



Ministry of Environment and Forests
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

NO. 1-33/2010-PE

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Dated 12th/ 15th Feb,2010

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

TASK FORCE ON PROJECT ELEPHANT

Project Elephant was conceived and launched as a milestone initiative in the year 1992 by the Ministry of Environment and Forests with an objective to protect and conserve the population of Wild Asian Elephants in India. In addition to protecting wild elephants, preserving elephant corridors and regulating man animal-conflict, the Project was charged with the unique mandate of looking after the welfare of domesticated elephants.

However, following the years of its inception Project Elephant faced a number of challenges both financial and institutional which limited the scope of its impact. This was cause for concern especially in light of the fact that India is home to over 60% of the global Wild Asian Elephant population. Hence it becomes imperative that a well thought out and practical policy be adopted for the preservation and protection of the species. Also in light of the cultural and ecological significance that the elephant enjoys, there is a need for the development of an institutional framework which is at par with that of Project Tiger and enjoys a similar stature.

Therefore, with a desire to give a fresh impetus to this Project and in pursuance of a decision taken in the meeting of the *Project Elephant Steering Committee* (held on 4th February, 2010) , the Ministry of Environment and Forests hereby constitutes a **“Task Force on Project Elephant”**. This Task Force shall provide detailed recommendations to ‘upgrade’ the Project to bring about a more effective conservation and management regime for the species in India.

Terms of Reference of the Task Force:

For Wild Elephants:

- The Committee shall recommend measures to strengthen elephant conservation in the country and keeping in view the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 suggest amendments needed , if found necessary.

- The Committee shall devise an institutional framework for Project Elephant exploring and explaining the functioning of the same at the Centre and State level with the objective of ensuring that it receives the same impetus and is brought at par with *Project Tiger*.
- The Committee shall identify, catalogue and define the elephant reserves and ranges at the landscape level. The Committee shall simultaneously develop a framework for preparing long-term perspective plans for elephant ranges.
- The Committee shall examine issues relating to human-elephant conflict and recommend appropriate short-term and long-term solutions.
- The Committee shall recommend appropriate methodology for the tracking, estimating and the monitoring of wild elephants. It shall also recommend measures for specialised training of the field staff in the states if required.
- The Committee shall also explore any other issues that it may find relevant to its charge.

For Captive Elephants:

- The Committee shall, keeping in view the socio-cultural and religious sentiments attached to the same, recommend future strategies/guidelines for suitable human use of elephants.
- The Committee shall, with regard to the use of captive elephants, recommend measures, guidelines and standards for:
 - Training and certification of Mahouts
 - Veterinarian care and Management guidelines
 - Creation of rescue centres
 - Monitoring of captive elephants
- The Committee shall develop general and uniform rules for the better upkeep and care of captive elephants and any matter in furtherance of the same.

Composition of the Task Force:

Name	Affiliation	Designation
Dr. Mahesh Rangarajan	Professor, Department of History, University of Delhi and Expert , Forestry and Wildlife history.	Chairman
Mr. Ajay Desai	Member, Steering Committee Project Elephant and Co-Chairman, IUCN Specialist Group on Asian Elephant, Belgaum , Karnataka	Member
Dr. R. Sukumar	Professor, Centre for Ecological Sciences, IISC, Bangalore, Karnataka	Member
Dr. P S Easa	Member, Steering Committee, Project Elephant and former Head , KFRI , Trichur, Kerala	Member
Mr. Vivek Menon	Executive Director, WTI, New Delhi	Member

Dr. S. Vincent	Member , Steering Committee , Project Elephant and Department of Advanced Zoology, Loyola College, Chennai, Tamil Nadu	Member
Ms. Suparna Ganguly	Trustee & Vice President, Compassion Unlimited Plus Action (CUPA), Bangalore , Karnataka	Member
Dr. BK Talukdar	Secretary General , Aranyak and Member , NBWL, Guwahati , Assam	Member
Mr. Brijendra Singh	Member, NBWL and National Tiger Conservation Authority, New Delhi	Member
Dr. Divya Mudappa	Nature Conservation Foundation, Mysore	Member
Dr. Sushant Chowdhary	Scientist , WII , Dehradun	Member
Mr. A. N. Prasad	IGF & Director, Project Elephant	Member Secretary

The Task Force will submit its Report by the **end of May 2010**.

The travelling allowance and Daily allowances will be payable to Non-official members of the Committee as admissible to Grade-I officers of the Government of India.



(A.N. Prasad)

IGF and Director, Project Elephant

Copy for information and necessary action to:

1. PS to Minister (E & F)
2. Secretary (E & F)
3. DGF & SS
4. ADG (WL)
5. Chairman and all Members of the Task Force
6. AS & FA
7. Secretary / PCCF/ CWLW of all PE States / UTs
8. MS, NTCA/IGF(WL)/MS, CZA/ AD , WCCB