



Government of Goa
Office of Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
Forest Department
Goa Van Bhawan, Old IPHB Complex;
Altinho, Panaji Goa - 403 001



No.5-43(Meeting of Tree Authority)-2021-22-Vol.1-FD/5915

Date:- 07-03-2022


To,
The Dy. Conservator of Forests,
North / South Goa Division,
Ponda / Margao - Goa

Sub: Minutes of the joint meeting of the Tree Authorities of North & South Goa Districts held on 1st March, 2022 at 11.00 am. in the Conference Hall, Secretariat, Porvorim-Goa.

Sir,

Please find enclosed herewith the Minutes of the joint meeting of the Tree Authorities of North & South Goa Districts held under the Chairmanship of Shri. Puneet Kumar Goel, IAS, Chief Secretary/ Principal Secretary (Forests) on 1st March, 2022 at 11.00 a.m. for further necessary action.

Yours faithfully,


Jiss K. Varkey, IFS
Dy. Conservator of Forests
Planning & Statistics

Encl: As above

Copy to:-

1. The Hon'ble Mayor, Corporation of the City of PanajiMember
2. The Adhyaksha, North Goa Zilla Panchayat, PanajiMember
3. The Adhyaksha, South Goa Zilla Panchayat, MargaoMember
4. The Chairperson, Margao Municipal CouncilMember
5. The Collector, North Goa DistrictMember
6. The Collector, South Goa DistrictMember
7. The President, Botanical Society of Goa.....Co-opted Member
8. The President, Mangrove Society of India, Goa Chapter, 48, Nirmitti Sagar Society, Dona Paula Goa.....Co-opted Member
9. Dr. Pradip Sarmokadam, Member Secretary, Goa State Biodiversity Board, Saligao, Bardez Goa.....Co-opted Member
10. The PS to Chief Secretary, Secretariat, Porvorim - Goa.
11. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Altinho, Panaji - Goa.
12. The Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Altinho, Panaji - Goa.
13. The Chief Conservator of Forests (Admin) Altinho, Panaji - Goa.
14. The Conservator of Forests (Conservation), Altinho, Panaji - Goa.
15. The Dy. Conservator of Forests, Headquarters, Altinho, Panaji - Goa
16. The Asst. Conservator of Forests, Legal Cell, Altinho Panaji Goa

Minutes of the joint meeting of the Tree Authorities of North & South Goa Districts held under the Chairmanship of Shri. Puneet Kumar Goel, IAS Chief Secretary/ Principal Secretary (Forests) on 01st March, 2022 at 11:00 AM in the Conference Hall, Secretariat, Porvorim-Goa

The list of participants is at Annexure.

At the onset, Chairman welcomed members of the Tree Authorities of North & South Goa Districts, including the new co-opted members present during the meeting. The President, Botanical Society of Goa, The President, Mangrove Society of India, Goa Chapter & Dr. Pradip Sarmokadam, Member Secretary, Goa State Biodiversity Board are the co-opted members as approved by Government of Goa.

The Chairman asked PCCF to brief the agenda points including action taken on the directions of the Hon'ble High Court of Bombay at Goa Judgement dated 8th July, 2021 in case of PIL Writ Petition. No. 08/2021 (Living Heritage Foundation Vs State of Goa & others).

Agenda No. 01: To apprise the Tree Authority on the Status of Goa's Forest & Tree Cover as per the India's State Forest Report, 2021

Status of Forest Cover, Tree Cover, Mangrove Cover and Growing Stock of Goa's Forests as per the India's State of Forest Report, 2021 published by Forest Survey of India, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India was appraised to the Tree Authorities. While appreciating the increase in Forest Cover, Mangrove Cover & Growing Stock, Chairman suggested the Forest Department to analyze the reasons for reduction in tree cover as per the FSI report and suggest measures to minimize such reductions and to increase the tree cover.

Agenda No. 02: To apprise the Tree Authority regarding the follow-up actions on the Judgement of Hon’ble High Court dated 08/07/2021

PCCF briefed the committee about the action being taken on the various directions of the Hon’ble Court and informed that compliance reports, as per direction of Hon’ble Court, have been filed by the Chairman and concerned Member Secretaries of the two Tree Authorities within stipulated timelines.

Following points were discussed and decisions taken:

SN	Direction of Hon’ble High Court	Discussion held and decision taken
1	The Tree Authority are directed to meet at least once in every three months as mandated by Section 4(1) of GPTA, 1984.	The Tree Authority was apprised that the direction of Hon’ble Court is being complied. The Chairman directed concerned member secretaries to strictly ensure that at least one meeting of Tree Authorities is convened in one quarter (Three month).
2	The Tree authorities are directed to consider the Co-option of up to 3 representatives of Non-Official Organization’s having knowledge or practical experience in the preservation of trees.	Direction of Hon’ble Court has been complied with. Following three Non-Official Organization’s have been co-opted by the Tree Authorities of North & South Goa Districts after obtaining necessary approval from the Government of Goa. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="863 1711 1430 1809">i. The President, Botanical Society of Goa. <li data-bbox="863 1832 1430 1930">ii. The President, Mangrove Society of India, Goa Chapter.

		iii. Dr. Pradip Sarmokadam, Member Secretary, Goa State Biodiversity Board.
3	<p>The Tree Authorities, consistent with the provisions of Section 7(b) of the Trees Act, are directed to carry out a census of the existing trees and obtaining, whenever considered necessary, declarations from all the owners or occupants about the number of trees in their lands. The Tree Authorities to consider using modern technology such as RFID and geo-tagging for this purpose. This exercise to cover areas comprising the entire State of Goa except for Government forests under the control of the Forest Department, a forest or forest land notified under the Indian Forest Act, 1927 having regard to the provisions of Section 30 of the Trees Act. This exercise is to be completed within a maximum period of one year from today i.e 27/07/2021</p>	<p>The Authorities were informed that after perusal of the compliance report filed by Tree Authorities, Hon'ble HC is of the view that, since to conduct Tree Census is specifically mentioned in the Act, therefore it cannot be said that tree census cannot be done due to any reasons including technical/ volume of work etc. and have asked the tree Authorities to indicate their plan to initiate Tree Census in Goa. Hon'ble court also opined that as per requirement, an additional Affidavit on the matter may also be filed by the Tree Authority.</p> <p>PCCF further informed that Ld. AG during meeting on 22nd Feb, 2022 have also advised to take the necessary steps in order to ensure compliance with the said direction in case not complied the Tree Authority is in contempt of the said Judgment and Order dated 08/07/2021. The last hearing was held on 23/02/2022 in which the Hon'ble High Court had asked the Appellant to prepare a chart on</p>

	<p>the issue of compliance based on the written response filed on behalf of the Respondent. The next date of hearing is 08/03/2022.</p> <p>The committee was informed that, in no state, tree census exercise covering the entire state is being carried out. However, in some states, trees census has been attempted but only for a limited area mostly restricted to Urban/ Municipal area of a particular district.</p> <p>Committee was apprised that Forest Department is consulting /referring to State Governments/Institutions to collect information related to Tree Census carried out within their respective jurisdiction. To mention, State Governments officials of Karnataka, Maharashtra and Gujarat have been contacted. It is learnt that Tree Census is being attempted/carried out within selected Municipal Corporation Limits – Thane Municipal Corporation (TMC), Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC), Ahmadabad Municipal Corporation (AMC), Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagar Palike (BBMP). Details in respect of</p>
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	<p>TMC have been obtained. Broadly it is observed that the Tree Census work is highly technical in nature and requires professional workmanship in the field of IT, Plant Taxonomy, Survey etc. Committee was further apprised that the Tree Census work is being carried out by respective Municipal Corporations in the states by out sourcing the work.</p> <p>Committee also considered unique favorable situation in Goa as the State falls in high rainfall zone with favorable climatic conditions, which facilitate quick growth of forest like vegetation. For the purpose of tree census, all the vegetation which falls in above category has to be included. The growth of the tree is a continuous process and in case census of such category is also done, which of course will be significantly large in number, it will be very challenging and complex task to create, maintain and update the tree census record over a period of time.</p> <p>While considering all aspects including technical nature and magnitude of work involved for carrying out Tree Census in</p>
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	<p>approximately 2,500 Sq. Km area in Goa, Authorities also noted that tree census is being attempted/ carried out by some Municipal Corporation in Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Karnataka state. Tree Authorities felt that, since as per Goa (Preservation of Trees) Act 1984 it is one of the duties of Tree Authority to carry out census of existing trees therefore, necessary feasible action has to be taken to carry out tree census in Goa. Tree Authorities were of the view that the process of Tree Census may be initiated in Goa and to begin with first tree census may be carried out in City Corporation of Panjim area (CCP) and Margao Municipal Council (MMC). Considering technical nature of work, the tree census work may be carried out by Forest Department.</p> <p>Tree Authorities asked Forest Department to prepare a suitable plan indicating procedure, man power requirement, specific timeline etc, considering all relevant factors, for Tree Census in Panjim and Margao Municipal area.</p>
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4	The Tree Authorities, consistent with the provisions of Section 7(c) of the Trees Act must specify standards regarding the number and kind of trees which each locality, type of land, and premises shall have and which shall be planted subject to a minimum of five trees per hectare in the case of rural areas.	The committee constituted vide Order dated 12/10/2021 has submitted an interim report. The Chairman of the Committee made a presentation on the interim report before the Tree Authorities. Following points were discussed / decision taken;
5	The Tree Authorities, consistent with the provisions of 50 PIL WP NO.8-2021 Section 7(g) of the Trees Act must take appropriate measures for planting and maintaining such number of trees as may be considered necessary according to the prescribed standards on roads, in public parks, and gardens and on the banks of rivers or lakes or seashores	<p>a. The Chairman directed the Tree Officers to ensure the replanting of trees as per the list of species suggested by the Committee in its Interim Report.</p> <p>b. Authorities observed that the recommendations of the technical committee in the interim report are generic in nature. Authority was of the view that it is desirable that technical committee may furnish specific recommendations specifying standards regarding number and kind of trees which each locality (to mention roads, public parks, garden, banks of river, lakes, sea shores, farm land etc), type of land and premises should have included list of trees. Accordingly, Committee may submit final report including</p>

		<p>above mentioned specific information by 30th April, 2022 so as to ensure that all concerned are benefited in the ensuing monsoon season.</p>
6	<p>The Tree Authorities, consistent with the provisions of Section 7(e) of the Trees Act must take appropriate measures for planting and transplanting of trees necessitated by the construction of buildings, new roads or widening of existing roads, or replacement of trees which have failed to come up along roads or for safeguarding danger to life and property.</p>	<p>DCF, South informed about the Transplantation of trees is being followed in the State of Karnataka by Bangalore Municipal Corporation. Chairman asked DCF, South to obtain guidelines on transplantation of trees and make a presentation on the scope of such transplantation in Goa in next Tree Authority Meeting for further consideration.</p> <p>Chairman further advised that, recent directions being issued by Government of India in this regard may also be referred for appropriate action.</p> <p>PCCF informed the Authorities that as per the recent communication received from Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH), Government of India is formulating the Tree Transplantation Policy as well as techniques for successful transplantation of the Trees. Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change</p>

	<p>(MoEF&CC) has submitted certain observations on this proposal that;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="821 324 1434 616">i. Data obtained is not consistent to draw any conclusion for recommending tree translocation as a matter of rule in infrastructure projects.<li data-bbox="821 638 1434 817">ii. Varying survival rates and growth of transplanted trees have been observed particularly after 1-2 years.<li data-bbox="821 840 1434 996">iii. State Forest Departments are not equipped to carry out tree transplantation<li data-bbox="821 1019 1434 1198">iv. Tree transplanting using hi-tech machines is relatively new to the country.<li data-bbox="821 1220 1434 1310">v. Globally, it has been tried in cold countries using temperate species.<li data-bbox="821 1332 1434 1624">vi. Global experience of transplanting tropical or sub-tropical trees suited to different agro-climate conditions prevalent in our country is too limited.<li data-bbox="821 1646 1434 1937">vii. MoEF&CC is of the view that tree translocation in India is an evolving technique which can be taken up on experimental scale by running pilots for selected species and girth classes
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		<p>in different agro-climatic zones of the country.</p> <p>In view of above, MoRTH vide the D.O letter dated 18/02/2022 informed that since the proposal to finalize the Tree Transplantation Policy may take some time, State Government may not insist on 80-100% tree transplantation as a matter of rule for considering the forest clearance of the National Highway projects.</p>
7	<p>The Tree Authorities, consistent with the provisions of Section 7 (i) of the Trees Act to undertake a critical study of the proposals of various Government Departments and private bodies for construction of buildings, roads, factories, irrigation works, laying out of electric, telephone, telegraphic and other transmission lines with regard to the protection of existing trees and planting of more trees, wherever possible.</p>	<p>Authorities were apprised that, as per the direction of Tree Authority, all project proposals involving felling of more than 500 trees will be routed through the Tree Authorities before making recommendation to the Government.</p> <p>No such proposal was received since the last meeting of Tree Authority held in September, 2021.</p>
8	<p>The Tree Authorities are hereby directed to comply with the obligations cast upon them by Section 4 of the Right to Information</p>	<p>The Tree Authority was apprised that the direction of Hon'ble Court is being complied.</p>

	<p>Act, 2005 and to upload the information prescribed in the said Section on the website of the Forest Department and even otherwise make available such information in the public domain by other suitable means. The minutes of the meetings of the Tree Authorities and the decisions reflected therein must also be invariably uploaded on such websites and made available in the public domain.</p>	
9	<p>The Tree Officers appointed under the Trees Act must dispose of the applications for felling of trees within 60 days as stipulated in Section 9(3) of the Trees Act by giving reasons for the grant or refusal of such permissions. Such decisions must be uploaded by the Tree Officers on the website of the Forest Department and the Tree Officers must consider, making such decisions effective at least 30 days from the date of such publication/uploading on the website.</p>	<p>The Tree Authority was apprised that the direction of Hon'ble Court is being complied.</p>
10	<p>The Tree Officers should, unless the</p>	<p>The Tree Authority was apprised that the</p>

	Proviso to Section 10 of the Trees Act is being invoked, specify in the order granting permissions to fell trees the details of the kind of and location at which, trees are to be planted/replanted. This is in terms of Section 10 of the Trees Act.	direction of Hon'ble Court is being complied.
11	The State Government is now directed to constitute the "Tree Protection Fund" as mandated by Section 35-A of the Trees Act within a maximum period of six months from today	The 'Tree Protection Fund' has been constituted with the approval of Government of Goa. The Chairman directed Member Secretaries to deposit the forfeited Security Deposits under the provisions of Goa Preservation of Tree Act, 1984 to the 'Tree Protection Fund' as per rules / guidelines in this regard.

The meeting ended with vote of thanks to the Chair.



(Jiss K Varkey, IFS)

Deputy Conservator of Forests
(Planning & Statistics)

File No. 5-43-GEN-2021-22-FD/5913

Date: 07.03.2022

Encl: List of participants.

Copy to: -

1. The Hon'ble Mayor, Corporation of the City of Panaji, Panaji, Goa.
2. The Adhyaksha, North Goa Zilla Panchayat, Panaji.
3. The Adhyaksha, South Goa Zilla Panchayat, Margao.
4. The Chairperson, Margao Municipal Council, Margao.
5. The Collector, North Goa District-Goa.
6. The Collector, South Goa District- South Goa.
7. The President, Botanical Society of Goa.
8. The President, Mangrove Society of India, Goa Chapter.

9. Dr. Pradip Sarmokadam, Member Secretary, Goa State Biodiversity Board.
10. The PS to the Chief Secretary, Secretariat, Porvorim-Goa for kind information of Chief Secretary.
11. The Commissioner, Corporation of the City of Panaji, Panaji-Goa
12. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Altinho, Panaji-Goa.
13. The Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Altinho, Panaji-Goa.
14. The Chief Conservator of Forests (Administration), Altinho, Panaji-Goa
15. The Conservator of Forests (Conservation), Altinho, Panaji-Goa.
16. The Dy. Conservator of Forests, North Goa/South Goa (Member Secretaries)
17. The Dy. Conservator of Forests (All)
18. Guard file.

Annexure

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS WHO ATTENDED THE JOINT MEETING OF THE
TREE AUTHORITIES OF NORTH & SOUTH GOA DISTRICTS SCHEDULED
ON 01st MARCH, 2022 AT 11.00 A.M. IN THE CONFERENCE HALL,
SECRETARIAT, PORVORIM – GOA.**

Chairman

- 1 Shri. Puneet Kumar Goel, IAS Chief Secretary/ Principal Secretary (Forests)

Members

- 2 Shri. Rohit Joe Monserrate Hon'ble Mayor, Corporation of the City of Panaji
- 3 Shri. Kartik Kudnekar Adhyaksha, North Goa Zilla Panchayat, Panaji
- 4 Shri. Ajit Roy, IAS Collector, North Goa District
- 5 Ms. Ruchika Katyal, IAS Collector, South Goa District
- 6 Dr. Vinod K. Dhargalkar Secretary, Mangrove Society of India
- 7 Dr. Pradip Sarmokadam Member Secretary, Goa State Biodiversity Board
- 8 Prem Kumar R, IFS Dy. Conservator of Forests, South Goa Division
(Member Secretary)
- 9 Shri. Santosh Fadte, DCF Dy. Conservator of Forests, North Goa Division
(Member Secretary)

Special invitees

- 10 Shri. Santosh Kumar, IFS Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
- 11 Shri. Saurabh Kumar, IFS Chief Conservator of Forests (Admn.)
- 12 Dr. S Dinesh Kannan, IFS Conservator of Forests (Conservation)
- 13 Shri. Jiss K. Varkey, IFS Dy. Conservator of Forests, P&S
- 14 Shri. Anand Jadhav Dy. Conservator of Forests, HQ
- 15 Shri. Amar Heblekar Asst. Conservator of Forests, Legal Cell