

**F.No. 8-60/2020 WL (Part-1)
Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate
Change Wildlife Division**

**1st Floor, Agni Wing,
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bagh Road, Aliganj,
New Delhi – 110003.
Date: 6th February, 2021**

**To
Chief Wild Life Warden
All State/UTs**

Sir/Madam,

Sub: Advisory to deal with Human Wildlife Conflicts – reg.

The Standing Committee of the National Board for Wild Life has recommended an Advisory to deal with the Human Wildlife Conflicts in the 60th meeting held on 5th January, 2021.

The Advisory to deal with the Human Wildlife Conflicts is enclosed herewith for information and necessary action.

Yours faithfully,

Enclosure: As above

Rakesh Kumar Jagenia,
Deputy inspector General of Forests (Wildlife)
Email: digwl-mefcc@gov.in

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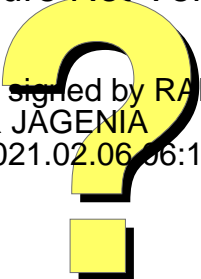
1. The Principal Secretary (Forest), All States/UTs
2. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Head of Forest Force. All States/UTs

Copy also to

1. Sr. PPS to DGF & SS/PSO to ADGF (WL)/PPS to IGF (WL)/PS to JD (WL)

Signature Not Verified

Digitally signed by RAKESH
KUMAR JAGENIA
Date: 2021.02.06 06:17:15 IST



F. No. 8-60/2020 WL

Government of India

Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change

(Wildlife Division)

New Delhi, Dated 6th February, 2021

Background

As per the Constitution of India, it is the duty of every citizen to protect wildlife. The Government is fully committed to protection of wildlife and has put in place institutional and organizational measures to strengthen the protection regime. Yet, incidences of negative interaction have been reported from time to time where wild animals including large mammals such as Nilgai (blue–bull), wild pig, elephant, tiger, leopard, bear etc. that are protected under the schedules of Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972, are involved. Human wildlife negative interaction many a time results in death/injury/permanent incapacitation of human beings/domestic animals/livestock due to attack by wild animals or loss of crops and property.

Therefore, the need for a separate advisory in this regard. The advisory has been recommended by the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wild Life in its 60th meeting held on 5.1.2021 as per Section 5C(2)(a) of the Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972.

The Advisory

Preamble

Recognising that the factors leading to Human Wildlife Conflict and associated death/injury to humans lives and or crops/scheduled animals, and their remedial measures often concern several departments of the State Governments/ UT Administration, this Advisory seeks expedited inter-departmental coordinated and effective action by State Governments/ UT Administrations on preventing and dealing with Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC) and associated death/injury/permanent incapacitation of human beings/domestic animals/livestock due to attack by wild animals or loss of crops and property and also accidental deaths of wild animals listed in Schedule I to IV of Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972..

Objectives

The following objectives are sought to be achieved:

- i. Improvement in wildlife habitat of such wild animals under Schedule I to IV of Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972 (hereinafter referred to as wild animals) that are commonly involved in HWC by leveraging resources from different departments of the government, so as to provide adequate food and water inside forests and minimise venturing of those wild animals outside forests;
- ii. Ensuring safe passage of wild animals along their scientifically-identified movement routes or corridors outside forests, including improvement of habitat conditions in and along those routes;

- iii. Creation of locally suitable biological barriers on and along the forest-fringe farms, including alteration of crop patterns, under schemes of different departments to deter wild animals from raiding private farms/ villages;
- iv. Ensuring adequate and timely payment of ex-gratia to the persons affected by HWC; and
- v. Creating an intelligent and effective system based on local intelligence and people's participation for preventing wildlife crimes, including killings of wild animals outside forests and trade/ consumption of animal parts, and prosecution of offenders.

Measures

In order to prevent and manage Human Wildlife Conflict, and mitigate the risks and adverse impacts associated with it, including killing of wild animals, the States/UTs should adopt the following measures:

A. MANAGEMENT MEASURES:

1. Inter-departmental Coordination Committees:

Prevention and management of HWC and associated death/ killing of wild animals concerns several government departments, and, therefore, close coordination is required for timely and adequate action. Coordination committees at the State/ UT and district levels should be constituted as follows within three months of issue of this Advisory:

- a. *Co-ordination committee at the State/UTs level (SLCC):*
 - i. State Governments/ UT Administrations of the affected States/ UTs should constitute a State Co-ordination Committee (SLCC) headed by the Chief Secretary with membership of Secretary in-charge of finance, natural resources, infrastructure, home and forest departments of State/ UT, Director General of Police, PCCF-HoFF and representatives of concerned Central Government departments (Railways, Revenue Intelligence, Customs, etc.). The Chief Wild Life Warden is to act as the member secretary of this committee.
 - ii. The committee would meet as many times as necessary, but no later than six months of the previous meeting.
 - iii. Functions of the SLCC:
 - In furtherance of the objectives of this Advisory, review the required infrastructure, manpower and monitoring systems in the State/ UT, and take necessary measures to strengthen the same;
 - Monitor the number of HWC cases and their geographical spread, and provide guidance/ instructions to different departments for action to be taken by each one of them in order to minimise/ prevent HWC in those areas;
 - Review the quantum of ex-gratia relief, issue guidance/ instructions for expedited payments, and work towards providing adequate funds for the same;

- Review the cases of revenge killings of wild animals and other wildlife related crime, and issue necessary guidance/ instructions to the concerned departments/ agencies as appropriate; and
 - Recommend to State Wildlife Board and / or the Government, policy and programmatic measures, including for capacity building, required for fulfilling the objectives of this Advisory.
- b. *District Co-ordination Committee (DLCC):*
- i. On the recommendation of Chief Wild Life Warden (CWLW), the State Government/ UT Administration should constitute an inter-departmental coordination committee in all or identified district(s) of the State/ UT that are vulnerable to HWC to be chaired by District Collector, and comprising of district-level officers of departments/ organisations included in the SLCC. The Wild Life Warden of the District headquarter is to act as Member Secretary.
 - ii. The Committee may also include an Honorary Wild Life Warden residing in the district and up to two non-official expert members on the recommendation of the Member Secretary.
 - iii. The Committee may invite an official from any other department/ organisation or an expert from a reputed State/ national level institute as special or standing invitee to meetings of the Committee.
 - iv. The Committee should meet as often as required but no later than three months of the last meeting.
 - v. Functions of the DLCC:
 - The DLCC would ensure coordinated action by different departments of the government to prevent killing/ injuring/ illegal capturing of wild animals by snaring, use of explosives, poisoning, electrocution, etc. in areas outside forests, and if requested so by the Wild Life Warden, in forest areas also.
 - The DLCC would also ensure coordinated action by different Departments for expeditious payment of ex-gratia to persons affected by HWC.
 - The DLCC may seek assistance of Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) or other expert organisations in capacity building for intelligence gathering, investigation and prosecution for prevention and dealing with wildlife crime.

2. **Identification of Hotspots**

- i. The hotspots where human death/ injury or damage to property by wild animals is occurring on a regular basis or death/ injury to wild animals is being caused by use of explosives, snares, traps, poisoning, electrocution or by any other means, may be identified and record of the same should be continuously updated by the concerned Wild Life Warden. A State level inventory of such Hotspots will be maintained, updated and used for planning for reducing Human Wildlife Conflict. The inventory should preferably be hosted on a secure GIS-based MIS platform under the direct supervision of Chief Wild Life Warden, and nodes of the platform may be available to the Wild Life Wardens.
- ii. For the purpose of identification of hotspots, simple mobile-based applications may be developed/used to for collation of geo-referenced HWC data.

3. **Joint Patrolling of Hotspots:**

Whenever solicited by the Wild Life Warden (Divisional Forest Officer) assistance from departments like Police, Revenue, Electricity, Irrigation, PWD, local community representatives etc. shall be provided for joint patrolling and combing operations in and around the hotspot areas or any other area where such operation is deemed necessary.

4. **Adherence to Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and Guidelines**

The Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change, Govt. of India and authorities under it have been issuing SOPs and guidelines to deal with various aspects of HWC which have to be followed while dealing with HWC incidences.

5. **Establishment of Rapid Response Teams (RRT):**

- i. States should establish Rapid Response Teams (RRT) for quick action and management of conflict situations, especially in the hotspot areas. The RRTs should include trained staff with technical knowledge, be well equipped with materials as per local needs. The DLCC should facilitate the involvement and contribution of related departments in the district for establishment of RRTs. The Chief Wild Life Warden will make assessment of RRTs at regular intervals, including men and materials to be made available to RRTs, and take necessary steps for their timely procurement with the help of DLCC.
- ii. Depending up on the severity of HWC, States may establish dedicated circle wise Control Rooms with Public helpline/Toll **free hotline numbers** which could operate on a 24x7 basis.

6. **Provision of financial resources for HWC**

It is to underline that HWC, if not attended properly, may acquire serious proportions, endangering both human life/property and the wildlife. Therefore, each State Government shall endeavour to provide adequate budgetary resources for dealing with HWC, and in particular for Early Warning Systems (EWS), RRT, ex-gratia payment and awareness generation. Measures like establishment of Revolving Fund at the level of Divisional Forest Officer help in timely availability of financial resources for dealing with HWC and expedited payment of ex-gratia.

7. **People's participation in managing HWC**

Local people should be involved in dealing with HWC particularly in the hotspot areas, by formation of teams at village or a group of village level comprising of members of Joint Forest Management Committee (JFMC), Eco-development Committee (EDC), Watershed Committee (WC), etc. to ensure timely communication, coordination and immediate management of HWC. Basic equipment, communication tools and training should be provided to these teams. The State/ UT may also consider providing 'contingency funds' to JFMCs/ EDCs for dealing with contingent expenses in cases of emergency.

8. Dealing with Law and order situation in HWC cases

It is often seen that in HWC situations, dealing with a large number of people who quickly gather at one place to view wild animals or to prevent them from entering their farms/ habitation, becomes a challenging task that hampers safe passage of wild animals or rescue work. State Governments/ UT Administrations may review the situation devise administrative mechanisms to ensure efficient coordination and cooperation of the law enforcing agencies at such situations to ensure smooth handling of such situations.

9. Adoption of Early Warning Systems (EWS):

The States should endeavour to develop and establish Early Warning Systems (EWS) to manage HWC. This may include:

- i. Seismic waves/IOS Mobile Technology, infrared technology, temperature and movement sensors, in alerting the movement of large herbivores like elephants in and around most vulnerable villages;
- ii. Drones and other systems for tracking movement of wildlife herd in and around Hot-Spot areas such as radio/satellite collars.
- iii. Warning alerts to local leaders /officials/villagers through SMS or through FM Radio/community radio/local TV, etc.

10. Developing ecologically sustainable linear infrastructure:

The guidelines issued by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change on “Eco-friendly measures to mitigate impacts of linear infrastructure on wildlife” should be followed, and timely creation of Underpasses, overpasses, etc. that facilitate the movement of wildlife in a timely manner by the infrastructure agencies should be monitored and ensured at highest level.

11. Adoption of traditional/common management practices:

i. Creation of barriers:

Barriers that prevents easy movement of wildlife from forest area to human habitations may be considered in certain cases after thorough evaluation about their necessity and effectiveness. These could in the form of:

- Trenches (especially for Elephants)
- Solar-powered electric fences
- Rubble walls
- Other types of fences made from steel channels, rail, wire guide ropes, bars etc

ii. Promotion of appropriate agri-horticulture/ agroforestry around wildlife rich areas that repel wild animal:

It is well known that wild animals get attracted to palatable and nutritious crops grown on crop fields around forest areas. This leads to damage of crops and financial loss and hardship to the farmers who are often poor people from the tribal communities. The concerned departments should promote crops in these fringe areas

which are unpalatable to wild animals. Farming or agroforestry models may include cash crops like chillies, lemon grass, *khus* grass etc. suitably mixed with appropriate tree/ shrub species. A comprehensive long-term plan for alternate cropping should be prepared and implemented by the State Agriculture/ Horticulture department under different schemes in such vulnerable areas.

iii. Augmenting fodder and drinking water in forest areas:

Improving wildlife habitat by management of invasive species, augmenting fodder species and provisioning water for wild animals in lean periods is the key to minimizing HWC, and, therefore, this should be undertaken extensively. Desilting of existing water holes should also be taken on priority basis. All wildlife rich areas and wildlife corridors in and around the Hotspots should be treated on priority. The SLCC and DLCC should review the progress and facilitate mobilisation of necessary resources available in different departments/ organisations for this purpose.

iv Improvement of local livestock

Free ranging livestock becomes more vulnerable to killing by wild animals. The Animal Husbandry department should formulate and implement special plans for improved stall-fed farm animal stock and practices, especially in the Hotspot areas. This will also reduce grazing pressure on native wildlife habitats and improve local economy.

12. Dealing with Wildlife Crime:

- i. Each State/UT should establish a State-level forest and wildlife crime intelligence units/ cells to facilitate collection of information from locals and other informers regarding forest and wildlife crime, including with the help of the existing Police Intelligence network. The Cell should regularly coordinate with WCCB and other neighbouring states.
- ii. The States/UTs should develop a mechanism of rewarding informers for intelligence gathering regarding wildlife crimes. The States/UTs may also issue necessary guidelines/notifications as per the provisions contained in the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to reward persons who render assistance in detection of offences and apprehension and trial of the offenders, and may also consider establishing Secret Fund at the disposal of Wild Life authorities of the State/UT at the appropriate level on the lines of Secret Fund operated by the State Police Department.
- iii. DLCC should oversee that regular patrolling of vulnerable local markets and food joints is being organised and effective action is being taken against the offenders.
- iv. Capacity building of frontline staff for investigation, forensics and successful prosecution of wildlife cases should be organised at regular interval.
- v. Sensitization and awareness drives involving JFMCs/ EDCs/ WCs through print & visual media in local language should be organised regularly. The DLCC and SLCC may oversee that the Public Relation Dept of the Govt. remains actively involved.

13. Dealing with problem animals

Providing safe passage to the wild animals involved in HWC in human habitations should be the topmost priority, and local administration should ensure better crowd management. If everything else fails, capture and translocation using scientific methods may be resorted with the approval of Chief Wild Life Warden.

14. Involving Gram Panchayats:

Considering the role Gram Panchayats play in community development and conservation of natural resources, the State Chief Wild Life Wardens may utilise the Panchayati Raj Institutions and authorize the *Sarpanch* or any other representative of Gram Panchayat for dealing with problematic wild animals under Section 11(1) (b) of Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 .

B. FINANCIAL MEASURES:

1. Ex-gratia relief:

- i. SLCC should review the rate of *ex-gratia* relief at regular intervals with a view to ensure that it is effective both in providing necessary support to the victim and to prevent revengeful action by vulnerable/ affected population. The rates of adjoining States and that of Central Government under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes, whichever is higher, should guide the review.
- ii. A suitable portion of ex-gratia relief should be paid within 24 hours to the affected persons in the case of death and injury to persons.
- iii. SLCC and DLCC should regularly review that ex-gratia, including immediate relief within 24 hours, is being paid in a timely manner, and for this purpose necessary reports/ documents are being made available by police, revenue and medical authorities to the local Range Officer of Forests expeditiously on priority. State Governments may establish a robust procedure with specific timelines for this purpose. Revolving Fund may be established with local Divisional Forest officer for quick payment of ex-gratia and other expenses in dealing with HWC.

2. Crop Insurance:

The State/UT Governments may also utilise the *Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana* which provides add-on coverage. With a view to provide an add-on welfare to the farmers, the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has included insurance coverage for crop loss due to attack by wild animals, under the *Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana*. This insurance programme would help farmers as means of compensation for their crops that have been damaged due to wild animal attacks.

The Operational Guidelines of the *Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana* may kindly be seen at the following link:

https://pmfby.gov.in/pdf/Revised_Operational_Guidelines.pdf
