



**PARLIAMENT OF INDIA
RAJYA SABHA**

**DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE
ON SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY, ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND
CLIMATE CHANGE**

THREE HUNDRED THIRY FIRST REPORT

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (2020-2021) OF THE
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST & CLIMATE CHANGE
(DEMAND NO. 25)**

(Presented to the Rajya Sabha on 6th March, 2020)
(Laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 6th March, 2020)



**Rajya Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi
March, 2020/ Phalguna, 1941 (Saka)**

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CONTENTS

| | PAGES |
|--|-------|
| 1. COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE | (i) |
| 2. INTRODUCTION | (ii) |
| *3. ACRONYMS | |
| 4. REPORT | 1-9 |
| *5. RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS-AT A GLANCE | |
| *6. MINUTES | |

** To be appended at printing stage*

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

(2019-20)

(Constituted on 13th September, 2019)

1. Shri Jairam Ramesh -- **Chairman**

RAJYA SABHA

2. Shri Anil Baluni
3. Shri R.S. Bharathi
4. Shrimati Vandana Chavan
5. Shri Hishey Lachungpa
6. Shri Parimal Nathwani
7. Shri Bhaskar Rao Nekkanti
8. Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw
9. Shri Ravi Prakash Verma
10. Shri Binoy Viswam

LOK SABHA

11. Shri Guharam Ajgalley
12. Shri Pradan Baruah
13. Shri E.T. Mohammed Basheer
14. Shri Jashvantsinh Sumanbhai Bhabhor
15. Shri Sudarshan Bhagat
16. Shri Rameshbhai Lavjibhai Dhaduk
17. Shri Anantkumar Hegde
18. Shrimati Jyotsna Charandas Mahant
19. Dr. Swami Sakshiji Maharaj
20. Shri Asaduddin Owaisi
21. Shri S.R. Parthiban
22. Dr. Ranjan Singh Rajkumar
23. Shri Kotha Prabhakar Reddy
24. Dr. Jayanta Kumar Roy
25. Shrimati Satabdi Roy (Banerjee)
26. Shri Mahesh Sahoo
27. Shri Francisco Cosme Sardinha
28. Shri Anurag Sharma
29. Shri Ram Shiromani
30. Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh
31. Dr. Ramapati Ram Tripathi

SECRETARIAT

Smt. Sunita Sekaran, Joint Secretary
Shri T. N. Pandey, Director
Shri S. Rangarajan, Additional Director
Shri Rajiv Saxena, Under Secretary
Shri Harish Kumar, Committee Officer

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science & Technology, Environment, Forests and Climate Change, having been authorised by the Committee to present the Report on its behalf, present this Three Hundred Thirty First Report of the Committee. This Report deals with the detailed Demands for Grants (2020-2021) of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (Demand No.25).

2. In the meeting of the Committee held on the 18th February, 2020, the representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change gave an overview of the various activities of the Ministry and the Members sought clarifications on various aspects of the performance of the Ministry to enable it to scrutinise the Demands for Grants.

3. The Committee expresses its thanks to the officers of the Ministry for replying to the clarifications sought by the Members and placing before it the required material to enable it to scrutinise the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change.

4. The Committee considered and adopted the Report in its meeting held on the 4th March, 2020.

NEW DELHI;
March 4, 2020
Phalgun 14, 1941(Saka)

(JAIRAM RAMESH)
Chairman,
Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on
Science & Technology, Environment, Forests and Climate Change,
Rajya Sabha.

REPORT

1. The Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science & Technology, Environment, Forests and Climate Change considered the Demands for Grants 2020-21 of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in its meeting held on the 18th February 2020.

2. BUDGETARY DETAILS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2019-20 AND ALLOCATION FOR 2020-21

2.1 The following table presents the overall budgetary details for the year 2019-20 and allocation made for the year 2020-21 in respect of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change:-

(Rs. in crore)

| Sl. No. | Scheme/Organisation | 2019-20 | | | 2020-21 |
|-----------|--|----------------|----------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| | | BE | RE | Actual Expenditure (As on 31.01.2020) | BE |
| | NON SCHEME | 1059.92 | 1012.32 | 828.09 | 1156.77 |
| I | Establishment Expenditure | 588.02 | 547.82 | 431.15 | 671.27 |
| a | Secretariat | 143.00 | 137.25 | 110.30 | 139.00 |
| b | Attached Offices/Subordinate Offices | 445.02 | 410.57 | 320.85 | 532.27 |
| 1 | Regional Offices | 41.00 | 35.28 | 28.57 | 37.00 |
| 2 | National Afforestation and Eco-Development Board | 9.00 | 7.74 | 5.81 | 9.00 |
| 3 | Forest Survey of India | 35.52 | 34.65 | 28.48 | 35.40 |
| 4 | Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy | 65.00 | 58.19 | 45.63 | 67.15 |
| 5 | State Forest Service and Rangers College | 23.00 | 21.75 | 16.82 | 25.00 |
| 6 | Wildlife Crime Control Bureau | 14.00 | 11.00 | 8.65 | 14.00 |
| 7 | Botanical Survey of India | 86.00 | 85.00 | 63.51 | 88.00 |
| 8 | Zoological Survey of India | 82.00 | 79.64 | 59.19 | 97.00 |
| 9 | National Museum of Natural History | 22.50 | 22.50 | 15.93 | 32.50 |
| 10 | National Green Tribunal | 42.00 | 36.40 | 26.53 | 101.00 |
| 11 | National Zoological Park (including Gate receipts) | 33.00 | 27.80 | 21.73 | 36.00 |
| | Less: Gate Receipts | -8.00 | -9.38 | | -9.78 |
| 12 | National Authority | | | | 100.00 |
| | Less: Amount met from National Compensatory Fund | 100.00 | 50.00 | 0.18 | -100.00 |
| II | Other Central Expenditure | 471.90 | 464.50 | 396.94 | 485.50 |
| A | Assistance to Autonomous Bodies | 324.90 | 327.00 | 293.19 | 340.00 |
| 1 | GB Pant Himalayan Institute of Environment and Development | 27.90 | 25.00 | 21.31 | 28.00 |
| 2 | Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education | 215.00 | 230.00 | 215.00 | 230.00 |
| 3 | Indian Institute of Forest Management | 37.00 | 32.00 | 25.50 | 37.00 |

| | | | | | |
|------------|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 4 | Indian Plywood Industries Research and Training Institute | 11.00 | 10.00 | 7.86 | 11.00 |
| 5 | Wildlife Institute of India | 34.00 | 30.00 | 23.52 | 34.00 |
| B | Statutory and Regulatory Bodies | 147.00 | 137.50 | 103.75 | 145.50 |
| 1 | Central Pollution Control Board | 100.00 | 100.00 | 75.00 | 100.00 |
| 2 | Central Zoo Authority | 15.00 | 8.50 | 5.75 | 12.00 |
| 3 | National Biodiversity Authority | 22.00 | 20.00 | 16.00 | 23.00 |
| 4 | National Tiger Conservation Authority | 10.00 | 9.00 | 7.00 | 10.50 |
| | SCHEME | 1894.80 | 1645.62 | 1391.71 | 1943.23 |
| III | Central Sector Schemes | 1008.80 | 859.05 | 679.53 | 1017.23 |
| a | Environmental knowledge and capacity Building | 85.80 | 85.80 | 84.78 | 86.37 |
| 1 | Forestry Training and Capacity Building | 10.80 | 10.80 | 9.78 | 11.37 |
| 2 | Eco-Task Force | 75.00 | 75.00 | 75.00 | 75.00 |
| b | Environment Protection, Management and Sustainable Development | 215.00 | 116.25 | 80.18 | 192.00 |
| 1 | Pollution Abatement | 10.00 | 10.00 | 9.69 | 10.00 |
| 2 | Hazardous Substances Management | 15.00 | 4.25 | 2.75 | 12.00 |
| 3 | Climate Change Action Plan | 40.00 | 15.00 | 7.86 | 40.00 |
| 4 | National Adaptation Fund | 100.00 | 40.00 | 22.37 | 80.00 |
| 5 | National Mission on Himalayan Studies | 50.00 | 47.00 | 37.51 | 50.00 |
| c | National Coastal Management Programme | 95.00 | 96.00 | 87.87 | 103.00 |
| 1 | National Coastal Mission | 95.00 | 96.00 | 87.87 | 103.00 |
| D | Decision Support System for Environmental Awareness, Policy, Planning and Outcome Evaluation | 153.00 | 116.00 | 95.60 | 175.86 |
| 1 | Environmental Education, Awareness and Training including 'Media, Publicity & Information' and 'Swachhta Action Plan' | 82.00 | 72.00 | 57.66 | 114.36 |
| 2 | Environmental Information Systems | 46.00 | 28.00 | 24.02 | 40.00 |
| 3 | Centres of Excellence | 15.00 | 11.50 | 10.33 | 14.00 |
| 4 | R&D for Conservation and Development | 10.00 | 4.50 | 3.59 | 7.50 |
| E | Control of Pollution | 460.00 | 445.00 | 331.10 | 460.00 |
| IV | Centrally Sponsored Schemes | 886.00 | 786.57 | 712.18 | 926.00 |
| A | National Mission for a Green India | 240.00 | 237.00 | 231.62 | 311.00 |
| 1 | Green India Mission-National Afforestation Programme | 190.00 | 190.00 | 186.68 | 261.00 |
| 2 | Forest Fire Prevention and Management | 50.00 | 47.00 | 44.94 | 50.00 |
| B | Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats | 560.00 | 493.57 | 434.13 | 532.00 |
| 1 | Project Tiger | 350.00 | 282.57 | 266.96 | 300.00 |
| 2 | Project Elephant | 30.00 | 31.00 | 29.60 | 35.00 |
| 3 | Development of Wildlife Habitats | 180.00 | 180.00 | 137.57 | 197.00 |

| | | | | | |
|----------|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| C | Conservation of Natural Resources and Ecosystems | 86.00 | 56.00 | 46.43 | 83.00 |
| 1 | Conservation of Aquatic Ecosystems | 16.00 | 9.00 | 6.67 | 13.00 |
| 2 | Biodiversity Conservation | 70.00 | 47.00 | 39.76 | 70.00 |
| | Grand Total (Scheme + Non Scheme) | 2954.62 | 2657.94 | 2219.80 | 3100.00 |

2.2 The Committee notes that the BE 2020-21 allocation of the Ministry has increased by Rs.442 crores over RE 2019-20 and hopes that the Ministry would be able to make optimum utilisation of funds allocated during the year.

2.3 In its meeting held on 18th February, 2020 with the representatives of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the Committee noted that the Ministry had projected a demand of Rs.4,295.44 crore for BE 2020-21, against which an amount of Rs.3100 crore has been allocated. The Ministry informed that the difference between the budgetary allocation requested and allocated would impact some of the key schemes/programmes of the Ministry. The Committee enquired about the challenges arising out of this difference in the proposed and allocated BE. The Ministry informed that it will seek for more funds at Supplementary and RE stage after due analysis of expenditure trends of the Programmes/schemes.

2.4 The Committee asked the Ministry about the bare minimum increase required in the budgetary allocations for the year 2020-21 to sustain its key programmes. In response, the Ministry stated that they require at least Rs.600 crore additional funds to sustain its key programmes/schemes during the year. Later, the Ministry informed that the two programmes/schemes where the requirement of additional funds is most necessary are ‘Control of Pollution’ (National Clean Air Programme) – Rs. 200.00 crore; and ‘National Coastal Mission’ (National Coastal Zone Management Programme) – Rs. 117.00 crore. Elaborating on the issue, the representative of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change informed the Committee during the meeting that they have received Rs.460 crore for ‘Control of Pollution’ during 2020-21 instead of Rs.660 crore projected by them. It was going to impact the activities under pollution control, especially taking up 20 more non-attainment cities in addition to the existing 102, under the National Clean Air Programme.

2.5 The Committee is of the view that both the above programmes, especially National Clean Air Programme, are of utmost importance in the present day context, and controlling air pollution must be given the topmost priority. The allocation of additional funds would help support additional 22 non-attainment cities under ‘Control of Pollution’ scheme. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Ministry must be provided the requisite allocation as sought by the Ministry with respect to these two programmes at the RE stage.

3. ALLOCATION FOR CONTROL OF POLLUTION TO MoHUA

3.1 The Committee pointed out that the Finance Minister has announced Rs.4400 crores for clean air for large cities having population above one million in her Budget Speech. The Ministry informed the Committee that the said Fund is being made available to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA). The Committee desired to know how the Ministry would align its 'Control of Pollution' scheme with the fund allocation to MoHUA in order to meet its shortfall. Elaborating on the issue, the Ministry informed that the budgetary allocation of Rs 4400 crore through MoHUA, is intended to be a performance related grant, which would be released to only the million plus cities based on the improvements in average annual concentrations of both PM 10 and PM2.5 (equal weightage of 50%). Such grant would, however, be released only based on the improvements (as calculated in Jan 2021). Cities shall utilise the same for taking up activities/ measures that would help to bring down the pollution levels further. National Clean Air Program (NCAP) component under the 'Control of Pollution' Scheme would take up measures in all the 102 non-attainment cities (initially identified). This number has increased to 122 non- attainment cities (76 cities with non-million plus population). In the year 2020-21, additional cities are to be supported to take up the measures for the abatement and control of air pollution. Thus, allocation of funds under 'Control of Pollution' Scheme would help support non-million plus non-attainment cities. It would also help support the million plus non-attainment cities in 2020-21, before these cities may receive funds in the last quarter based on their improvements in PM 10 and PM 2.5 levels.

3.2 The Committee observes that the allocation of Rs.4,400 crore for pollution control to Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs is more than the entire budget allocation for 2020-21 for the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. The Committee notes that there are 46 cities in India, with a population above 1 million. The Committee recommends that these 46 cities can be kept out of the 102 non-attainment cities identified by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to take up measures for the abatement and control of air pollution. This would also help the Ministry reduce the shortfall of funds being sought by them for their Control of Pollution scheme.

4. BUDGETARY SUPPORT & ACTUALLY UTILISED DURING THE LAST TWO YEARS

4.1 The following table indicates the BE, RE allocation and Actual Expenditure (upto January 2020), year-wise, for the years 2018-19 and 2019-20 :-

(Rs. in Crore)

| Component | 2018-19 | | | 2019-20 | | |
|-----------|---------|----|----|---------|----|-----------------------------|
| | BE | RE | AE | BE | RE | AE (up to 31.01.2020) |
| | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Scheme | 1618.90 | 1628.20 | 1588.47 | 1894.80 | 1645.62 | 828.09 |
| Non-Scheme | 1056.52 | 1047.22 | 1035.38 | 1059.92 | 1012.32 | 1391.71 |
| Total | 2675.42 | 2675.42 | 2623.85 | 2954.72 | 2657.94 | 2219.80 |

4.2 The Committee notes the pattern of utilisation of allocated amount by the Ministry during the last two financial years and finds the same satisfactory. However, the Committee notes that during 2019-20, whereas only 50% of the allocation has been utilised with respect to Schemes, the expenditure under the Non-Scheme has gone beyond the RE allocation. The Committee also notes that the BE allocation of the Ministry was reduced by nearly Rs.300 crores at RE stage in the current financial year, which indicates a slow start to the schemes in the initial phase, thereby leading to the reduction in allocation at the RE stage. The Committee is of the view that the Ministry needs to take note of this issue and take corrective measures to avoid the same in the future. The Committee urges the Ministry to optimally utilise the allocation made to it during the remaining period of the financial year 2019-20.

5. UTILISATION OF CAMPA FUND

5.1 During the meeting, the Committee brought to the notice of the Ministry the instances of the CAMPA fund not being utilised properly in some states. The Committee also noted that CAMPA fund had a huge corpus of Rs.54394 crore. Noticing that the Ministry had indicated shortfall in allocation in some of its key schemes/programmes, the Committee desired to know whether the Ministry could dovetail the CAMPA fund with its other activities/programmes so that the pressure on the General Budget could be reduced.

5.2 In response, the Ministry informed the Committee that as per the Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAF) Act, 2016, National and State Funds have been established under the Public Account of India and the Public Account of States in which monies received from user agencies towards compensatory afforestation, additional compensatory afforestation, penal compensatory afforestation, net present value and all other amounts recovered from such agencies under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 are credited. These funds are basically compensatory levies arising out of non-forestry use of forest land or protected areas for developmental needs of the country. These compensatory levies have primary role in mitigating impact of loss of tree cover, forest land, wildlife habitat and ecological services rendered by the forests. The monies in the National and State Funds can be utilised as per provisions of CAF Act, 2016 and CAF Rules, 2018. There is no specific provision in the CAF Act, 2016 to fund any other scheme of the Ministry from the National Fund. The schemes can only be funded as per Section 5 (b) (iii) of CAF Act, 2016.

5.3 Responding to the issue raised regarding the improper utilisation of the CAMPA fund, the Ministry apprised the Committee of the mechanism for ensuring appropriate utilisation of CAMPA fund. The Committee was informed that a monitoring group has been constituted as per Section 9 (iii) of the CAF Act, 2016. The major functions of the monitoring group (Section 16 of CAF Act, 2016) include evolving independent system for concurrent monitoring and evaluation of works implemented in States and Union Territories; inspection and undertaking financial audit of funds released by the National Authority; and devising measures for transparency and accountability. Monitoring protocol for afforestation works under CAMPA is being developed by the Forest Survey of India, which is based on remote sensing data and analysis of satellite imageries with ground truthing. In addition to this, the State Authorities are at liberty to carry out internal monitoring as well as third party monitoring and evaluation of works carried out through CAMPA Funds.

5.4 The Committee observes that CAMPA is a huge fund. However, its guidelines have been drafted in such a manner that its resources cannot be used for the schemes/programmes of the Ministry with similar objectives where it requires the money most. The Committee is of the view that CAMPA funds have accumulated due to deforestation. There is, therefore, no reason that the Green India Mission, which primarily aims at afforestation, cannot be funded out of the CAMPA fund. The Committee recommends that the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change should explore the possibility of allocating CAMPA funds for those schemes/programmes of the Ministry having similar objectives as envisaged in the activities to be undertaken by the CAMPA fund, even if it requires amendment to the CAMPA Act/Rules and the Committee would support the Ministry in this matter. This would also, to an extent, reduce the financial burden on the Ministry and it would be able to utilise the fund for its schemes with similar objectives.

6. Green India Mission - National Afforestation Programme

6.1 The Committee was informed that National Afforestation Programme (NAP) was merged with Green India Mission scheme for budgetary allocation during 2018-19 & 2019-20. Budgets were allotted to both the Green India Mission and NAP scheme to the tune of Rs.157.50 crore for 2018-19 and Rs.140.00 crore for 2019-20. Out of the allocated budget, an expenditure of Rs.95.38 crore was incurred during 2018-19 for taking up new afforestation activities over 16636 ha and an expenditure of Rs.21.98 crore has been incurred during 2019-20, till date, for new afforestation over of 19724 ha, including maintenance of previous year's plantation and nursery work.

6.2 The Committee acknowledges that the National Afforestation Programme is one of the important programmes of the Government for protection and conservation of natural resources through the active involvement of the people. However, the utilisation of funds under the scheme falls short of the allocation made for the purpose, and is highly

unsatisfactory.

7. R&D Scheme for Conservation and Development

7.1 The Committee asked the Ministry to furnish information relating to the steps taken by the Ministry to strengthen scientific research in the area of environmental sciences in the country. The Committee was informed that the R&D Scheme supports and funds research projects for building database, generate information and knowledge for finding practical solutions to problems of environmental protection and management and for developing policies, strategies, action plans and in better management and conservation of natural resources. R&D programme has funded 16 projects during this year with a total cost of 8.40 crore and sanctioned 3.37 crore for first installment as on date.

7.2 The budget allocation and actual expenditure for R&D Scheme for Conservation and Development during the last three years is as under:-

| Budget Allocation (in crores) | | | | Actual Expenditure (in crores) | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|---------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | Total (2017-2020) | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 (as on 03.02.2020) | Total (2017-2020) |
| 9.5 | 9.7 | 10 | 29.20 | 2.20 | 1.58 | 3.58 | 7.36 (25.2%) |

7.3 The Committee finds that during the last three years, the allocation under the above scheme has been utilised to the tune of only 25%. The Committee urges the Ministry to introspect on the poor usage of funds allocated to Research and Development, and take measures to ensure that such funds that are vital, are not grossly underutilised in future.

8. MAN-ANIMAL CONFLICT

8.1 During the meeting, the Committee enquired about the man-animal conflict and the compensation to be granted in case of human/animal loss. The representatives of the Ministry informed the Committee that there is a component of a scheme, which deals with wildlife conflicts. It involves minimising wildlife conflict by taking up such activities because of which the habitat is improved and the wild animal does not come out of the habitation. In response to a query about the compensation, the Ministry stated that they provided financial assistance to States/UTs under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes, for ex gratia relief at the following rates:

| Sl. No. | Nature of damage caused by wild animals | Amount of ex-gratia relief |
|----------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1. | Death or permanent incapacitation to human beings | Rs.5.00 lakhs |
| 2. | Grievous injury | Rs.2.00 lakhs |

| | | |
|----|------------------------|---|
| 3. | Minor injury | Cost of treatment up to Rs.25000/- per person |
| 4. | Loss of property/crops | State/UT Government may adhere to the cost norms prescribed by them |

8.2 It was also stated that the States may provide enhanced ex-gratia relief as per their own norms. In response to a specific query as to how much compensation is given when humans/cattle get killed by wild animals, the Committee was informed that the amount varies from State to State. Some States, like Odisha, pay Rs.4 lakhs for humans getting killed whereas some states like Maharashtra pay even Rs.15 lakhs. With regards to cattle getting killed, Odisha was paying Rs.10,000 whereas Maharashtra was paying Rs.50,000. The Committee was further informed that in order to compensate the damage caused to the crops by wild animals, the Ministry has brought this loss under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Bima Yojana.

8.3 While deliberating on the subject, the Committee brought the instances of revenge killing of animals by the affected parties to the notice of the Ministry. The Committee also enquired about the measures taken for prevention of deaths/injuries arising out of Man-Elephant conflict in the country. The Ministry informed the Committee about the following measures taken by them in this respect:

- (a) Financial and technical assistance is provided to elephant range states under 'Project Elephant', to protect elephants, their habitat and corridors;
- (b) Ex-gratia relief in case of human death/injury and property/crop loss;
- (c) Notification of critical elephant habitats as Elephant Reserves for better management of wild elephants;
- (d) All the elephant states have been directed to implement Guidelines for Management of Human-Elephant Conflict; and
- (e) Wildlife Institute of India, in consultation with MoEF&CC, National Highway Authority of India, National Tiger Conservation Authority and World Bank Group has published a document namely 'Eco-friendly Measures to Mitigate Impacts of Linear Infrastructure' to assist project agencies in designing linear infrastructure in a manner that reduces human-animal conflicts.

8.4 The Committee notes the compensation available for human/cattle/crop loss in case of man-animal conflict and the financial assistance provided by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to the States/Union Territories in such cases. The Committee observes that the amount of compensation varies a lot from state to state. The Committee recommends that the Ministry of Environment, Forest and

Climate Change must take initiative to carry out a comprehensive review of the compensation being provided in different states and frame guidelines to align the compensation at an equivalent and realistic level, so that the affected persons are suitably compensated for the loss suffered by them equitably all over the country.

8.5 The Committee also takes a serious view of the cases of revenge killing of animals by the affected persons. The Committee recommends that the Ministry must impress upon the State Governments/Union Territories to ensure that prompt payment of compensation is made to the persons affected by man-animal conflicts on time, which would deter people resorting to retaliatory killing of wild animals.

9. AUDITING OF PLANTATION ACTIVITIES

9.1 During the meeting, the Committee also raised the issue of plantation of a very large number of plants under the concerned schemes. The Committee drew attention to the fact that planting such a large number of plants also required proportionately large tracts of land and expressed apprehension of money being siphoned off in such cases. The Committee also called for the audit of the plantation activities. Responding to this, the Ministry informed the Committee that National Afforestation Programme is monitored at the village level by the members of JFMCs by way of social auditing at district level by Forest Development Agency (FDA) and at the State level by State Forest Development Agency (SFDA). The Ministry also monitors the implementation of the scheme through Utilisation Certificates, Quarterly physical and financial Progress Reports (QPRs). The audit report and the statement of Accounts of previous year, duly audited by a Chartered Accountant in the panel of C&AG is a pre-requisite for sanctioning grant. The afforestation sites are periodically evaluated by the State Forest Department and the Ministry by engaging independent evaluators having credibility and expertise. The concurrent evaluation of plantation is also carried out in the 3rd and 5th year of the five year plantation cycle by SFDA.

9.2 The Committee notes the reply of the Ministry but is also of the opinion that the apprehension expressed by the members cannot be ruled out. The Committee recommends that the Ministry must take into cognizance the concern expressed and ensure that the funds allocated for the plantation activities are utilised for only that activity, and take all necessary steps to plug any loopholes in the system.
