

## Minutes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of National Forest Right Act Committee

The 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the National FRA Committee as a joint committee of Ministry of Environment & Forests and Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MOTA) constituted by Government of India Ministry of Environment & Forests Notification No.12-1/2006-FP dated 16.04.2010, was held on 7<sup>th</sup> **June 2010** at Van Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

The following members attended the meeting.

- I. Dr. N. C. Saxena, Chairman
- II. Dr. Devendra Pandey, Co-chairman
- III. Dr. Bachitter Singh, JS, Representative Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- IV. Dr. Ravi Chellam
- V. Dr. Arupjyoti Saikia
- VI. Dr. A.K. Jha
- VII. Dr. C.K. Sreedharan
- VIII. Shri V. R. Khare
- IX. Shri H. G. Upreti, Representative, Ministry of Panchayati Raj
- X. Shri Ashish Kothari
- XI. Shri Ravi Rebbapragada
- XII. Ms. Jarjum Ete
- XIII. Dr Ramdhan Lal Meena
- XIV. Shri Mannu Lal Markam
- XV. Ms. Vasavi Kiro
- XVI. Ms. Roma
- XVII. Shri Mohan Lal, Representative Ministry of Environment and Forests.
- XVIII. Shri Rakesh Kumar Dogra, Member Secretary.

Dr. Sharachchandra Lele attended the meeting via Audio Conferencing from Cambridge U.K. Shri Achyuta Samanta could not attend the meeting due to pre-committed engagement with HRD Ministry. Dr. N. C. Saxena, Chairman of the Committee, welcomed all the members especially the members attending the meeting for the first time and set the agenda rolling for the meeting. Dr. Bachitter Singh, Joint Secretary MoTA attended the meeting as representative of MoTA and also intimated that hence-forth he will be attending the meeting on behalf of MoTA on the committee. He also informed that it will be appropriate that committee gives MoTA an opportunity to make a presentation before the committee. The chairman requested him to do so

right forth, to which he informed that he'd make a detailed presentation of MoTA perspective in the next meeting.

The Member Secretary took up the agenda items in details. The minutes of the first meeting as also modified through email discussion, were approved by all the members and the Member Secretary intimated the action taken on the decision of the last meeting as follows.

1. Call for inputs: a simple "Call for Inputs" was prepared and circulated to relevant networks, and issued to the press in some locations. This is available in English, Hindi, Marathi, and Assamese.
2. Website for the committee - The Committee was intimated that ICFRE is prepared to host a static website with facility of uploading data only through ICFRE and not being able to allow remote access for up-loading due to security issue. The possibility of website being hosted by MOTA was also discussed and Dr. Bachitter Singh intimated that he will discuss with the NIC People and convey his decision to Sri Dogra. Some members wanted to have an independent website maintained through a Service Provider, which however will depend upon the availability of the budget. It was decided to consult Dr. Lele in this regard.
3. The announcement regarding the committee has already been put on ICFRE and TRTI's websites. The documents were also sent to MoEF and MOTA for putting on the respective website, for which a request was reiterated in the meeting. The documents were also sent to MoEF for issuing to PIB for publication in national media and Mr Mohan Lal, the representative of MoEF was requested to take further action.
4. The name of Shri V.R. Khare, was included in the thematic sub-group for technologies application to support FRA on his request.
5. The name of Shri V.R. Khare, was included in a sub group for Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra, Ms. Roma for Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh and Shri M L Markam for Arunachal Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh.
6. It was also decided to make a list of nodal officers of each state (Commissioners/Directors of Tribal Affairs), for which JS MoTA agreed to provide the list with contact ids.
7. Clarificatory circulars and orders have been obtained from MoTA, and also from some states (Orissa, Maharashtra, Andhra); they still need to be obtained from MoEF and from other states.

The discussion on new agenda items already circulated was held in details and the following decisions were taken.

### **1. Presentation of thematic templates:**

The thematic templates were discussed and the following templates have been finalized.

- The individual rights (Shri Arupjyoti to provide summary version)
- The community Rights
- State and district information

The chairman emphasized that the templates need to be simple and succinct. It was decided that the sub-groups will finalize all the templates latest by **30<sup>th</sup> June 2010** and put all the templates on the FRA group as separate documents. The following are to be prepared:

- Protected areas and critical wildlife habitats: by Ravi Chellam and Ashish Kothari
- Post-claims role of Forest Dept: by Sharad Lele
- Technology: by AK Jha and VR Khare

The Member-Secy was requested to send the State/District format to all states to obtain information in advance of consultations/visits, as far as possible.

### **2. Presentation of Trip Reports:**

Presentation of trip report was made by Dr. N.C. Saxena for Chattisgarh, Dr. Devendra Pandey for M.P., Shri Ashish Kothari for Uttarakhand and Western U.P., Shri Ramdhan Lal Meena for Rajasthan and Chattisgarh, and Dr. C.K. Sreedharan for Karnataka. The reports of the visit have already been circulated in the FRA group. After discussion it was decided -

- I. More emphasis should be laid on the field visit to collect first hand information about the implementation and progress about other TORs. One should visit those villages where a large number of cases have been rejected, and verify whether rejections are valid or not. Too much dependence on public consultations where people might make exaggerated claims will not help the committee in reaching any definite conclusion. At the same time, the committee members may also like to test-check process of some successful claims for the purpose of study.
- II. The report of the visit should be sent to the State Governments concerned by the visiting members after arriving at a consensus within the visiting members. The report should include the information on the site of the consultation and visit(s), including village/town, district, and state., Any specific methodology used, the date(s) of the consultation and visit(s), the name(s) and email ID of the team member(s) who have written the report. The

