentioned that few villages and temple sites were excluded from the proposed ESZ. The number of villages shall be reduced from 39 to 23 in the final Notification. Accordingly, the area of ESZ shall be reduced from 451.15 sq km to 442.60 sq. Km. The extent of proposed ESZ will remain same. The drop in 16 villages include the areas for reconstruction and re-establishment at Kedarnath in the post-disaster development of Char Dham Yatra route.

During the presentation, the State Government proposed to shift the commercial activities under the regulated activities and industrial activities remained in the prohibited section. However, the members of the Committee did not agree to this change. Later, the representatives of the State Government revealed that they are planning for installation of ropeway that will reduce construction of road and also to minimize the pollution.

Based on the presentation made and discussions held, the Committee recommended for finalisation of the Draft Notification with suggested changes limited with ESZ area, ESZ boundary with reduction of 16 villages.

## **WEST BENGAL**

### **4.5 Eco-sensitive Zone around Ramnabagan Wildlife Sanctuary:**

Shri S. Sundriyal, APCCF Wildlife, Department of Forest, West Bengal made a presentation and apprised the Committee about the proposal. It was informed that

the draft Notification was published on 18.09.2018. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA	:	0.15 sq. km
Proposed ESZ area	:	0.23 sq. km
Proposed Extent	:	100 meters uniform

It was mentioned that Ramnabagan Wildlife Sanctuary is situated at the middle of Burdwan town in West Bengal at a distance of about 105 km. from the State capital Kolkata. There is one Zoo within the Sanctuary where numerous species of mammals and bird species are protected under captivity. The extent of ESZ shall be 100 meters uniform around the protected area.

No comments were received from the stakeholders/public. While enquiring about any significant changes in the draft Notification to be processed for final Notification, the representative of the State Government informed that the area of PA need to be corrected as 0.14 sq. km instead of 0.15 sq. km and precise area of ESZ shall be 0.24 sq km.

Based on the presentation made and discussions held, the Committee recommended for the finalization of draft Notification with the above changes.

#### **4.6 Eco-sensitive Zone around Bibhutibhusan Wildlife Sanctuary:**

Shri S. Sundriyal, APCCF Wildlife, Department of Forest, West Bengal made a presentation on the proposal. It has informed that the draft Notification was published on 01.10.2018. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA	:	0.64 sq. km
Proposed ESZ area	:	0.31 sq. km
Proposed Extent	:	100 meters uniform

It was mentioned that Bibhutibhusan Wildlife Sanctuary was declared as Wildlife Sanctuary on 19<sup>th</sup> August, 1998. The Sanctuary is situated on the bank of river Ichhamoti within the Parmadan mouza and the areas surrounding the Sanctuary is mainly agricultural land. The region falls under Sundarban Biosphere Reserve and it is an excellent habitat for fishes, variety of birds, reptiles and also captive of spotted deer.

No comments were received from the stakeholders/public and local villagers urged to protect the area. On any significant changes, the representative of the State informed Committee that the area of ESZ has to be corrected as 0.52 sq. km. from 0.31 sq. Km.

Based on presentation made and discussions held, the Committee recommended for the finalization of draft Notification with the above changes.

## TAMIL NADU

### 4.7. Eco-sensitive Zone around Mudumalai Tiger Reserve, Tamil Nadu:

Shri Sanjay K Srivastava, PCCF & CWLW, Government of Tamil Nadu made a presentation on the proposal. It has informed that the draft Notification was published on 29.06.2018. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA	:	688.586 sq. km
Proposed ESZ area	:	438.904 sq. km
Proposed Extent	:	Zero km to 33.65 km

It was stated that Mudumalai Tiger Reserve is located in Nilgiris district at the tri-junction point with Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. The proposal was vetted by District Collector, DFO and also presented before the Chief Minister of the State. The total area of ESZ including buffer zone of the Tiger Reserve is 438.904 sq. km with an extent varying between zero to 33.65 km. The zero extent is toward the border of Kerala.

The comments received from the stakeholders/public were duly considered. The member of the experts suggested improving the map by delineating ESZ are by hatching on the maps.

Based on the presentation made and discussion held, the Committee recommended for the finalization of draft Notification subject to submission of improved maps and views of State Government on public comments in a tabular form.

### 4.8 Eco-sensitive Zone around Therthangal Bird Sanctuary

Shri Sanjay K Srivastava, PCCF & CWLW, Government of Tamil Nadu made a presentation on the proposal. It was informed that the draft Notification was published on 05.07.2018. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA	:	0.29295 sq. km
Proposed ESZ area	:	4.5718 sq. km
Proposed Extent	:	0.3 Km to 1.17 km

It was mentioned that Therthangal Bird Sanctuary is situated in Nainarkoil taluk of Ramanathapuram district. The Sanctuary is an important roosting site for local migrants and resident water bird species. The birds also provided natural fertilizer (guano) for the paddy fields and also important site for the development of community based eco-tourism.

No comments were received from the stakeholders/public. Based on the presentations made and discussions held, the Committee recommended for the finalization of draft Notification.

#### **4.9 Eco-sensitive Zone around Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary**

Shri Sanjay K Srivastava, PCCF & CWLW, Government of Tamil Nadu made a presentation on the proposal. It was informed that the draft Notification was published on 05.07.2018. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA	:	2.30495 sq. km
Proposed ESZ area	:	19.0387 sq. km
Proposed Extent	:	Zero km to 2 km

It was informed that Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary is situated in Ramanathapuram district and is basically a PWD irrigation tank that is used for storing water for agriculture. The Sanctuary provide a good feeding and wintering ground for long distant migrant water birds which also fertilized the agriculture field..

No comments were received from the stakeholders/public. The Committee enquired about the presence of revenue land within the proposed ESZ. The representative of State informed that there are four villages and the land use pattern map is provided for reference. On zero ESZ extent, it was mentioned that it is on the eastern side because the area falls under the proposed site of the State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamilnadu Ltd (SIPCOT).

Based on the presentation made and discussions held, the Committee recommended for the finalization of draft Notification.

#### **4.10 Eco-sensitive Zone around Srivilliputhur Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary**

Shri Sanjay K Srivastava, PCCF & CWLW, Government of Tamil Nadu made a presentation on the proposal. It was informed that the draft Notification was published on 09.07.2018. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA	:	476.65 sq. km
Proposed ESZ area	:	305.86 sq. km
Proposed Extent	:	Zero Km to 6.2 km

It was described that Srivilliputhur Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary is located at Rajapalayam and Srivilliputtur district and Saptur Reserve Forest of Madurai district. The Sanctuary is also meeting place of two distinct geographical regions of bio diversity landscape i.e. Western Ghats of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. It has wide varieties of endangered species including Grizzled Squirrel, Elephant, Tiger, Leopard, Nilgiri Tahr, Gaur, Lion Tailed Macaque, etc. It was also mentioned that no ESZ is proposed on south, south-west and west, due to the presence of Sivagiri Reserve Forest and Nellai Wildlife Sanctuary in south, Periyar Tiger Reserve, Kerala in south west and Megamalai Wildlife Division in west.



No comments were received from the stakeholders/public. Based on the presentation made and discussions held, the Committee recommended for the finalization of draft Notification.

#### **4.11 Eco-sensitive Zone around Kanjirankulam Birds Sanctuary**

Shri. Sanjay K Srivastava, PCCF & CWLW, Government of Tamil Nadu made a presentation on the proposal. It was informed that the draft Notification was published on 12.07.2018. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA	:	1.0421 sq. km
Proposed ESZ area	:	3.90 sq. km
Proposed Extent	:	0.05 Km to 1.30 km

It was mentioned that Kanjirankulam Birds Sanctuary is situated in Nilgiris district. The site is an important wintering ground for long distant migrant water birds and around 4500 birds belonging to 43 species have been recorded during the peak season including Pelican, Painted stork, Eurasian Spoon bill, White ibis, Darter, Flamingo etc. The birds support with natural fertilizer (guano) for the paddy fields. The Sanctuary can develop community based eco-tourism in near future.

No comments were received from the stakeholders/public. Based on the presentation made and discussions held, the Committee recommended for the finalization of draft Notification.

#### **4.12 Eco-sensitive Zone around Vettangudi Birds Sanctuary**

Shri. Sanjay K Srivastava, PCCF & CWLW, Government of Tamil Nadu made a presentation on the proposal on the proposal. It was informed that the draft Notification was published on 12.07.2018. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA	:	0.38426 sq. km
Proposed ESZ area	:	12.03 sq. km
Proposed Extent	:	Zero Km to 2 km

It was stated that Vettangudi Birds Sanctuary is basically 3 PWD irrigation tanks that are used for storing water for agriculture. . The area is an important wintering ground for migratory bird species. Around 5321 birds belonging to 46 species have been listed during the peak season which including white ibis, black ibis, open-billed stork, egrets, mynas, teals, ducks, darters, herons, little cormorant, etc. The representative of the State mentioned that the ESZ area and the extent are not correct and needed to be changed. He mentioned that the ESZ area is 7.423 sq. km. and the extent is 1 km (uniform).

No comments were received from the stakeholders/public. Based on presentation made and discussions held, the Committee recommended for the finalization of draft Notification after submission of a letter mentioning ESZ area and extent from the State Government.

#### **4.13 Eco-sensitive Zone around Vallanadu Blackbuck Sanctuary**

Shri Sanjay K Srivastava, PCCF & CWLW, Government of Tamil Nadu made a presentation on the proposal. It was informed that the draft Notification was published on 12.07.2018. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA	:	16.4121 sq. km
Proposed ESZ area	:	12.03 sq. km
Proposed Extent	:	Zero Km to 2 km

It was mentioned that Vallanadu Blackbuck Sanctuary the southernmost region in the subcontinent where Blackbuck is found. The maximum extent of ESZ is toward the south-eastern side of the Sanctuary; while the minimum extent is zero kilometre which is due to passing of National Highway on the northern side.

On the Mining activities in the area, representative of the State Government informed that numerous mining proposal/lease has already been rejected and no further activities are permitted in the proposed Eco-sensitive Zone. On the number of blackbuck in the sanctuary and number of villages in the ESZ was asked by the Committee, it was responded that around 130 Blackbucks were recorded and there are 5 villages within the ESZ. It was brought to the notice of the State Government that in the draft Notification there is no mention about villages. The State Government confirmed presence of 5 villages in the ESZ.

No comments were received from the stakeholders/public. Based on the presentation made and discussions held, the Committee recommended for the finalization of draft Notification subject to submission of letter from the State Government regarding villages inside the ESZ.

#### **4.14 Eco-sensitive Zone around Melaselvanur-Kelaselvanoor Bird Sanctuary**

Shri. Sanjay K Srivastava, PCCF & CWLW, Government of Tamil Nadu made a presentation on the proposal. It was informed that the draft Notification was published on 20.07.2018. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA	:	5.93 sq. km
Proposed ESZ area	:	11.5108 sq. km
Proposed Extent	:	0.019 km to 2.00 km

It was informed that Melaselvanur-Kelaselvanoor Bird Sanctuary situated in Ramanathapuram District. The sanctuary is basically a PWD irrigation tank that is used for storing water for agriculture. It is an important roosting site for local migrants and resident water birds. Around 16000 birds belonging to 45 species have been recorded including Pelican, Painted stork, Eurasian Spoon bill, White ibis, Darter, Flamingo, etc. These birds support natural fertilizer (guano) for the paddy fields. It may be developed as community based eco-tourism in the area.

No comments were received from the stakeholders/public. Based on the presentation made and discussions held, the Committee recommended for the finalization of draft Notification.

#### **4.15 Eco-sensitive Zone around Kanyakumari Wildlife Sanctuary**

Shri Sanjay K Srivastava, PCCF & CWLW, Government of Tamil Nadu made a presentation on the proposal. It was informed that the draft Notification was published on 20.07.2018. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA	:	402.395 sq. km
Proposed ESZ area	:	196.05 sq. km
Proposed Extent	:	Zero Km to 3 km

It was also mentioned that the State Government have cautiously congregated numerous patch of land in proposing the Eco-sensitive Zone to reduce the environmental degradation due to segregation of forest patches. It was elaborated that the Kanyakumari Wildlife Sanctuary is floristically one of the richest areas consisting of numerous endemic species including *Piper*, *Garcinia*, *Eugenia*, *Ixora*, *Hiptage*, *Calamus*, *Dioscorea* etc. Also, the sanctuary is rich in wildlife with about 40 types of mammals, 120 species of birds including 14 species of migratory birds and rich diversity of fishes, reptiles and amphibians. Many endemic medicinal & endangered plants form the natural wealth of this place. The presence of Tiger and Leopard lends credence to the richness of biodiversity.

It was also mentioned that the zero extent of ESZ is towards the Northern, North-Eastern and Eastern boundary of the Sanctuary which is bordering with Kalakkad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve. Similarly extent towards western and north-western boundaries is adjoined with the Neyyar Wildlife Sanctuary of Kerala State.

Comments received from the stakeholders/public were duly considered by the Committee. The representative of the State Government explained that the comments are mainly on the demarcation of ESZ boundary and livelihood options for the local people. He also clarified that the declaration of ESZ has no significant impact on the livelihood of the local people and it is ultimately benefiting to the local inhabitant.

Based on the presentation made and discussions held, the Committee recommended conducting a public hearing in consultation with the District Collector on the draft Notification for addressing the apprehension arising from the public. Further consideration of the proposal was deferred.

#### **4.16 Eco-sensitive Zone around Gulf of Mannar National Park**

Shri Sanjay K Srivastava, PCCF & CWLW, Government of Tamil Nadu apprised the Committee about the proposal. It has informed that the draft Re-Notification was published on 27.07.2018. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA	:	560 sq. km
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Proposed ESZ area : 720.89 sq. km

Proposed Extent : 0.73 Km to 5.57 km

It was mentioned that Gulf of Mannar National Park is situated in two districts of Tamil Nadu i. e. Ramnathapuram & Tuticorin. It is one of the four major reef ecosystems in India with 21 off-shore islands (2 submerged). richly endowed with unique coral formations, marine shells, molluscs and tropical fish associated with coral islands. The ecosystems support 4200 species of fauna and flora including rare chanks, shrimps, pearl oysters, whales, dugongs, turtles, seahorses, sea snakes, sea cucumbers etc. Also, the sacred chank, a *Turbinellapyrum*, and the most preferred species of pearl oyster *Pinctada fucata* occurs here. Further, the Sanctuary harbours most endangered mammal, Dugong (*Dugong dugon*) and the area also contains the rare and unique *Balanoglossus*.

No comments were received from the stakeholders/public. The member of the Committee enquired about the distance of Biosphere Reserve from the Sanctuary and possibilities of covering more area of ESZ toward the north-eastern side of the protected area in the proposed draft Notification. The representative of the State informed that the Sanctuary itself is a Biosphere Reserve without any habitation within the sanctuary and ESZ. It was also stated that it was basically taken from the Fisheries Department for the protection of Dugong and further declared as Wildlife Sanctuary and it will be difficult for further expansion of ESZ extent.

Based on the Presentation made and discussions held, the Committee recommended for the finalization of draft Notification.

#### **4.17 Eco-sensitive Zone around Megamalai Sanctuary**

Shri Sanjay K Srivastava, PCCF & CWLW, Government of Tamil Nadu made a presentation on the proposal. It was informed that the draft Notification was published on 10.09.2018. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA : 269.10 sq. km

Proposed ESZ area : 116.73 sq. km

Proposed Extent : Zero Km to 1.7 km

It was mentioned that the Megamalai Sanctuary is situated in southern part of Western Ghats. The Sanctuary is an important landscape for elephant conservation programme in Periyar and also harbours numerous endangered species such as Grizzled Squirrel, Elephant, Tiger, Leopard, Nilgiri tahr, etc. There are 8 villages inside the ESZ and zero extent of ESZ are toward the Eastern boundary Gandamanur Range covered by the Srivilliputhur Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary and Chinnamanur and Cumbum East range covered by Megamalai Reserve Forest along the Eastern boundary. The Southern Boundary of Gudalur range and Cumbum East range is covered by Periyar Tiger Reserve.

Comments were received from the stakeholders/public. On the issue of various public utilities like drinking water supply, medical, road, transport,

electrification, cultivation etc without any hindrance in the region, it was informed that the suggested activities fall under regulated activities and there will be no impact on the plantations or plantation workers due to this Notification.

Based on presentation and discussions held, the Committee recommended for the finalization of draft Notification.

#### **4.18 Eco-sensitive Zone around Gangaikondan Spotted Deer Sanctuary**

Shri Sanjay K Srivastava, PCCF & CWLW, Government of Tamil Nadu made a presentation on the proposal. It was informed that the draft Notification was published on 30.10.2018. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA	:	2.88 sq. km
Proposed ESZ area	:	1.47 sq. km
Proposed Extent	:	Zero Km to 0.82 km

It was informed that Gangaikondan Spotted Deer Sanctuary is the India's first spotted deer Sanctuary situated in the Tirunelveli District. The area is normally a thorny scrub or dry deciduous type forest. The Spotted deer which are not only regular habitants in this sanctuary but, over time they have spilled over to surrounding areas. Because of its location, the declaration of ESZ for the Sanctuary could be targeted for conservation, awareness and ecotourism to provide livelihood to villagers. It was also mentioned that the zero extent of ESZ in the proposed proposal is in the western and north western side of the Sanctuary due to National Highways and the railway line at the south-east side.

No comments were received from the stakeholders/public. The Committee discussed the possibility for developing corridors by modifying the proposal, and the representative of State responded that the Sanctuary is primarily a habitat of spotted deer and no other important wild animals present. The State Government is planning for placing sign board alongside the boundaries, where road are passing.

Based on the presentation made and discussions held, the Committee recommended for the finalization of draft Notification.

#### **4.19 Eco-sensitive Zone around Point Calimere Sanctuary**

Shri. Sanjay K Srivastava, PCCF & CWLW, Government of Tamil Nadu made a presentation on the proposal. It was informed that the draft Notification was published on 30.10.2018. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA	:	22.51 sq. km
Proposed ESZ area	:	88.93 sq. km
Proposed Extent	:	0.14 km to 4 km

It was informed that the sanctuary is home to the largest population of the Blackbuck in Southern India. It harbors the single largest stretch of the unique dry-evergreen forest in the country. The sanctuary and its surrounding wetlands are

important wintering grounds for water-birds from the North. Nearly 100 species of migratory water birds including the Greater Flamingo start arriving in the sanctuary and its surroundings from September onwards and stay on till January before their return to the North. The sanctuary coast has been a regular nesting site of the endangered Olive Ridley turtle

No comments were received from the stakeholders/public. The Committee enquired about the status of salt production in the region. The representative of the State informed that the area is basically a cyclone affected area where mud flats are formed at various places. Cultivation is generally practiced in the area and thus both cultivation and salt production activities are keeping under regulated activities in the proposed proposal. On the clarification regarding the Point Calimere + 'B' Wildlife Sanctuary in the present proposal, it was informed that there is another protected area of 5.22 sq km that link with mangrove forest which is fully protected under Ramsar site.

Based on the presentation made and discussions held, the Committee recommended for the finalization of draft Notification.

#### **4.20 Eco-sensitive Zone around Nellai Wildlife Sanctuary**

Shri Sanjay K Srivastava, PCCF & CWLW, Government of Tamil Nadu made a presentation on the proposal. It was informed that the draft Notification was published on 22.11.2018. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA	:	356.7333 sq. km
Proposed ESZ area	:	106.24 sq. km
Proposed Extent	:	Zero km to 1 km

It was mentioned that Nellai Wildlife Sanctuary is situated in Tirunelveli district and is an important habitat for numerous species of mammals, reptiles and birds. The sanctuary is the habitat for 64 nos of mammals, 69 nos of reptiles & 118 nos of birds and it has 456 nos of plant species which includes 3 nos of Gymnosperms, 40 nos of RET species.

The representative of the State justified that zero extent towards the Northern boundary, as it is bordered with Grizzled Giant Squirrel Sanctuary, the Western side is surrounded by Periyar Tiger Reserve and Sanctuaries and Reserved Forests of Kerala. The Southern side is covered by Courtallam & Puliয়ারai Reserved Forest which has several waterfalls.

No comments were received from the stakeholders/public. The Committee suggested including the waterfalls in the proposed proposal. The representative of the State mentioned that the waterfalls are regularly monitored by the Madras High Court and at the meeting of stakeholders at district level it has already been decided to exclude waterfalls from ESZ.

Based on the presentation made and discussions held, the Committee recommended for the finalization of draft Notification.

#### **4.21 Eco-sensitive Zone around Kodaikanal Wildlife Sanctuary, Tamil Nadu**

Shri. Sanjay K Srivastava, PCCF & CWLW, Government of Tamil Nadu made a presentation on the proposal. It was informed that the draft Notification was published on 22.11.2018. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA	:	608.95 sq. km
Proposed ESZ area	:	101.08 sq. km
Proposed Extent	:	Zero km to 1 km

It was mentioned that Kodaikanal Wildlife Sanctuary is characterized by a variety of ecosystems such as grasslands, fresh water, marsh ecosystem, dry deciduous forest, and tropical evergreen forests etc. The protected area provided sustainable habitat for about numerous species of mammals including species like Tiger, Elephant, Nilgiri tahr, etc. It was also informed that the zero extent of ESZ is due to inter-State border with Kerala and presence of a township.

No comments were received from the stakeholders/public. The Committee enquired any suggestive changes from draft to final Notification. The representative of the State Government clarified that the area of ESZ shall be corrected as 106.78 sq km. instead of 101.08 sq. km without changing the extent of ESZ and further provided that no modifications on geo-coordinates and activities shall be made from draft to final Notification.

Based on the presentation made and discussions held, the Committee recommended for the finalization of draft Notification.

#### **4.22 Eco-sensitive Zone around Pulicat Bird Sanctuary, Tamil Nadu:**

Shri Sanjay K Srivastava, PCCF & CWLW, Government of Tamil Nadu made a presentation on the proposal. It was informed that the proposal is under the drafting stage and willing to discuss before the Expert Committee for consideration. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

- a. Pulicat Bird Sanctuary of Tamil Nadu has an area of 153.67 sq km. The sanctuary area itself includes Pulicat lake as well as 13 villages located adjoining the lake where the feeding grounds for the birds is located.
- b. The distance between the boundary of these villages from the HTL of the lake ranges from about 450m to more than 5 km at certain places. This zone provides sufficient shelter and buffer to the birds.
- c. Any new area proposed for Eco-sensitive Zone will result in animosity with the local people and that will go against the efforts for conservation.
- d. Hence there is no ecological requirement of any other buffer area for the conservation management of the sanctuary which is only seasonal in nature at the time of arrival of birds.

- e. Therefore, it has been decided not to propose any eco sensitive zone for Pulicat bird sanctuary. Hence zero km is proposed as Eco-Sensitive Zone for Pulicat Birds Sanctuary.

In addition, the representative of the state also clarified that the sanctuary itself is protected under the Wildlife (Protection) Act and there is no necessity for separate Notification for declaring Eco-sensitive zone.

The Committee did not agree to the submission of the state Government and asked MOEF&CC to seek views of Wildlife Division in the first place. Based on the presentation made and discussions held, the Committee decided to seek considered opinion from Wildlife Division before considering the proposal further.

## **Uttar Pradesh**

### **4.23 Eco-sensitive Zone around Samaspur Bird Sanctuary, Uttar Pradesh:**

Shri Abu Arshad, Wildlife Warden, Endangered Project, Government of Uttar Pradesh made a presentation on the proposal. It was informed that the re-notified draft of above WLS was published on 14.12.2018. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA	: 3.0854 sq. km
Proposed ESZ area	: 22.84 sq. km
Proposed Extent	: 1.0 km uniform

It was mentioned that Samaspur Bird Sanctuary is an important habitat of birds including globally threatened species such as great spotted eagle, saras crane, oriental darter, painted stork, etc. There are six (6) villages within the proposed Eco-Sensitive Zone.

No comments were received from the stakeholders/public on the draft proposal. The Committee asked the State Government to mention, if there are any changes proposed for the Notification. The representative of the State Government revealed that there was an error in the area of the Bird Sanctuary mentioned in the draft Notification. The corrected area of the protected area is 7.99 sq km instead of 3.085 Sq. Km. He further requested that the member secretary of the proposed Monitoring Committee to be changed from Dy. Conservator of Forest, Hardoi to Divisional Director, Social Forestry Division, Raebareli.

Based on the presentation made and discussions held, the Committee recommended the proposal for finalization of draft Notification subject to submission of an official communication from the State Government on the above mentioned changes.

## **Maharashtra**

### **4.24 Eco-sensitive Zone around Tungreshwar Wildlife Sanctuary, Maharashtra:**

Shri Naresh Zurmure, Chief Conservator of Forest, Thane Circle, Government of Maharashtra made a presentation on the proposal. It was informed that the draft



Notification of above WLS was published on 24.12.2018. The salient features of the draft Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ) are as follows:

Area of PA	: 85.70sq. km
Proposed ESZ area	: 67.26sq. km
Proposed Extent	: 100 meters to 4.0 km

It was Stated that Tungareashwar Wildlife Sanctuary is situated in Thane and Palghar Districts of Maharashtra. The Sanctuary is an important habitat for leopard, wild boar, four headed antelopes, jackals and porcupines etc. The Southern part of the Sanctuary is touching the Sanjay Gandhi National Park. There are 30 villages within the Eco-Sensitive Zone.

The Committee, while enquiring any significant changes from draft to final Notification, the representative of the State Government mentioned that no such changes are proposed in the regulated/prohibited activities from the draft Notification. However, the State requested for some modification in the composition of proposed Monitoring Committee for the Eco-Sensitive Zone. The Assistant Conservator of Forest (L.R.P) Thane shall be replaced by Assistant Conservator of Forest (Sub Divisional Forest Officer, Mandvi) and a representative Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) will be added in the monitoring Committee in the final Notification.

Comments, objections and suggestion received from public/stakeholder were duly considered and the Committee enquired about the significant objections on the draft Notification. The representative of the State mentioned that objection was mainly related with the mining activity, where the owner/tenant/Gram Sabha of a particular land/village had sought removal of their land/village from the Eco-Sensitive Zone.

The Committee referred the Hon'ble Supreme Court's orders dated the 4th August 2006 in the matter of T.N. Godavarman Thirumulpad Vs. UOI in W.P.(C) No.202 of 1995 and dated the 21st April 2014 in the matter of Goa Foundation Vs. UOI in W.P.(C) No.435 of 2012 and mentioned that one (1) km around the boundary of the protected area, by default, is prohibited for mining even if, the ESZ is less than one (1) Km.

Based on the presentation made and discussions held, the Committee recommended the State Government to conduct the public consultation/hearing on the proposal and submit the detailed minutes to the Ministry at the earliest for further consideration of the proposal.

5. Based on the draft Notifications, comments received from stakeholder/public, presentations made on the proposals and detailed discussions on each proposal the Expert Committee took the following decisions:

Sl. No.	Protected Area/ZMP	State	Recommendation of Expert Committee
1.	Draft Zonal Master Plan of	Uttarakhand	Revised Zonal Master Plan to

Sl. No.	Protected Area/ZMP	State	Recommendation of Expert Committee
	Bhagirathi ESA		be submitted by the State
2.	Draft Zonal Master Plan for Doon Valley Notification	Uttarakhand	Integrated Zonal Master Plan to be submitted by the State
3.	Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary,	Uttarakhand	Deferred
4.	Kedarnath Musk Deer Sanctuary,	Uttarakhand	Recommended for finalization with limited changes in ESZ area and number of villages
5.	Ramnabagan Wildlife Sanctuary	West Bengal	Recommended for finalization
6.	Bibhutibhusan Wildlife Sanctuary	West Bengal	Recommended for finalization
7.	Mudumalai Tiger Reserve	Tamil Nadu	Recommended for finalization subject to submission of additional information
8.	Therthangal Bird Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Recommended for finalization
9.	Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Recommended for finalization
10.	Srivilliputhur Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Recommended for finalization
11.	Kanjirankulam Birds Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Recommended for finalization
12.	Vettangudi Birds Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Recommended for finalization subject to submission of additional information
13.	Vallanadu Blackbuck Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Recommended for finalization subject to submission of additional information
14.	Melaselvanur-Kelaselvanoor Bird Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Recommended for finalization
15.	Kanyakumari Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Deferred
16.	Gulf of Mannar National Park	Tamil Nadu	Recommended for finalization
17.	Megamalai Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Recommended for finalization
18.	Gangaikondan Spotted	Tamil Nadu	Recommended for finalization

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Protected Area/ZMP</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Recommendation of Expert Committee</b>
	Deer Sanctuary		
19.	Point Calimere Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Recommended for finalization
20.	Nellai Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Recommended for finalization
21.	Kodaikanal Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Recommended for finalization
22.	Pulicat Bird Sanctuary	Tamil Nadu	Write-up to be submitted by the State Government for seeking views of the Wildlife Division
23.	Samaspur Bird Sanctuary,	Uttar Pradesh	Recommended for finalization
24.	Tungareshwar Wildlife Sanctuary,	Maharashtra	Deferred

6. Meeting ended with vote of thanks to Chairman.

**Annexure****34<sup>th</sup> Expert Committee Meeting on ESZ held on 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2019****List of Participants****Members of Expert Committee**

1. Shri A. K. Jain, Additional Secretary, Chairperson.
2. Dr. S. C. Garkoti, Adviser, MoEF&CC.
3. Shri S. A. Hussain, Scientist 'G', WII, Dehradun.
4. Dr. K. Chandra Sekar, Scientist 'E', GB Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment & Development, Almora.
5. Dr. Sandeep Chauhan, Scientist 'E', B. S. I., Dehradun.
6. Ms. Vishaish Uppal, Director, WWF India.
7. Shri. Shiv Marwadha, Planner, WWF India.
8. Shri. Raja Ram Singh, AIG, NTCA.
9. Dr. Sanjay Singh, Scientist, ICFRE, Dehradun.
10. Dr. Basudev Tripathy, Scientist, Z.S.I., Kolkata.
11. Shri. Sanjay k Aggarwal, Deputy Director, Forest Survey of India, Dehradun.
12. Shri. P. K. Duria, Town & Country Planner, TCPO, Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs.

**Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, GOI**

13. Dr. Subrata Bose, Director (SC-'F'), MoEF & CC.
14. Shri Pankaj Verma, Additional Director (SC-'E'), MoEF & CC.
15. Dr. Veenu Joon, Deputy Director (SC-'C'), MoEF&CC.
16. Dr. Shaikhom Inaotombi Singh (Consultant-ESZ), MoEF&CC.

**Officials of Government of West Bengal**

17. Shri. S. Sundriyal, APCCF Wildlife, Government of West Bengal.

**Officials of Government of Tamil Nadu**

18. Shri. Sanjay K Srivastava, PCCF & CWLW, Government of Tamil Nadu.

**Officials of Government of Maharashtra**

19. Shri Naresh Zurmure, Chief Conservator of Forest, Thane Circle, Government of Maharashtra.
20. Shri Jitendra S Ramgaokar, Deputy Conservator of Forest, Thane, Government of Maharashtra.

## Officials of Government of Uttar Pradesh

21. Shri. Abu Arshad, Wildlife Warden, Endangered Project, Government of Uttar Pradesh.

## Officials of Government of Uttarakhand

22. Shri. Arvind Singh Hyanki, Secretary, Forest & Environment Department, Government of Uttarakhand.
23. Shri. Monish Mullick, PCCF & CWLW, Uttarakhand Forest Department, Government of Uttarakhand.
24. Shri. Sandeep Kumar, DFO Uttarkashi, Forest Department, Government of Uttarakhand.
25. Shri. R. S. Khatri, Executive Engineer, P.W.D, Government of Uttarakhand.
26. Shri. S. P. Gupta, SEPWD Uttarkashi, Government of Uttarakhand.
27. Shri. M. S. Tomar, C.A.O Uttarkashi, Agricultural, Government of Uttarakhand.
28. Shri. G.P. Shwal, EE irrigation Uttarkashi, Government of Uttarakhand.
29. Shri. Shashi Prakash Jaiswal, A. E. Irrigation Uttarkashi, Government of Uttarakhand.
30. Shri. Suresh Singh, AE Ganga pollution unit, Uttarkashi, Government of Uttarakhand.
31. Shri. Rajeev Goswami, EE PMGSY Uttarkashi, Government of Uttarakhand.
32. Shri. Prakash Singh Khatri, District Tourism Officer, Uttarkashi, Government of Uttarakhand.
33. Shri. Trishuwan Rawat, Assistant Engineer, PMGSY Uttarkashi, Government of Uttarakhand.
34. Shri. Shardul Ghsain, D. C. D. D. M. A., Government of Uttarakhand.
35. Shri. Ajay Patel, GM(SHP), UJVN Ltd., Government of Uttarakhand.
36. Shri. S K Pant, CTCP, Town & Country Planning Department, Government of Uttarakhand.
37. Ms. Geeta Khule, STP Senior Town Planner, Government of Uttarakhand.
38. Shri. Abhishek Tiwari, Assistant Engineer, World Bank Division P.W.D., Government of Uttarakhand.
39. Shri. Ramesh Chand, Ex. Engineer, World Bank Division P.W.D., Government of Uttarakhand.
40. Shri. Ashish Chauhan, DMKJKY, Administration, Government of Uttarakhand.
41. Shri. Taqdir Singh, AAE PWD Bhawan, Government of Uttarakhand.
42. Shri. Prakash Chandra Dymka, Secretary, M.D.D.A Dehradun, Government of Uttarakhand.
43. Shri. Man Singh Director, C.C.F, Nanda Devi Biosphere Resource, Government of Uttarakhand.

44. Shri. Amit Kanwar, DFO Kedarnath, Forest Department Government of Uttarakhand.

**Others**

45. Shri. D. P.S Rawat, Second-in-command, ITB Police, Government of India.

46. Shri. Prakash Chandes Raturi, Deputy Commandant, ITB Police, Government of India.

47. Shri. S. C. Srivastava, Commander, BRD, Ministry of Defence, Government of India.

48. Shri Rakesh Kumar, Commandant, ITB Police, MHA, Government of India.

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