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Draft Minutes of the 5th Governing Body Meeting, APFBC Society
held on 06.04.2015

In the chair- Shri Jitesh Khosla, IAS, Chief Secretary, Government of Assam,
And Chairperson, Governing Body, APFBC Society

Members/ invitees present: List Appended.

Record of proceedings:

On behalf of the chairperson; Shri O. P. Pandey, Member Secretary welcomed all the members and invitees present in the meeting. After a brief self introduction by members and invitees, the Member Secretary with permission of the chair proceeded to present issues listed in the agenda for deliberation.

The Agenda wise discussions and decisions taken stated as follows:

Agenda item – 1: Validation of the minutes of 4th meeting of the Governing Body held on 21.08.2014.

The Member Secretary informed that the minutes of the 4th meeting of the Governing Body had been circulated to all concerned and no comments had been received. Therefore the minutes of the 4th meeting of the GB (**Annexure-I**) stands validated.

Agenda item – 2: Review of progress made since 4th meeting of GB.

The Member Secretary made a presentation regarding progress made in implementation of Assam Project on Forest and Biodiversity Conservation (APFBC) after the 4th meeting of the Governing Body held on 21.08.2014 highlighting the details as described below:

- i. "NOC" from the French Development Agency (Afd) to project documents related to procurement of goods, works and services.
 - Audit & M&E: EOI was received from interested Audit firms and M&E firms. Short listing of firms in both the cases was completed and draft Bid Document for Procurement of Audit Firm was communicated to the Afd on 28th November, 2014 for "NOC".
"NOC" accorded by the Afd vide e-mail dt. 03.04.2015
 - Draft Bid Document for Procurement of M&E firm was held up, but will now be processed as modification, if any suggested by Afd in the document for procurement of the Audit Firm will be incorporated and sent to Afd for NOC.
 - Comments on the Draft RFP document for procurement of Technical Assistance communicated to the Afd on 28th November, 2014 and again on 18th February, 2015 for finalizing the RFP document. Final document is awaited and the matter has been taken up with the Afd

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- Draft Bid Document for procurement of Bicycles, Motorcycles and Light Motor Vehicles communicated to the AfD for "NOC" on 5th January, 2015.

AfD has mailed standard RFP template for procurement of goods on 26th March, 2015. This document will be used in future procurement of goods under APFBC.

- "NOC" for TOR for procurement of NGOs is also accorded by the AfD vide e-mail dt. 03.04.2015.
- NOC for the TOR for holding workshop on implementation of Component -2 is still awaited.

The Chairman desired that matter should be pursued with AfD for timely response.

- ii. *Bambusetum*: the GB was informed that estimate for civil works vetted by the PWD for setting up bambusetum was received on 28th February, 2015.

The Chairperson opined that rather than making the bambusetum a standard PWD construction it should be made an unique construction incorporating concept of 'Green Building'. A DPR containing technical elements, operational aspects and civil works should be prepared in consultation with TERI incorporating green and environment friendly concepts, use of locally available materials, use of solar energy, water harvesting and maintenance of optimum tree cover. Developing **Green Fencing** should also be considered as an alternative to brick and chain link fencing and the HPC, Jagiroad may be consulted in the matter. The State Biodiversity Board shall be given the responsibility of preparation of DPR in consultation with TERI.

- iii. *Maintenance of plantation*: The MS informed that a sum of Rs. 1,47,66,223.00 was disbursed to the Field Implementation Units (FIUs) for 2nd and 3rd quarter maintenance of 10772 ha. plantation.

- iv. *JFMC/EDC*: the GB was informed that identification of Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs)/ Eco-Development Committees (EDCs) is in progress and so far 139 number of JFMCs have been identified with firewood plantation area totaling 5,744 ha.

Identification of Eco-Development Committees and PA wise allocation of habitat improvement activity is awaited from the Wildlife Wing. PCCF (WL) has been provided with all the requisite details and reminded for taking expeditious action in the matter.

The Member Secretary informed the GB about constraints in getting suitable land for raising plantations. The Chairman suggested to bring the encroached forest land under JFMCs taking example from the **Tripura Model**. The Member Secretary explained that legally encroachers cannot be made part of JFMC and secondly encroachers are unwilling to part with forest land as it is being used for habitation as well as for crop cultivation.

Shri.C.Ramesh, DFO, Parbatjhora Division, BTAD stated that in Kokrajhar there is lot of encroachment over forest land and efforts were made in consultation with all stakeholders

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to convince encroachers to come out of the forest area and they will be provided incentives like schools, health facility, agricultural land, etc. However, no success was achieved in the endeavor.

The Chairman emphasized to plant trees on the encroached forest land to restore tree cover through Agro-forestry/Farm forestry and further suggested to explore possibility of giving some kind of user right under Forest Right Act. Agro-forestry and Farm-forestry should first be introduced on pilot basis in few places. The Additional Chief Secretary, Environment & Forest, suggested to provide support for livelihood activities.

The GB approved release of fund for creating firewood plantation by the JFMCs over forest land already identified.

- v. *Road work*: "Plan and Estimate" for road work is being submitted by FIUs and fund is being released. Fund has been released to the Nagaon WL Division for 13 k.m. road work, for 4 numbers of watch tower and Wetland Management

Need to get the estimate vetted by the PWD is causing delay in submission of Plan and Estimate. The Addl. C.S., Environment and Forest intervened and stated that vetting of estimates by the PWD is not required now as per decision taken in the meeting of the empowered committee held recently. Necessary instructions would be issued shortly.

- vi. *Component-4 (Adding Value and Open Market Opportunities)*

- Workshop was held in Guwahati on 20-21 November, 2014. NSDC and identified SSCs participated to introduce new options for skill development and income generation. State Departments of P&RD, Handloom & Textiles, Horticulture & Food Processing also participated.

In order to impart structured trainings in traditional and sunrise sectors, an MOU with NSDC may be entered into.

The Chairman opined that the targeted communities should be imparted skill on issues related to Environment, Forest and Wildlife management in consultation with State Employment Generation Mission which has the mandate in this regard. The Chairman put emphasis on identifying skills and creating a directory of skills required in the field of climate change, biodiversity conservation, forest and wildlife, social forestry, etc. besides, identifying the themes for trainings e.g., growing nursery stock of quality planting material(QPM), environment management, wildlife and wildlife habitat management, conservation of rare and endangered species of medicinal and aromatic plants, green construction, communication skills, Computers, GIS, etc.

- vii. *Accounting Software*: 32 customized Tally Accounting Software has been procured at a cost of Rs.7.80 lakh and is being used.

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Agenda item – 3: Approval of the Annual Work Plan 2015-16.

The activities proposed in the AWP 2015-16 was discussed in detail and the Chairperson made the following suggestions:

- a. Emphasis should be put on developing specialized training of forest staff in areas like animal biology, climate change impact and mitigation, biodiversity management and conservation. Members from targeted communities should also be imparted training.
- b. The Chairman opined to enhance the budget for trainings.
- c. The heritage buildings to be renovated should be identified.
- d. Under Component – 3, Activity 3.3, Biodiversity Conservation and Management the details of activity to be undertaken should be provided
- e. the subtotals of fund for each activity should be given.
- f. the Annual Work Plan 2015-16 should be discussed in a GB meeting to be convened after 20 days.

Agenda item – 4: Any other issue with the permission of the chair.

i. *Amending the length of road work:*

The MS explained that construction/repair of 40 km road is not possible with Rs 20.0 lakh earmarked for road work to each Division as envisaged. So, to avoid audit objection the limit of 40.0 K.M. needs to be removed. The GB consented to the proposal but emphasized that the SOR of the PWD must be followed.

ii. *Approval of engagement of additional man power in the PMU:*

The Member Secretary informed the GB that PMU is facing staff shortage as adequate number of officers as envisaged under the Assam Project on Forest and Biodiversity Conservation Society are not deployed to the PMU, APFBC Society and thus it is functioning below par. It is therefore proposed to engage personnel as indicated below on contractual basis.

The Addl. C.S., Environment and Forest stated that regular forest staff deployed to the PMU get transferred and it becomes difficult to provide Guwahati based suitable replacement.

Sl. No.	Position	Number	Remuneration (INR) per month
1	Retired Forest Officer	6	40,000/-
2	Retired Civil engineer & Architect	1 each	30,000/-
3	Financial Advisor	1	30,000/-
4	GIS Operator	1	25,000/-
5	Assistant Accountant	1	20,000/-
6	Programmer	1	18,000/-
7	Multi Media Operator	1	20,000/-

The MS informed the GB that the above proposal for engagement of personnel on contractual basis was approved by the Executive Committee, APFBCS and also given consent by the AfD. The GB accorded consent to the proposal. However, the Chairman opined that the position of Forest Officer and Financial Advisor be re-designated as Forest Managers and Financial manager respectively. He also suggested young people should be preferred over retired personnel.

- iii. *Approval for engagement of one single source consultant for 3 months.*

The Member Secretary proposed to engage Shri T. Ekande, who had worked with the project earlier as single source consultant for 3 months to assist in various works of the project and the proposal was accepted by the GB.

- iv. The GB did not approve the proposal to buy motorcycles in lieu of bicycles. The Chairperson opined that bicycles should be procured as envisaged.

- v. Regarding the following issues the Chairperson directed to provide details in the next meeting of the GB for discussion:

- i. *Approval for Sal Coppice Management proposal.*
- ii. *Creation of nursery as per norms being followed in CAMPA out of saving from bamboo plantation.*
- iii. *Opening of bank account in State Bank of India, Guwahati Branch to facilitate speedy deposit of Taxes.*
- iv. *Change in Work Plan 2013-14 for Watch tower.*
- v. *Provision of Rs. 40 lakhs for Deepor Beel.*
- vi. *Provision for fencing & watch and ward for plantation including firewood plantation.*

The Chairperson further directed that meeting of the GB should be held after 20 days to discuss the issue remaining un-discussed in this meeting.

The meeting ended with thanks from the Chairman to all the members and invitees.


 (Sh. Jitesh Khosla, IAS)
 Chief Secretary, Government of Assam
 &
 Chairperson, GB, APFBC Society