



**PARLIAMENT OF INDIA  
RAJYA SABHA**

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

**THREE HUNDRED FORTY SIXTH REPORT  
DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (2021-2022) OF THE  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST & CLIMATE CHANGE  
(DEMAND NO. 27)**

(Presented to the Rajya Sabha on 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2021)  
(Laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2021)



**Rajya Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi  
March, 2021/ Phalguna, 1942 (Saka)**

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सत्यमेव जयते

**Rajya Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi  
March, 2021/ Phalguna, 1942 (Saka)**

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*\* To be appended*

**COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE**  
**(2020-21)**  
*(Constituted w.e.f. 13<sup>th</sup> September, 2020)*

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 Binoy Viswam  
10. <sup>@</sup>Shrimati Seema Dwivedi

**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 Anantkumar Hegde  
17. Shri S. Jagathrakshakan  
18. Shri Mohammed Azam Khan  
19. Shrimati Jyotsna Charandas Mahant  
20. Dr. Swami Sakshiji Maharaj  
21. Shri Asaduddin Owaisi  
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 Sardinha  
28. Shri Anurag Sharma  
29. Shri Ram Shiromani  
30. Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh  
31. Dr. Ramapati Ram Tripathi

**SECRETARIAT**

Shri Pradeep Chaturvedi, Joint Secretary  
Shri T. N. Pandey, Director  
Shri Rakesh Anand, Additional Director  
Shri Rajiv Saxena, Under Secretary  
Shri Harish Kumar, Committee Officer

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@ Nominated w.e.f. 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2020, in lieu of Shri Ravi Prakash Verma who ceased to be a member of the Committee on expiry of his term in Rajya Sabha on 25<sup>th</sup> November, 2020.

## INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment, Forests and Climate Change, having been authorised by the Committee to present the Report on its behalf, present this Three Hundred Forty Sixth Report of the Committee. This Report deals with the detailed Demands for Grants (2021-2022) of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (Demand No.27).

2. In the meeting of the Committee held on the 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2021, 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 of Environment, Forest & Climate Change 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.

4. The Committee considered and adopted the Report in its meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> March, 2021.

NEW DELHI;  
March 4, 2021  
Phalguna 13, 1942 (Saka)

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

## REPORT

The Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment, Forests and Climate Change considered the Demands for Grants 2021-22 of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in its meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

### 2. **Budgetary Details for the Financial Year 2020-21 and allocation for 2021-22**

2.1 The following table presents the overall budgetary details for the year 2020-21 and allocation made for the year 2021-22 in respect of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change:-

(₹ in crore)

Sl. No.	Scheme/Organisation	2020-21			2021-22
		BE	RE	Actual Expenditure (As on 31.01.2021)	BE
(A)	<b>NON SCHEME</b>	<b>1156.77</b>	<b>874.91</b>	<b>771.06</b>	<b>1110.80</b>
I	<b>Establishment Expenditure</b>	<b>671.27</b>	<b>477.06</b>	<b>384.44</b>	<b>634.30</b>
a	<b>Secretariat including 'International Co-operation' and 'Environmental Impact Assessment'</b>	<b>139.00</b>	<b>128.96</b>	<b>111.32</b>	<b>147.82</b>
b	<b>Attached Offices/Subordinate Offices</b>	<b>532.27</b>	<b>348.10</b>	<b>273.12</b>	<b>486.48</b>
1	Regional Offices	37.00	31.00	24.88	50.40
2	National Afforestation and Eco-Development Board	9.00	10.00	7.49	9.50
3	Forest Survey of India	35.40	26.40	21.76	30.58
4	Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy	67.15	32.14	25.56	51.50
5	State Forest Service and Rangers College	25.00	18.50	12.06	24.50
6	Wildlife Crime Control Bureau	14.00	9.04	6.68	11.00
7	Botanical Survey of India	88.00	71.13	57.18	78.00

Sl. No.	Scheme/Organisation	2020-21			2021-22
		BE	RE	Actual Expenditure (As on 31.01.2021)	BE
8	Zoological Survey of India	97.00	69.32	56.22	82.00
9	National Museum of Natural History	32.50	19.06	10.23	19.00
10	National Green Tribunal (NGT)	101.00	35.51	30.79	104.00
11	National Zoological Park (including Gate receipts)	36.00	26.00	20.27	31.00
	<b>Less: Receipts</b>	<b>-9.78</b>	<b>0.00</b>		<b>-5.00</b>
12	National Authority	100.00	200.00	22.38	261.65
	<b>Less: Amount met from National Compensatory Fund</b>	<b>-100.00</b>	<b>-200.00</b>	<b>-22.38</b>	<b>-261.65</b>
<b>II</b>	<b>Other Central Expenditure</b>	<b>485.50</b>	<b>397.85</b>	<b>386.62</b>	<b>476.50</b>
<b>a</b>	<b>Assistance to Autonomous Bodies</b>	<b>340.00</b>	<b>289.45</b>	<b>283.05</b>	<b>305.50</b>
1	GB Pant Himalayan Institute of Environment and Development	28.00	16.70	13.50	24.00
2	Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education	230.00	217.00	217.00	220.00
3	Indian Institute of Forest Management	37.00	23.50	21.50	27.75
4	Indian Plywood Industries Research and Training Institute	11.00	10.25	9.05	8.25
5	Wildlife Institute of India	34.00	22.00	22.00	25.50
<b>b</b>	<b>Statutory and Regulatory Bodies</b>	<b>145.50</b>	<b>108.40</b>	<b>103.57</b>	<b>160.50</b>
1	Central Pollution Control Board	100.00	83.00	83.00	100.00
2	Central Zoo Authority	12.00	7.50	5.46	11.00
3	National Biodiversity Authority	23.00	10.50	8.25	19.50
4	National Tiger Conservation Authority	10.50	7.40	6.86	10.00
5	Commission for Air Quality Management	-	-	-	20.00
<b>c</b>	<b>Other Bodies</b>				10.50
1	Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON)	-	-	-	10.50



Sl. No.	Scheme/Organisation	2020-21			2021-22
		BE	RE	Actual Expenditure (As on 31.01.2021)	BE
	<b>NON SCHEME - TOTAL</b>	<b>1156.77</b>	<b>874.91</b>	<b>771.06</b>	<b>1110.80</b>
	<b>SCHEMES</b>	<b>1943.23</b>	<b>1140.09</b>	<b>902.65</b>	<b>1759.13</b>
<b>III</b>	<b>Central Sector Schemes</b>	<b>1017.23</b>	<b>584.09</b>	<b>408.33</b>	<b>993.13</b>
<b>a</b>	<b>Environmental knowledge and capacity Building</b>	<b>86.37</b>	<b>40.00</b>	<b>35.13</b>	<b>70.00</b>
1	Forestry Training and Capacity Building	11.37	2.00	1.38	10.00
2	Eco-Task Force	75.00	38.00	33.75	60.00
<b>b</b>	<b>Environment Protection, Management and Sustainable Development</b>	<b>192.00</b>	<b>107.93</b>	<b>83.46</b>	<b>136.00</b>
1	Pollution Abatement	10.00	6.00	3.32	
2	Hazardous Substances Management	12.00	3.69	0.42	6.00
3	Climate Change Action Plan	40.00	24.00	19.90	30.00
4	National Adaptation Fund	80.00	44.24	34.32	60.00
5	National Mission on Himalayan Studies	50.00	30.00	25.50	40.00
<b>c</b>	<b>National Coastal Management Programme</b>	<b>103.00</b>	<b>68.34</b>	<b>52.35</b>	<b>200.00</b>
1	National Coastal Mission including 'Conservation of Corals & Mangroves'	103.00	68.34	52.25	200.00
<b>d</b>	<b>Decision Support System for Environmental Awareness, Policy, Planning and Outcome Evaluation</b>	<b>175.86</b>	<b>83.82</b>	<b>46.74</b>	<b>117.13</b>
1	Environmental Education, Awareness and Training including 'Media, Publicity & Information' and 'Swachhta Action Plan'	114.36	51.00	29.72	77.13
2	Environmental Information Systems	40.00	25.00	11.24	35.00
3	Centres of Excellence	14.00	4.82	3.99	--
4	R&D for Conservation and Development	7.50	3.00	1.79	5.00
<b>e</b>	<b>Control of Pollution</b>	<b>460.00</b>	<b>284.00</b>	<b>190.65</b>	<b>470.00</b>
<b>IV</b>	<b>Centrally Sponsored Schemes</b>	<b>926.00</b>	<b>556.00</b>	<b>494.32</b>	<b>766.00</b>

Sl. No.	Scheme/Organisation	2020-21			2021-22
		BE	RE	Actual Expenditure (As on 31.01.2021)	BE
<b>a</b>	<b>National Mission for a Green India</b>	<b>311.00</b>	<b>193.00</b>	<b>183.23</b>	<b>290.00</b>
1	Green India Mission-National Afforestation Programme	261.00	160.00	154.83	250
2	Forest Fire Prevention and Management	50.00	33.00	28.40	40.00
<b>b</b>	<b>Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats</b>	<b>532.00</b>	<b>320.00</b>	<b>280.25</b>	<b>414.00</b>
1	Project Tiger	300.00	195.00	179.83	250.00
2	Project Elephant	35.00	25.00	21.72	33.00
3	Development of Wildlife Habitats	197.00	100.00	78.70	131.00
<b>c</b>	<b>Conservation of Natural Resources and Ecosystems</b>	<b>83.00</b>	<b>43.00</b>	<b>30.84</b>	<b>62.00</b>
1	Biodiversity Conservation	13.00	8.00	7.02	12.00
2	Conservation of Aquatic Ecosystems	70.00	35.00	23.82	50.00
	<b>Grand Total (Scheme + Non Scheme)</b>	<b>3100.00</b>	<b>2015.00</b>	<b>1673.71</b>	<b>2869.93</b>

2.2 The Committee noted that there had been a drastic reduction in the budgetary allocation of the Ministry at RE Stage in 2020-21. On being asked about the reasons therefor, the Ministry informed that the said reduction in the total outlay of the Ministry in 2020-21 was due to COVID-19 pandemic. The Committee desired to know the impact of COVID-19 on the budgetary allocations and the schemes/programmes of the Ministry. In response, it was informed that the Ministry's budget allocation was reduced by ₹1085.00 crore at R.E. stage due to COVID-19 pandemic. Thus the various programmes and schemes run by the Ministry faced issues in achieving all the outcomes envisaged for the year 2020-21 including key Schemes such as Green India Mission (GIM) and Control of Pollution. The reduction in funds will also lead to non-release of

funds for all proposed activities mentioned in the Annual Plan of Operations (APOs) of various schemes.

**2.3 The Committee notes the adverse effect of COVID-19 pandemic on the budgetary allocation of the Ministry whereby the BE allocation of the Ministry for 2020-21 was drastically reduced by 35% at RE stage, thus resulting in non-release of funds for all proposed activities mentioned in the Annual Plan of Operations (APOs) of various schemes. The Ministry has been able to spend 83% of the RE allocation upto 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021. The Committee urges the Ministry to optimally utilise the funds available with it during remaining part of the year.**

2.4 The Committee desired to know the budgetary allocation requested by the Ministry and the amount actually allocated to it during 2021-22. The Committee was informed that the Ministry had requested for ₹4066.30 crore and had been allocated only ₹2869.93 crore for 2021-22. The reduction would impact allocation under all the key schemes/programmes of the Ministry during the year. When asked as to how the Ministry proposed to deal with the challenges due to this reduction of funds, the Ministry informed that it will seek more funds at Supplementary and Revised Estimates (R.E.) stage after due analysis of expenditure trends of the Programmes/schemes. The Ministry has already requested the Ministry of Finance for relaxation in the ceiling imposed (i.e. 5.5 times of total scheme expenditure of FY 2019-20) on the outlay of its schemes for the next five years, considering the pivotal areas it deals with viz. environmental protection, increase in forest cover, protection of wildlife and endangered species, etc.

2.5 The Committee then asked the Ministry to provide details of the absolute bare minimum increase it needed in the budgetary allocations for the year 2021-22 to sustain its key programmes with the desired outcomes and efficiency. In

response, the Ministry informed that it requires additional funds to the tune of at least ₹900 crore for its key programmes/schemes in financial year 2021-22. This amount includes provisions to undertake envisaged activities under schemes such as Green India Mission-National Afforestation Programme, Forest Fire Prevention and Management, National Coastal Mission (NCM), Project Tiger and Development of Wildlife Habitats.

**2.6 The Committee notes that the reduction of funds of the Ministry at RE 2020-21 was due to an unprecedented situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the BE 2021-22 of the Ministry is still less than BE 2020-21 (₹3100 crore) and even BE 2019-20 (₹2954.72). The Ministry has indicated that it requires an additional amount of ₹900 crores during 2021-22 for its key schemes/programmes. The Committee recommends that in 2021-22, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change should make proactive efforts to ensure that the physical targets of the Ministry in respect of its various schemes/programmes are on schedule and the allocation made at BE is utilised to the maximum, so that it is on a firm footing to seek additional funds at the Supplementary and RE stage to achieve its objectives during the year.**

### **3. Budgetary Support & Actually Utilised during the last three years**

3.1 The following table indicates the BE, RE allocation and Actual Expenditure (upto January 2021), year-wise, for the years 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21:-

(₹ in Crore)

Component	2018-19			2019-20			2020-21		
	BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE	BE	RE	AE (up to 31.1.2021)
<b>Scheme</b>	1618.90	1628.20	1588.47	1894.80	1645.62	1579.32	1943.23	1140.09	902.65
<b>Non-Scheme</b>	1056.52	1047.22	1035.38	1059.92	1012.32	986.12	1156.77	874.91	771.06
<b>Total</b>	<b>2675.42</b>	<b>2675.42</b>	<b>2623.85</b>	<b>2954.72</b>	<b>2657.94</b>	<b>2565.44</b>	<b>3100.00</b>	<b>2015.00</b>	<b>1673.71</b>

**3.2 The Committee notes the pattern of utilisation of allocated amount by the Ministry during the last three financial years and finds the same satisfactory. The Committee also notes that although the BE allocation of the Ministry was reduced by nearly Rs.300 crores at RE stage during 2019-20, indicating a slow start to the schemes in the initial phase, thereby leading to the reduction in allocation at the RE stage, the Ministry was able to utilise the allocation fully during that year. The Committee also notes that the Ministry has been able to spend 83% of the RE 2020-21 allocation upto 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021, which is satisfactory.**

#### **4. Control of Pollution**

4.1 The Committee desired to know the allocation under ‘Control of Pollution’ Scheme requested by the Ministry and actually allocated to it during 2021-22. In response thereto, the Committee was informed that the Ministry had sought funds to the tune of ₹550 crore for the above scheme and they have been provided with ₹470 crore for 2021-22. In response to a query whether the reduced allocation will affect the targets of the Ministry under the scheme, the Ministry informed the Committee that the reduction will not affect the targets/achievements envisaged under various components of the schemes as major programme under the scheme is National Clean Air Programme (NCAP). This is a comprehensive time bound action Programme at national level for reduction of air pollution levels, both at regional and urban scales, at non-attainment cities. The implementation of city action plans for reduction of air pollution is based on convergence of activities from other Departments/Ministries. Though the allocation for year 2021-22 has been kept as ₹470 crore at the level of BE 2020-21, additional funding for the activities is supported by grants provided to 42 'million plus cities' (₹4400 crore in the year 2020-21 and ₹2217 crore in the year 2021-22) on the recommendation of

Fifteenth Finance Commission. Further, provisions made under Urban Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0 (₹1,41,678 crores over 5 years through Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) with a focus on air pollution reduction by effectively managing waste from construction and demolition activities and bio-remediation of all legacy municipal solid waste dump sites, will also augment funding for achieving NCAP objectives.

4.2 The Committee also noted that an allocation of ₹460 crore was made for 'Control of Pollution' in 2020-21 which was reduced to ₹284.00 crores at RE stage. The Committee desired to know as to what amount has been actually spent under the scheme till 31.1.2021 and whether the Ministry will be able to achieve its targets, both physical as well as financial, during the year. The Ministry informed the Committee that an amount of ₹190.65 crore has been spent under the Scheme till 31.01.2021. Further, an amount of ₹ 33.54 crore is in process to be released. The Ministry also stated that there will be a shortfall in achieving the targets, both physical and financial, during the year 2020-21, due to COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdown impacts. Due to COVID-19, the states were not able to utilise the amount released to them in 2020-21, which also led to revision of targets for the year. Further, assistance provided for Abatement of Pollution to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and all State Pollution Control Boards/ Pollution Control Committee (SPCBs/ PCCs) in lieu of Water Cess may also be affected.

4.3 The Committee noted that the funding under 'Control of Pollution' scheme will be from various sources. During the meeting, the Committee desired to know the role of the various agencies implementing this scheme in a particular city or town. The Secretary of the Ministry informed the Committee that the contribution under NCAP was through the allocation of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. The allocation of ₹2200 crore from Fifteenth Finance Commission was also to be spent through the Ministry. Further, it has

been submitted to the Committee through a public representation, that the 15<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission recommended the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change may be given a separate grant for installation of systems to monitor air quality. The Committee also observed during the meeting that smaller cities like Guwahati received funds of only ₹20 lakh in 2019-20 under the NCAP, which is inadequate. It has been brought to the notice of the Committee through an expert's representation that installing just one air quality monitor costs ₹1.2 crore.

**4.4 The Committee notes that the 'Control of Pollution' scheme is to be implemented through various Central and State Government agencies. The Committee is of the view that although there may be different fund contributors to various implementation agencies under the scheme, there should be a central mechanism for coordination of various Central and State agencies and ensuring accountability through monitoring of the progress of the works undertaken. Further, capacity building should be undertaken at the municipal level to ensure implementation of NCAP. These measures are critical for the successful execution of the scheme. The Committee recommends that the grant made available by recommendation of 15<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission for installation of systems to monitor air quality must be prioritised by the Ministry in the smaller cities and towns that are often neglected, and suffer from a lack of quality data on air pollution.**

**4.5 Further, the Committee strongly recommends the need for transparency in information relating to expenditure of 'Control of Pollution' scheme, progress of NCAP, and functioning of the Pollution Control Boards.**

**4.6 The Committee understands that the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change utilises the allocation made for 'Control of Pollution' under its various schemes and programmes. The Committee is of the view that apart from implementing its various schemes and programmes, the**

**Ministry needs to innovate and invest in creating infrastructure for pollution abatement measures having sustainable and long-term impact such as installing superchargers for electric vehicles and establishing Effective Microorganism bio-digesters units. Installing superchargers for electric vehicles in cities affected by vehicular pollution will accelerate transition of people from petrol/diesel to electric vehicles, thereby reducing vehicular pollution. Similarly, establishing Effective Microorganism bio-digesters units after studying learnings from pilot projects, will not only help increase the efficiency of waste treatment and biogas production in urban areas, but also reduce the problem of stubble burning in rural North India, since these bio-digester units can provide effective microorganism solution, which, if made available to the farmers at a low cost, can provide them incentives to decompose stubble instead of burning it. This will also go a long way in controlling the problem of air pollution that severely affects the Indo-Gangetic plains every year.**

## **5. R&D Scheme for Conservation and Development**

5.1 The Committee desired to know from the Ministry as to what steps had been taken by them to strengthen scientific research in the area of environmental sciences in the country. In response, the Ministry provided the details of (i) Centres of Excellence (CoE) Scheme and (ii) Research & Development (R&D) Scheme for Conservation and Development.

5.2 The Committee noted that major focus of the new scheme of R&D is Promotion of Research & Development in various facets of ecology and environment for the conservation and protection of environment and natural resources of the country. The Budget allocation and actual expenditure for R&D Scheme for Conservation and Development during the last 3 years is as under:

**(₹ in Crore)**



<b>Year</b>	<b>Budget Allocation</b>	<b>Actual Expenditure</b>
2018-19	9.70	1.58 (16.3%)
2019-20	10.00	3.58 (35.8%)
2020-21 (as on 14.01.2021)	7.50	1.76 (23.5%)

**5.3 The Committee is dismayed to note that during the last three years, the actual expenditure under ‘R&D Scheme for Conservation and Development’ has been only 16.3%, 35.8% and 23.5%, respectively, of the allocated amount. Under utilisation of the funds raises doubts about the achievements of the physical targets set under various programmes under the scheme too. Facilitating research and development and investing for the same are extremely critical. The Committee had dwelt upon this issue in its 331<sup>st</sup> Report on Demands for Grants 2020-21 of the Ministry too. However, the situation still remains the same. The Committee would like to reiterate its earlier recommendation and urge the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to introspect on the poor usage of funds allocated to Research and Development, and take appropriate measures to correct this immediately.**

## **6. Man-Animal Conflict**

6.1 During the meeting, a number of Members of the Committee pointed out instances of man-animal conflict which resulted in killing of people by the animals, especially monkeys. Instances of monkey menace such as loss of life and damage to the crops were unequivocally referred to by many Members. Members also pointed out that there were many instances of human-wildlife conflict in their respective states across the country.

6.2 Responding to the issues raised in this regard, the Director General (Forests) & Special Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate

Change accepted that on account of the steps taken to improve the number of wildlife and the conservation programmes, the number of wildlife, including monkeys, has increased substantially. He also informed that the Ministry had recently issued an advisory to the State Governments on the steps to be undertaken to minimise the instances of man's conflict with wildlife.

**6.3 The Committee is of the view that the cases of man-animal conflict are rising and it still remains an area of concern. There is an urgent need to minimise the instances of man-animal conflict resulting in both loss of human and animal life.**

## **7. Monitoring of Plantation activities**

7.1 During the meeting, a large number of Members of the Committee also drew attention to afforestation drives being undertaken to increase the number of plants/trees in the country. However, the mortality rate of the plants planted during such drives was quite high and there was no mechanism available to keep track of the survival, or otherwise, of these plants. The Committee also expressed concern that although huge amount of money was being spent on such exercises, yet there was no mechanism to check either the credibility of the claims made by forest officers for having planted a given number of plants at a site and the number of plants which had survived after a certain period of time. Another matter of concern, the Committee felt, was the feeling of trees in the forests, which in long run, will have depletion therein.

7.2 The Committee observes that in its 331<sup>st</sup> Report on Demands for Grants 2020-21 of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change also, the Committee had raised the issue of plantation of a large number of plants and also expressed apprehension of money being siphoned off in such cases. The Committee had also called for the audit of the plantation activities. Although the Ministry had provided the details of the mechanism available for monitoring the

implementation of the works undertaken under such schemes, the apprehension expressed by the Committee cannot be ruled out.

**7.3 The Committee observes that a year has gone by and the Committee is still apprehensive on the matter of misappropriation in plantation drives. The Committee recommends that the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change should allay the concerns on this front in a transparent manner through audits that can be accessed easily by both public representatives and civil society.**

7.4 The Committee observes that in its 331<sup>st</sup> Report on Demands for Grants 2020-21 of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, and in its 339<sup>th</sup> Action Taken Report (ATR) by the Government on the Recommendations/Observations contained in the 331<sup>st</sup> Report, the Committee, had raised the issue on the utilisation of CAMPA fund and enhancing synergy amongst its different schemes and programmes related to improvement/expansion of forest and tree cover. The Ministry promised to report progress on this issue through Supplementary ATR within three months from submission of the Action Taken Note, dated 14.07.2020. Further, the Committee is constrained to point out that the Committee presented the 339<sup>th</sup> ATR Report to Hon'ble Chairman, Rajya Sabha on 30.10.2020. Yet, the supplementary ATR has not been forthcoming from the Ministry.

**7.5 The Committee expresses its deep concern and dismay that the Supplementary ATR on the above issue of CAMPA fund has not been submitted by the Ministry to the Committee much beyond the promised timeline. The Committee expects the Ministry to furnish the Supplementary ATR within the next two weeks.**

**7.6 The Committee also expresses its anguish on the issue of non-cooperative and unresponsive behaviour of the officials dealing with environmental matters towards the public representatives. Such attitude not only puts hurdles in the discharge of their constitutional obligations but also in their accountability to the people. The Committee recommends that the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, being the nodal central Ministry dealing with these matters, must impress upon the State Governments as well as their own officers to sensitise all the concerned authorities to accord due courtesy to the public representatives, attend to their grievances, respond to their communications and make available the information sought by them.**

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