



**MINUTES OF THE NINTH MEETING OF THE NATIONAL TIGER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY, HELD UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF SMT. JAYANTHI NATARAJAN, HON'BLE MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS, ON THE 19<sup>TH</sup> JUNE, 2013 IN ROOM NO. 403, MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS, PARYAVARAN BHAWAN, NEW DELHI**

The ninth meeting of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) was held under the Chairmanship of Smt. Jayanthi Natarajan, Minister for Environment and Forests and Chairperson, NTCA, on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June, 2013 in Room No. 403, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Paryavaran Bhawan, New Delhi. The list of participants is at **Annexure-I**.

The Chairperson, NTCA welcomed the members and initiated the deliberations. It was stated that India has a long and good track record of conserving its wild tigers, while having the unique distinction of being a pioneer country in this regard by launching the flagship scheme of Project Tiger in 1973. Over the years, the said project coverage has increased from 9 reserves to 43 tiger reserves, spread over 17 States where tigers occur. It was informed that **3 new reserves**, viz., Kawal in Andhra Pradesh, Sathyamangalam in Tamil Nadu and Mukandra Hills (including Darrah, Jawahar Sagar and Chambal Wildlife Sanctuaries) in Rajasthan have been recently added, and process is on for declaring the Rajaji National Park as a Tiger Reserve. The core and buffer areas of tiger reserves constitute more than 2% of our country's geographical area.

The Chairperson, NTCA further apprised the members that the focus on tiger conservation has been sharpened and several initiatives have been taken in the recent past as indicated below:

- The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Project Tiger was revised in August, 2011. Its allotment was stepped up for the XI Plan to Rs. 1216.86 crores, especially to support the States for securing inviolate space for tigers. A number of additional components have also been included: (i) Change in the funding pattern in respect of North Eastern States (90:10), (ii) raising compensation for man-animal conflict to Rs. 2 lakhs, (iii) acquisition of private land for making the core/critical tiger habitat inviolate, (iv) establishment of Tiger Safari, interpretation/awareness centres under the existing component of 'co-existence agenda in buffer/fringe areas', and management of such centres through the respective Panchayati Raj Institutions, (v) re-introduction of Cheetah.
- The allocation for the ongoing Project Tiger Scheme during the XII Plan is Rs. 1245 crores. This is an enhancement compared to Rs. 792 crores during the XI Plan.



- Other initiatives include: (i) giving “in-principle” approval to three new tiger reserve, viz. Pilibhit (Uttar Pradesh), Ratapani (Madhya Pradesh) and Sunabeda (Odisha) (ii) in-principle approval for use of CAMPA funds towards village relocation from core areas, (iii) completion of ‘e-surveillance’ project in Corbett, (iv) launching ‘M-STrIPES’ monitoring protocol, (v) launching of Tiger Reserve level year round monitoring using camera traps (Phase-IV), (vi) supporting patrolling in tiger rich areas outside tiger reserves, (vii) capacity building of field officials for wildlife crime investigation in collaboration with the CBI, (viii) advising some of the States for CBI investigation in tiger / rhino poaching cases to break the nexus, and (ix) strengthening bilaterals with Nepal, Bangladesh, Russian Federation and Bhutan.

It was also informed that an aggressive ‘tiger agenda’ is being followed in the core areas of tiger reserves, and the strategy now is to ensure an equally aggressive ‘inclusive’ agenda in the peripheral / buffer areas to benefit people who live in such areas. Under Project Tiger, funding support is provided for such activities in the buffer. The status of tiger and many wild animals continue to remain endangered. The Special Tiger Protection Force (STPF) has been raised and deployed in three tiger reserves, viz. Bandipur (Karnataka), Tadoba-Andhari (Maharashtra) and Pench (Maharashtra). The NTCA is committed to support the other tiger States as well in this regard, and MOU has been signed with several States like Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Odisha.

It was highlighted that tiger and other wildlife cannot be protected by excluding local people, and hence the endeavour all along has been to deploy local workforce in protection. In all, approximately 24 lakh mandays are generated annually with 50% central assistance amounting to around Rs. 24 crores (excluding matching 50% share given by States) under Project Tiger. Many local tribes constitute such local workforce (besides non-tribals), eg. Baigas, Gonds in Madhya Pradesh, Gonds in Maharashtra, Chenchus in Andhra Pradesh, Sholigas in Karnataka, Gujjars in Uttarakhand and Irulas in Tamil Nadu to name a few. The deployment of such local tribals has been fostered/encouraged in the last two years.

The process of providing enabling provisions in the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 is ongoing for strengthening the implementation of the CITES, besides enhancement of penalties for contravention of provisions of the Act.

The Chairperson, NTCA informed the members that the progress towards tiger reserve specific Phase-IV monitoring has been reviewed by her, and each tiger reserve now has a camera trap data base of individual tigers, which facilitates close monitoring. Such data, in combination with those already available from the



country level assessment would be used for creating a National Repository of Camera Trap Photographs of individual tigers.

The Chairperson, NTCA apprised the members of her visit to Kaziranga and Sariska tiger reserves for field appraisal, while stating that the States are being actively engaged to address the problem of tigers moving into human dominated areas. Likewise, every individual tiger death is being monitored, besides sensitizing States for intelligence based protection. The SOPs issued by the NTCA were also highlighted.

The Chairperson, NTCA expressed her confidence that with the support of the States and Civil Society, the initiatives taken for wildlife conservation would be successful.

This was followed by deliberations on the agenda items as indicated below:

### **Agenda Item No. 1**

#### **Confirmation of minutes of the eighth meeting, including action taken**

The Chairperson, NTCA solicited comments on the minutes of the eighth meeting of the NTCA. The NTCA confirmed the minutes of its eighth meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2012.

### **Agenda Item No. 2**

#### **Apprising the Members of the NTCA on compliance of the statutory requirements, guidelines and advisories issued**

With the permission of the Chair, the Member Secretary, NTCA apprised the members on compliance of the statutory requirements, guidelines/advisories issued as detailed in the agenda notes, and the supplementary information provided on Agenda 2(1):

1. Status of Tiger Conservation Plan [Section 38V of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972] and status of approved Tiger Conservation Plans
2. Steering Committee [Section 38U of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972]
3. Tiger Conservation Foundation [Section 38X of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972]
4. Core and buffer areas of tiger reserves [Section 38V of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972]



5. Notification of new Tiger Reserves
6. Comprehensive guidelines issued on Project Tiger and tourism in tiger reserves under section 38O (c) of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972
7. Standard Operating Procedures issued by the NTCA
8. Details regarding laying of Annual Reports of NTCA
9. Update on tiger status / monitoring / initiatives taken:
  - (1) Present status of tiger, co-predators, prey and habitat
  - (2) Management Effectiveness Evaluation of Tiger Reserves
  - (3) General reasons for tiger decline in areas outside tiger reserves
  - (4) Tiger Mortality (year-wise)
  - (5) Steps taken to address tiger poaching
  - (6) Present approach to tiger conservation
  - (7) Milestone Initiatives taken for strengthening tiger conservation including recent initiatives
10. It was also informed that the process for the 3<sup>rd</sup> round (2013-14) of country wide assessment of status of tigers, co-predators, prey and habitat using the refined methodology has been initiated, in addition to the 3<sup>rd</sup> round of independent Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE) of Tiger Reserves (2013-14).

**The Authority took note of the above with the following observations from members:**

- (i) S/Shri Brijendra Singh, Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh and Smt. Maneka Gandhi, Members, NTCA desired that the Amangarh range of the Bijnore District falling in Uttar Pradesh should be notified for tiger conservation since the said area was earlier part of the Corbett Tiger Reserve (The UP Government has already notified the Amangarh area as a buffer of the Corbett Tiger Reserve).
- (ii) Smt. Maneka Gandhi, MP and Member, NTCA emphasized on expediting the notification of the Pilibhit forest area in Uttar Pradesh as a tiger reserve, and the matter should be taken up with the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. The Member Secretary, NTCA informed that the MEF and Chairperson, NTCA has already addressed the Chief Minister in this regard and the matter was being pursued at the level of Chief Secretary and Principal Secretary, Forest Department, Government of Uttar Pradesh. The



- Chairperson informed that this would be taken up at her level with the Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh.
- (iii) Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh, Member, NTCA desired that the newly notified Mukandra Hills Tiger Reserve should be renamed by restoring its historical name as “Mukundwara”. The Chairperson, NTCA directed for informing the State accordingly.
  - (iv) Smt. Maneka Gandhi, MP and Member, NTCA highlighted the problems in the Rajaji National Park of Uttarakhand and desired that the support for tiger reserve should be conditional to solving of such issues. The suggestion made by the Member was noted.
  - (v) Dr. A.J.T. Johnsingh, Member, NTCA while welcoming the notification of Rajaji as a tiger reserve desired that the Surahi range of Terai East Division, Uttarakhand should be conserved for rhinos. The Chairperson, NTCA stated that this would be taken up with the Chief Minister of the State. Dr. A.J.T. Johnsingh, while referring to the Western Ghats Landscape, also desired that details of ‘effort’ done should also figure in the tiger assessment report. The suggestion of the member was noted.
  - (vi) Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh, Member, NTCA desired that during the country level assessment of tiger a separate category should be made for recording of sub-adult tigers/young ones, as well as tiger mortality for obtaining information on recruitment / death. He also suggested for categorizing the tiger deaths due to various causes: viz., internecine fight, poaching etc. The Member, while praising the independent Management Effectiveness Evaluation of Tiger Reserves desired that the status of habitat, survival of endangered species in tiger reserves should also be evaluated. The Member Secretary, NTCA informed the member that such issues are already considered. The suggestions made by the member were noted.

### **Agenda Item No. 3**

#### **Approval of budget / expenditure schedules for the year 2012-13**

The NTCA approved and ratified the following:

1. The form of financial statements together with balance sheet, income and expenditure account, receipts and payment statements as provided at Annexure-II of the agenda notes for the year 2012-13.
2. Approved the allocation of Rs. 15,56,18,594/- to the NTCA for the year 2012-13, and the expenditure incurred therein leaving an unutilized amount of Rs. 9,92,50,387/-.



Smt. Maneka Gandhi, MP and Member, NTCA desired that the NTCA should provide more support for capacity building / training rather than publications. She also desired to know the details of expenditure on publications. The Member Secretary, NTCA informed the member about such details as provided in the agenda notes. The Chairperson, NTCA directed to take note of the observations made by the member, while providing the details.

The break-up of expenditure relating to publications (sub-head printing, publication and periodicals) amounting to Rs. 12,45,991/- are provided as below:-

Sl. No.	Item	Amount (Rs. in lakhs)
1.	Publication of Bimonthly outreach journal 'STRIPES'	3.24
2.	Purchase of books/periodicals	0.52
3.	Payment to NICS I for development of website	0.99
4.	Printing of Annual Reports of NTCA for the years 2008-09 and 2009-10	1.45
5.	Payment to the Controller of Publications for gazette notification	4.22
6.	Miscellaneous (Photocopies, spiral binding of reports, newspaper etc.)	2.04
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12.46</b>

#### **Agenda Item No. 4**

##### **Posting and tenure of Field Directors**

The Member Secretary, NTCA informed that in the past, the Steering Committee of Project Tiger had directed that the State Governments should send a panel of names suitable for posting as Field Directors of tiger reserves. Time and again, Project Tiger / NTCA has been pursuing with States for the same. However, over the years, this process could not be followed for want of such panel from States. The status of protection and field implementation largely depends on the leadership shown by the Field Director. Hence, a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding, linked to fund flows has also been implemented since 2009-10, between the NTCA/Project Tiger, State Government and the Field Director.

Hence, the proposal has been made that the States may be directed under section 38O (2) of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 for sending a panel of names to Project Tiger / NTCA for recommendation before posting, with a commitment for a minimum tenure of three years in the tiger reserve under normal circumstances. This arrangement would be a consultation for professional reasons, not





amounting to concurrence, and should not be construed as encroaching in the State's administrative domain.

Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh, Member, NTCA, while appreciating the proposal desired that an officer trained in wildlife management should be preferred during selection. Smt. Maneka Gandhi, MP and Member, NTCA also appreciated the proposal while emphasizing the need for posting the motivated officers in tiger reserves, besides developing special wildlife training module for field officials. Shri Brijendra Singh, Member, NTCA, while supporting the proposal desired that an officer who has served as a Wildlife Warden / Deputy Director in a tiger reserve should be preferred for such postings. The Chairperson, NTCA informed that the Wildlife Institute of India is conducting the diploma course for field personnel, while directing for taking note of the observations made by the members.

The NTCA approved the proposal.

### **Agenda Item No. 5**

#### **Providing ration allowance to the field staff of tiger reserves under the ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Project Tiger**

The Member Secretary, NTCA highlighted the agenda item as provided in the agenda notes, while stating that a lumpsum rate of Rs. 860/- per month has been proposed for all categories of field staff in tiger reserves, below the level of Range Officers,/Deputy Rangers. The said rate has already been approved for the personnel of Special Tiger Protection Force.

Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh, Member, NTCA desired that such allowance should be more for lower level functionaries. Shri P.K. Sen, Member, NTCA highlighted the need for differentiating the 'ration allowance' from the "project allowance", since the latter has different rates for various field level officials. He also desired that the workforce deployed in tiger reserves on a day to day basis should also be provided such benefits. The Member Secretary, NTCA informed that the States would be advised to support the same through the Tiger Conservation Foundation, as being practiced in some States. The Chairperson, NTCA directed for obtaining further comments from members to firm up the proposal.

The NTCA approved the proposal 'in-principle', which would be firmed up for approval of the competent authority after obtaining comments from the members, the support would be provided from the savings in the ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Project Tiger.



**Additional Agenda Item No. 1 proposed by Shri Sajjan Singh Verma, MP, Lok Sabha and Member, NTCA on death of two tigresses in a week in Bandhavgarh National Park**

Shri Sajjan Singh Verma, MP and Member, NTCA highlighted the recent tiger deaths in Bandhavgarh, while emphasizing the need for fixing accountability on senior officials. Smt. Maneka Gandhi, MP and Member, NTCA also felt the same. The Chairperson, NTCA asked for an update from the Chief Wildlife Warden, Madhya Pradesh, who informed that two forest personnel have been suspended and an enquiry has been initiated in the said case. The members felt that non-compliance of the advisories issued by the NTCA should be viewed seriously and must be linked with fund flow.

**Additional Agenda Item No. 2 proposed by Dr. A.J.T. Johnsingh, Member, NTCA for eradication of *Opuntia dillenii* from Mudumalai landscape**

It was agreed that funding support for eradication of *Opuntia dillenii* from Mudumalai landscape may be provided under the ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Project Tiger, as per the provisions of the Tiger Conservation Plan through the Annual Plan of Operation.

**Additional Agenda Item No. 3 proposed by S/Shri J.T. Rajappa and A.P. Shibu, Member(s), NTCA**

After discussion, the Chairperson, NTCA directed that an appraisal team would be sent by the NTCA to sort out the problems, and central assistance under Project Tiger would be provided to States for voluntary village relocation from tiger reserves like Nagarhole and Mudumalai.

**During the course of deliberations, several valuable suggestions were provided by the members as detailed below:**

**1. Smt. Maneka Gandhi, MP and Member, NTCA**

- a. The Member desired that all tiger reserves should have a veterinary doctor, and such doctors should be trained in the Wildlife Institute of India.
- b. Wildlife rescue centres like the one established near Kaziranga, should be fostered in other tiger reserves as well.
- c. The ITBP should be involved in training forest guards for group patrol.
- d. The issue of change in land use in the periphery of tiger reserves like Corbett should be taken up with the State Government.





- e. Several resort owners around Corbett Tiger Reserve are misusing domestic elephants which should be strictly banned.
- f. A timeline of one-month should be provided to States for providing the investigation report on tiger deaths to the NTCA, the compliance of which should be linked with fund flow.
- g. The Van Gujjars should be relocated on a priority basis from Corbett Tiger Reserve.
- h. Stop grass to Gujjars.

**2. Dr. A.J.T. Johnsingh, Member, NTCA**

- a. The Chilla-Motichur corridor is very important and should be established on a war footing. The army ammunition dump from the said corridor should be removed.
- b. Removal of encroachment in Sundarkhal, falling outside Corbett Tiger Reserve should be undertaken, for restoring its corridor value.

**3. Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh, Member, NTCA**

- a. Prophylactic vaccination of cattle around tiger reserves must be done to stop spread of contagious disease.
- b. The research in tiger reserves should be on 'Applied Aspects', with a focus on issues like grass restoration, soil conservation, protection of endangered species, and site specific conservation of species restricted to some tiger reserves like hog deer in Corbett.

**4. Shri Brijendra Singh, Member, NTCA**

- a. Stopping of fund flow to tiger reserves for non-compliance would cause hardship to field personnel (especially local workforce), and hence the States should be engaged in an ongoing manner to ensure compliance.
- b. The voluntary relocation of Gujjar settlements in Corbett needs to be expedited.
- c. A Coordination Committee of the NTCA should liaison with border tiger States periodically.

The Chairperson, NTCA wrapped up the discussion while directing for taking note of the above valuable suggestions.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chairperson and Members.

\*\*\*



## Annexure-I

### List of Participants (19.06.2013)

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Name of the Participant, designation and address</b>	<b>E-mail address</b>	<b>Contact No.</b>
1.	Smt. Maneka Gandhi, MP and Member, NTCA 14, Ashoka Road, New Delhi	gandhim@nic.in	
2.	Shri Sajjan Verma, MP and Member, NTCA 25, Ferojshah Road, New Delhi		09013180203 23782340
3.	Shri Shibu A.P., Member NTCA, Sulthan Bathery, Kerala	shibuwnd@gmail.com	09441110322
4.	Shri P.K. Sen, Member, NTCA	1941sen@gmail.com	
5.	Shri J.T. Rajappa, Member, NTCA	rajappajk1@gmail.com	
6.	Dr. A.J.T. Johnsingh, Member, NTCA, 101 Magnolia, Esteem Gardenia, Sahakara Nagar, Bangalore.	ajt.johnsingh@gmail.com	
7.	Dr. M.K. Ranjitsinh, Member, NTCA, 5 Tiger Lane, Sainik Farms, New Delhi	mkranjitsinh@gmail.com	
8.	Shri Brijendra Singh, Member, NTCA, 28, Sunder Nagar, New Delhi.	rajasiba@gmail.com	
9.	Shri P.R. Sinha, Director, WII, Dehradun	dwii@wii.gov.in	
10.	Shri O.P. Kaler, Addl. PCCF, Biodiversity, Kerala	omkaler@gmail.com	09447979150
11.	Shri Lakshmi Narayan, PCCF & CWLW (I/C), Tamil Nadu, Chennai-6000015.	tnforest@yahoo.com cwlw_wildlife3@yahoo.in	9444144990
12.	Shri Narendra Kumar, CWLW, Madhya Pradesh, Pragati Bhawan, III Floor, Bhopal	nkumar169@gmail.com pccfwl@mp.gov.in	9424790007
13.	Shri S.S. Sharma, PCCF & CWLW, Uttarakhand	cwlwua@yahoo.co.in	
14.	Shri Shyam Kapoor, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi.	shyam.kapoor@nic.in	
15.	Dr. Gita Rawat, Joint Secretary & Arbitrator, Ministry of Law and Justice		9968308468



16.	Shri Shashi Malik, Director, Ministry of Panchayati Raj	<a href="mailto:shashi.m@nic.in">shashi.m@nic.in</a>	8860286033
17.	Shri V. Rajagopalan, Secretary (E&F)		
18.	Shri K. Jude Sekar, DGF & SS, MoEF		
19.	Shri S.S. Garbyal, ADG (WL), MoEF	<a href="mailto:ssgarbyal@yahoo.com">ssgarbyal@yahoo.com</a>	
20.	Dr. Rajesh Gopal, ADG (PT) & MS (NTCA)		
21.	Dr. H.S. Negi, IG (NTCA)		
22.	Shri S.P. Yadav, DIG (NTCA)		