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Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
National Tiger Conservation Authority

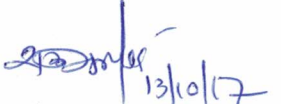
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Sub: Proceedings/Summary record of the meeting of Chief Wildlife Wardens of Tiger Range States and Field Directors of Tiger Reserves on 15-16 September, 2017- reg.

A copy of the proceedings/ summary record of the meeting of Chief Wildlife Wardens of Tiger Range States and Field Directors of Tiger Reserves on 15-16 September, 2017 held at Periyar Tiger Reserve, Thekkady, Kerala is enclosed herewith for kind perusal.

Encl: As above.


(Raja Ram Singh)

Assistant Inspector General of Forests (NTCA)

Distribution:

1. Chief Wildlife Warden (s), All Tiger Range States.
2. The Field Directors, All Tiger Reserves.
3. The Inspector General of Forests, NTCA, RO (Bengaluru, Guwahati and Nagpur).
4. Shri Sanjay Kumar, DIG, NTCA, HQs, New Delhi.
5. Shri Nishant Verma, DIG, NTCA, HQs, New Delhi.
6. Dr. Vaibhav C. Mathur, AIG (NTCA), HQs, New Delhi.

Copy to:

1. PS to ADG (PT) & MS (NTCA).

Summary record of the meeting of the Chief Wildlife Wardens of Tiger Range States and the Field Directors of the Tiger Reserves of the country held at Thekkady, Periyar Tiger Reserve, Kerala on 15 & 16 September 2017

A meeting of the Chief Wildlife Wardens of Tiger Range States and the Field Directors of the Tiger Reserves of the country was held at Thekkady, Periyar Tiger Reserve, Kerala on 15 & 16 September 2017. The list of participants is placed at **Annexure-I**.

2. Constitution of **Tiger Conservation Foundations (TCF)** in Tiger Reserves is one of the mandatory statutory requirements, which is still pending in some tiger reserves and not being utilised optimally in some of the tiger reserves. However, the **TCFs** in some of the Tiger Reserves have set an example & particularly the Periyar tiger reserve has taken pioneering efforts with regard to TCF.

3. *The section 38-X of the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 (WLP Amendment Act, No.39 of 2006) states that the State Government shall establish a **Tiger Conservation Foundation for Tiger Reserves** within the State in order to facilitate and support their management for conservation of tiger and biodiversity and to take initiatives in Eco-development by involvement of people in such development process.* Therefore, this meeting was conducted with the objectives of eliciting best and innovative practices adopted in functioning/operationalization of Tiger Conservation Foundations (TCFs) of Tiger Reserves.

4. The meeting was inaugurated by Dr Harsh Vardhan, Hon'ble Union Minister, Environment, Forest and Climate Change. Other dignitaries present during the function were Adv. K. Raju, Hon'ble Minister for Forests and Wildlife, Zoos & Animal Husbandry, Govt of Kerala, Shri Siddhanta Das, DGF&SS, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Dr. H. Nagesh Prabhu, PCCF & HoFF, Kerala and Shri. K.J. Varughese, PCCF (Wildlife) & Chief Wildlife Warden, Kerala. In his inaugural address, Hon'ble Minister lauded the efforts of the NTCA and tiger range States for their continued efforts to keep the pride of India, the **Tiger** safe & protected. He also appealed the gathering to come out with **Periyar Declaration** after intense brainstorming for establishing a road map for strengthening the tiger conservation in the future. The DGF&SS, MoEF&CC appreciated the efforts of concerned States Tiger Reserve Management and NTCA for successfully implementing the Project Tiger and thereby strengthening the efforts towards tiger conservation. He stressed for linking tiger conservation practices to the Climate change Agenda and water securities in the tiger reserves.

5. Shri Sanjay Kumar, DIG, NTCA HQrs outlined the pioneering initiatives taken by NTCA in the field of tiger conservation. It was followed by presentation by Field Director, Periyar Tiger Reserve, Kerala on pioneering efforts taken for development of effective TCF & its use for carrying out innovative activities for tiger conservation. He deliberated about mainstreaming tribal communities, through forming various EDCs and financial support such as Swami Poongavana Punarudharana (SAPP) EDCs for management of pilgrimage in Sabarimala, Fisherman sub group – EDC, Firewood & thatching grass collection EDCs etc. He also highlighted the role of all Women Vasanthasena (protection force) which is a voluntarily formed patrolling group for protection of tiger. The Periyar Tiger Reserve has in house R & D for real time monitoring of reserve through wireless transmitters.

6. The presentations on the theme of TCF were made by the respective Field Directors of the tiger reserves, brief account of their best and innovative practices are presented below:

- a) The Field Director, Parambikulam Tiger Reserve explained the background of Periyar foundation establishment and narrated the experience of last 10 years of establishment of TCF. He

highlighted the need for having accountability in TCF operation and hiring of experts and technical support for its successful operation. It was also pointed out that there is need of tapping more CSR funds for Wildlife Conservation. The budgeting of accrued receipts of TCF of Periyar/Parambikulam Tiger Reserve is sub-divided into five components:

- Component 1. Support to Village Eco Development - 40%
- Component 2. Improved Protected Area Management - 40%
- Component 3. Environmental education & Awareness- 5%
- Component 4. Impact Monitoring & Research- 5%
- Component 5. Administration & Trust Fund - 10%

He also highlighted the issues to be tackled in future by TCFs, such as land use changes around Tiger reserves, Climate change, Human Wildlife Conflict, Invasive Alien Species, Perception management and overall accountability. He suggested for the constitution of a small committee by NTCA for formulating the operations manual of TCF.

- b) The CWLW, Arunachal Pradesh informed that out of 3 tiger Reserves in Arunachal Pradesh (Pakke, Namdhapa and Kamlang); there is no TCF in Kamlang. In Namdhapa Tiger Reserve, TCF was established in 2011 and main focus is on awareness and revenue generation. The important activities include inter-alia celebration of world environment day, maintenance of traditional huts, park management activities like bridle / patrolling paths.

The DFO, Pakke Tiger Reserve deliberated on the partnership of Pakke Tiger Reserve administration with NGO and Ghora-Aabhe (Head of Villagers) in conservation. Its TCF is still in infancy stage.
- c) The Field Director, Kaziranga Tiger Reserve highlighted that entry fee and grant-in-aid had been the major source of revenue of TCF and 10% fund are kept in fixed deposits. The loan disbursement is done to DFOs of Kaziranga Tiger Reserve for carrying out park management activities and it is repaid when regular funds are released by the NTCA / State government. As a part of confidence building mechanism, a library building and Weaving centre in Rangalu EDC has been created from the fund of TCF.
- d) The Field Director, Nagarjunasagar-Srisaillam Tiger Reserve while deliberating about TCF highlighted the fact that 96% of expenditure out of total fund of TCF is spent on wages to 32 'Swachchh Sevaks' (engaged for plastic removal along the road) and DEOs (check post/ entry gates) including Uniform, Bicycles, Shoes etc. There are two sources of revenue for TCF: Environment Maintenance Charge and Ecotourism.
- e) The Deputy Director, Valmiki Tiger Reserve in his presentation elaborated about TCF that has been formed in 2010 and its activities include training of the local artisans in Bamboo hut preparation, formation of SHGs, rafting in Gandak , boating in Rohua nala, canopy walk etc.
- f) The Field Director, Udanti Sitanadi Tiger Reserve informed that in spite of TCF which got registered in 2009, no eco-tourism activities are being undertaken due to Left Wing Extremism in the Tiger Reserve.
- g) The Field Director, Palamau Tiger Reserve presented the activities of TCF and informed that the TCF has been formed in 2014 and the future plan includes reducing dependency of a population of about 30 lakh in 168 villages by spending Rs. 180 crores for livelihood and other employment

opportunities. Out of Rs. 180 Crores, 60.00 crores have been proposed to be spent through Foundation. The rest amount will be spent through MANREGA and Convergence through other Government Departments.

- h) The Field Director, Achanakmar Tiger Reserve informed that the TCF is functional since 2010 and sources of receipts to TCF are Lodging FEE in resorts, Safari Entry Fee , JFMC Gypsy Fee, Private Vehicle Fee, Guide Charges, Cycling Charge, Still/video Camera Charges and adventure Sports. A quarterly magazine is also published by the TCF.
- i) The TCF of Bhadra Tiger Reserve earn revenue from tourism @1crore per annum. The utilisation of funds is through APO which gets approved by governing body. Savings are kept as fixed deposit. The Tiger reserve has 23 EDC and Rs 1 lakh is deposited per EDC in their account. What needs to be done out of that money is decided by EDCs. EDCs may lend money to SHG individuals for setting up of piggery, grocery shop etc. Entry money is equally shared between Tiger Reserve and EDCs.
- j) The Field Director, Kanha Tiger Reserve discussed about MP Tiger Foundation Society started in 1997, at state level and not at the Tiger Reserve level in which support is received in the form of kinds. The Hon'ble Forest minister is Chairman, CWLW is Secretary and Field Directors of Tiger Reserves are Executive Directors. Similarly, Vikas Nidhi has been formed in each Tiger Reserve on the lines of Tiger Conservation Foundation. Till such time, Govt. fund is released, Vikash Nidhi Fund is utilised. Vikash Nidhi fund is also used for village relocation. 60% of collection in Vikash Nidhi is used for Tiger Reserve, 10% for Ecotourism Board and rest is used for people. Some of the innovative activities being undertaken by Kanha Tiger Reserve are running of Van Aushadhalaya for forest staffs, Bhoor Singh Play School, Food waste management from Hotel and An Evening with *Junglewalah* for the tourists.
- k) TCF was created in 2011 in Simlipal Tiger Reserve. Bye laws and operational manual has been approved. Main sources of revenue are entry fees, parking fee and accommodation fee etc. Major expenses out of TCF are maintenance of tourism facilities, health insurance and other staff welfare activities.
- l) The TCF in Melghat Tiger Reserve is involved in major skill developmental activities of the people in and around Tiger Reserve such as plumbing, hospitality, automobile repair, poultry, Bangle making etc. Because of State sponsored '*Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Jan Van Yojana*', Rs 25 lakhs is spent per EDC in village per year for its development.
- m) The major sources of earning of Tadoba Andhari Tiger Conservation Foundation are Entry fee from visitors, Govt. schemes, Donations from individual/NGOs and interest earned on deposits. The major activities under foundation are toilet construction, gas connection distribution, agriculture related activity, agarbatti project, developing camping site, nature education for school children etc.
- n) The TCF of Sahyadri Tiger Reserve has collected fees from wind mill located inside the reserve. 2 % of project cost (like wind mills) is also being given to foundation. The Sahyadri Tiger Reserve has developed an Android based trekking app "*Bhramanti*" for promoting ecotourism wherein treks can be booked in advance, choice of food & payment gateway provision is also available . Along with this, the bio-inventory of the trek enlisting the diverse flora & fauna are recorded in the App.
- o) The major innovative activities under Sanjay Dubri Tiger Conservation Foundation (Sanjay Dubri Tiger Reserve) have been distribution of Water filter as the area has serious Iron contamination and two women from each Eco Development Committee have been imparted training in First Aid Treatment.

- p) In Corbett Tiger Reserve, the TCF receives 20 % of revenue earned and Ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh for death and Rs 50,000 for injury from wild animals are given from foundation funds. In case of employee's death, Rs 5 lakh is given straightway. Other major activities of the foundation are different solar fencing models, solar fencing and stone wall, chain-link fencing along with solar fencing (for smaller mammals) etc.
- q) The TCF of Sariska Tiger Reserve was formed in 2010. Present source of income is gate entry fee, guide fee and gypsy/canter rent. Ex-gratia relief is provided to EDC.
- r) The TCF in Ranthambore Tiger Reserve are involved in Village Wildlife Volunteer programme, Mongya (tribe) Children and Hostel Programme and extending Compensation equal to State i.e. Rs. 2.00 lakh from TCF for human death from Wildlife.
- s) The TCF of Nagarhole Tiger Reserve is involved in staff welfare activities such as Group Insurance for staffs, Health Insurance for staffs, Support for Higher education for staff children's and Medical support. The Eco developmental activities being undertaken by TCF are providing community facilities viz. Construction of School buildings, Installation of Solar Power Street lights, Solar pump sets, De-silting of village tanks, Installation of RO Units, Conducting Health Camps and Payment of Compensation etc.
- t) The TCF of Kalakkad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve has 20 years of experience in Eco development. It has three tiers viz. VFC (Village Level Committee), Sub-VFC and Micro-VFC. They conduct Shramdan every month for fire line creation, weed removal, plastic removal and carry out innovative joint patrolling of the forest.
- u) The Sundarban Tiger Conservation Foundation Trust (STCFT) was established with effect from 19.03.2010. Major thrust areas of APO of Foundation are Eco-developmental works, Capacity building, skill developmental activities, inputs to SHGs and other activities in connection with Alternative Livelihood Promotion, Mitigation of Tiger human conflict & wildlife management, Strengthening protection mechanism, research, monitoring, awareness and maintenance of Tourism infrastructure. 20% of total fund generated goes to JFMCs.

7. This was followed by **extensive/exhaustive brainstorming** among the different groups of participating officers for shortlisting the policy, management interventions that are necessary in the current scenario for fostering tiger conservation to be adopted by all the concerned stakeholders. Based on brainstorming, the draft Periyar Declaration was prepared.

8. The Additional Director General (PT) and Member Secretary (NTCA) highlighted the success of Periyar Tiger Foundation by emphasising that with less sighting of tigers and diversified activities through EDCs, it has been very successful model and this model needs to be emulated by other tiger reserves for making TCF more financially viable and tiger reserve centric problem solving. He also stressed for the timely submission of APOs of voluntary village relocation along with KML/KMZ Files with geo-tagged photographs of the works carried out & proposed, Utilisation certificate, Physical/financial progress reports etc. by the tiger reserves through their concerned CWLWs. He also called upon the participating officers to carry out the necessary preparations /planning of the activities as per the timeline of All India Tiger estimation, 2018 on priority basis. He also stressed for expediting the MEE of the tiger reserves.

9. The Assistant General General, GTF, Shri S. P. Yadav presented about the protocol for security audit of Tiger Reserves that has been validated in Kanha and Satkosia Tiger Reserves. The security audit has three components: Threat assessment, Enforcement/Protection Assessment and Patrol Standards. Entire exercise

is evidence based and it takes about 5 days for an independent team of 3-4 members. He also informed that 25 Tiger Reserves have been identified for Security Audit in first phase. The result of the audit will be confidential and will be shared with NTCA only.

10. The representatives from WII, Dehradun presented about M-STriPES and GIS data needed from the Tiger Range States for successful implementation of M-STriPES. A presentation about E-Bird technology by concerned representative of WII was also made highlighting the progress in the project being implemented by WII, Dehradun. The DIG, NTCA, Shri Nishant Verma discussed in details the issues related with preparation of Annual Plan of Operation and various requirements such as KML/KMZ Files, Utilisation certificate, Physical/financial progress report etc. The AIG, NTCA, Shri Raja Ram Singh presented in brief the pending tiger mortality cases and its analysis and urged all Field Directors for expediting its disposal.

11. In the end, the Periyar declaration which had been prepared by extensive brainstorming among the different groups of participating officers was again deliberated and finalised. The draft **Periyar Declaration** enumerating the suggested activities/interventions for fostering the tiger conservation to be adopted by all the concerned stakeholders was finalised.

Following decisions were taken in the meeting:

1. Timely submission of APOs along with KML/KMZ Files with geo-tagged photographs of the works carried out & proposed, Utilisation certificate, Physical/financial progress reports etc. by the tiger reserves through their concerned CWLWs.
2. The necessary preparations /planning of the activities as per the timeline of All India Tiger estimation, 2018 are to be done on priority basis & for this purpose, a meeting of the FDs shall be called urgently.
3. Disposal/ finalising the **pending tiger mortality cases** on priority basis as per the SOP of NTCA at the earliest.
4. Expediting the Management Effectiveness Evaluation of the tiger reserves.
5. Conducting Security audit in 25 tiger reserves with help of GTF.

The meeting ended with vote of thanks from the AIG, NTCA, Regional Office, Bengaluru, Shri R.G. Garawad to the Chair and all participants.
