

**MINUTES OF 2nd MEETING OF THE REVIEW COMMITTEE TO REVIEW
THE PRIVATE FOREST AREAS IDENTIFIED BY STATE LEVEL EXPERT
COMMITTEE (THOMAS AND ARAUJO COMMITTEE) ON PRIVATE
FOREST HELD ON 03.02.2020**

A meeting of the Review Committee appointed by the Government of Goa vide Notification No. DCF (WP)/Pvt. For/16(THC)/2013(WZ)/19-20 dated 21/01/2020 to review the provisionally identified Private Forest areas by Thomas & Araujo Committee, was held on 03.02.2020 at 5 pm in the chamber of Conservator of Forests (Conservation), Junta House, Panaji Goa under the chairmanship of Conservator of Forests (Conservation), Panaji Goa.

Following attended the meeting:

1	Additional Collector, North Goa District	Member
2	Additional Collector, South Goa District	Member
3	Head Surveyor North and Supervisor North, Representative of Director, Settlement and Land Records	Member
4	Asst. Director, Representative Director of Agriculture	Member
5	Asst. Conservator of Forests, Headquarters, North Goa Division	Member
6	Asst. Conservator of Forests, Headquarters, South Goa Division	Member
7	Dy. Conservator of Forests, Working Plan Division, Ponda.	Member Secretary

Agenda item No. 1:- Member Secretary of the committee Dy. Conservator of Forests, Working Plan Division, Ponda introduced the private forest concept and overview of the work to be carried by the committee. The present Review Committee has to review the provisional private forest areas identified by

Thomas and Araujo committee following the basic three Criteria for inclusion of any land in Goa as private Forest, which are as follows:

- i) 75% of the tree composition of such lands should be of Forestry species.
- ii) The area should be either contiguous to the Government Forest lands or if in isolation, the minimum area identified should 5 ha., and
- iii) Canopy density should not be less than 0.4.

Agenda item No. 2:- Member Secretary briefed the methodology adopted by earlier review committee for reviewing the Sawant and Karapurkar committee identified private forest areas. As discussed in the previous meeting that the methodology can be improved using high quality forest cover map, detailed discussion regarding this was held and it was opined to use the high resolution satellite image/classified map/ forest cover map (FCM) for verification of second and third criteria of private forest. The chairman briefed that a letter in this regard has already been written to the Director General, Forest survey of India.

Upon receipt of the same the digitized private forest survey numbers will be overlaid on the FCM and will be interpreted as well as verified on field for the first criteria of private forest. Accordingly, after considering FCM interpretation for canopy density, field verification data for species composition, representations/objections from land owners and other required records the extent of private forest will be decided.

(Action Taken: Member Secretary DCF (Working Plan))

Agenda item No. 3:- Time frame to complete the task assigned: After detailed discussion it was opined that the time required for completion of work will be at least one year (excluding monsoon season) from the date high resolution forest cover data is received from FSI.

Agenda item No. 4:- Following important observations were made by the committee members:

1. Additional Collector, South raised the point on the stand taken by Forest Department on the applications of change of land use from agriculture to non-agriculture in the properties falling under the provisional list of survey numbers identified by State Level Expert Committee for North and South Goa Division (Thomas and Araujo Committee). Chairperson assured that the matter will be placed before the head of the Department and action will be taken accordingly.

(Action Taken: Member Secretary DCF (Working Plan))

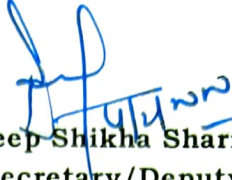
2. Head surveyor DSLR, representative of the Director, DSLR raised the concern about the notices to be issued to the land owners for filing their representations and objections. Member secretary briefed that as per the methodology approved by all committee members, the notices will be published twice in local newspaper.

For the first time the full list of all survey numbers identified by State Level Expert Committee for North and South Goa Division (Thomas and Araujo Committee) will be published in the local newspaper, inviting representations/ objections of the land owners along with contact details and ownership documents within three months of the date of publication. Also local governing bodies of the concerned area will be informed and the same notice will also be displayed on notice boards in Range offices and Mamlatdar offices. The same procedure will be followed second time before commencement of actual field verification and survey work. The land owners, if dissatisfied can again file the objection within 15 days of field verification by the teams of concerned territorial division.

Agenda item No. 5: It was decided to seek guidance from the Government as and when, difficulty arises. The new draft methodology was approved and

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signed by all committee members (copy of new draft methodology is placed at **Annexure I**). The same will be submitted to the Government for approval.

Meeting ended with a vote of thanks.


Deep Shikha Sharma IFS
Member Secretary/Deputy Conservator
of Forests (Working Plan), Ponda

No. MS/REV-PF/DCF/WP/2019-20/872

Dated:- 04.02.2020

To

- 1 Conservator of Forests, Conservation, Junta House, Panajim
- 2 Director, Settlement & Land Records, Panaji
- 3 Director Agriculture
- 4 ~~Asst~~ Conservator of Forests Head Quarter, North Ponda
- 5 ~~Asst~~ Conservator of Forests Head Quarter, South Margao.
- 8 Additional Collector, Revenue Department, Margao South
- 9 Additional Collector, Revenue Department, Panaji North
- 10 Legal Cell, Forest Department, Panaji.
- ✓ 11 Office copy.
12. DCF (HQ) Panaji

Methodology to be adopted by the Review Committee w.r.to private forest identified by Thomas and Araujo (In case FSI provides high quality forest cover map)

The criteria for inclusion of any land in Goa as Private Forest is as follows:

- (i) 75% of the tree Composition of such lands should be of Forestry species;
- (ii) The area should be either contiguous to the Government Forest lands or if in isolation, the minimum area identified should be 5 ha; and
- (iii) Canopy density should not be less than 0.4.

Thomas and Araujo Committees identified Private Forests primarily on ocular basis in North and South Goa Forest Divisions respectively without demarcating on ground.

Initially, for inviting objections/representations of the land owners, whose land has been identified provisionally as Private Forest by Thomas and Araujo Committees, advertisement will be published in the local newspaper, wherein correspondence address and contact details along with ownership documents will also be sought within three months of the date of publication in the newspaper. Similarly local governing bodies of the concerned area will be informed and same notice will also be displayed on notice board in Range office and Mamlatdar office.

In order to achieve the mandate, the Review Committee will adopt the following methodology:-

- (i) **Digitization of Private Forest Data:** - The first step will be to digitize the survey numbers referred by Thomas and Araujo Committees using DSLR/TCP record. Survey numbers included in Sawant and Karapurkar committees will be excluded as a different committee has already reviewed those survey nos.
- (ii) **Superimposing on Forest Cover Map/ Classified image:**-Second step will be to superimpose the digitized maps of Private Forest areas on the high quality Forest cover map prepared by FSI showing the boundary of Forest cover with 40% canopy density.
- (iii) **Image interpretation:**-The third step will be to carry out data interpretation of the superimposed private forest area referred by Thomas and Araujo

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Committees. Second criteria will be analysed here and accordingly KML file alongwith GPS locations of Survey numbers/patches fulfilling second and third criteria will be prepared and sent to two Divisions for verification of first criteria.

- (iv) **Ground verification:-** Since out of the three criteria of Private Forests in Goa, the first criteria i.e.; 75 % of the tree Composition should be forestry species composition, which cannot be ascertained by using Forest Cover Map/ Classified image, so ground verification will be carried out during which concerned land owner will be invited, for which separate advertisement of commencement of field verification will be published in local newspaper. During inspection photograph of site under verification and signature of the land owner will be taken on field data sheet/verification report. In case of refusal by the owner this will be suitably mentioned in the verification report and he/she can file objection within 15 days of site verification by the team of concerned territorial division.
- (v) Divisions/Ranges will carry out enumeration of forestry and non-forestry species in each patch.
 - a. The Superintendent of Police, North Goa and South Goa shall provide, subject to advance intimation by the Member Secretary of the committee in this regard, the necessary protection to the survey team during ground verification and survey.
 - b. Survey team will be empowered to enter into any private property for ground verification and survey work.
- (vi) If a survey number/patch is identified as Forest in Thomas and Araujo Committee Reports but not from above analysis, concerned Division will be asked to check for any records/evidence of tree felling offence case/ court case on concerned patch besides checking the area on google time series data. Accordingly decision on inclusion or exclusion of concerned patch will be taken.
- (vii) Based upon the Forest Cover Map/ Classified image interpretation as well as ground verification report and survey and disposing off objections received, the

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Review Committee will identify the Private Forests areas fulfilling all three criteria of Private Forest, within the survey numbers referred by Thomas and Araujo Committees.

- (viii) Time required for completion of work will be at least one year (excluding monsoon season) from the date high resolution forest cover data is received from FSI.
- (ix) Review Committee may seek guidance from the Government as and when, difficulty arises.

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