

০৭/১১/২০১৪ তারিখে অনুষ্ঠিত

মন্ত্রিসভার সিদ্ধান্ত

FORM XIII (IV)

[Section 4(II)]

Decision in Cabinet

held on November 07, 2014

আলোচ্যসূচী বহির্ভূত

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বিভাগ : বন

বিষয় : পশ্চিমবঙ্গ ইকোটুরিসম বোর্ডকে বিধিসম্মত মর্যাদা প্রদান এবং আনুষঙ্গিক বিষয়সমূহ।

সিদ্ধান্ত : স্মারকলিপির ৪নং অনুচ্ছেদে বর্ণিত প্রস্তাবটি ৩নং অনুচ্ছেদের প্রতিবেদন সাপেক্ষে নীতিগতভাবে অনুমোদিত হল।

Outside the Agenda

2

Department: Forest

Subject : Conferment of Statutory status to the West Bengal Ecotourism Board and associated issues.

Decision : The proposal contained in para-4 read with para-3 of the Cabinet Memo. was approved in principle.

Sd/-

(Mamata Banerjee)

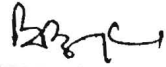
মুখ্যমন্ত্রী / Chief Minister / Presiding Minister

Copy forwarded for Information and taking necessary action to Addl. Chief Secretary / Principal Secretary / Secretary, Forest Department

সকাতা, ১১-১১-২০১৪

ককাতা,

November 11, 2014


Joint Secretary
Cabinet Secretariat

24

West Bengal Ecotourism Board - Structure, Role and Duties

1. A. Background: In view to promote tourism along with conservation of environment throughout the State of West Bengal, an Eco tourism Task Force was constituted with the mandate of clearly identifying the scope and objectives of ecotourism in West Bengal, developing and recommending appropriate institutional and funding mechanism for the systematic development of ecotourism in the State, setting out the nature and extent of interdepartmental synergy required for this purpose and preparing of an action plan/roadmap for the development of ecotourism in the State.

The Ecotourism Task Force held several rounds of meetings and submitted its recommendation. The Task Force recommended, inter alia, setting up of an Ecotourism Board so as to ensure that there is a coordinated approach among different departments and agencies of Government of West Bengal in promoting and developing ecotourism in West Bengal.

1. B. The Role and Duties of the Board will be to:

- Finalize Ecotourism policy of West Bengal;
- Promote and develop ecotourism in West Bengal as per Ecotourism Policy of the State;
- To develop frameworks of ecotourism projects in West Bengal;
- Provide guidance for development of Ecotourism facilities including related infrastructure in West Bengal;
- Specify Standards of infrastructure, hospitality management and upkeep of ecotourism facilities in the state;
- Draw up an Action Plan for promotion and development of ecotourism, including related infrastructure, in the State on an annual basis in which the responsibilities for implementation will be clearly outlined;
- Coordinate, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Action Plan on a regular basis; and,
- Take up and discharge such other functions as may be entrusted to it.

1.C. Incentives for non-home stay ecotourism will be framed by the Board and initiatives in that direction may be taken in due course after constitution of the Board. The Board will encourage home stay tourism in forest villages with a view to promoting sustainable livelihood in these villages and conservation of forest. The L & LR department will transfer vested land in the proximity of forest to forest department on a case to case basis on merit.

1. D. The Eco Tourism Board shall identify and designate Eco Tourism zones on the basis of the eight Ecotourism zones as mentioned below recommended by the Eco Tourism Task Force (ETTF)

- i) Forest zones (with Special Emphasis on Jaldapara, Chapramari, Sunderbans and forests of North Bengal)
- ii) Coastal Zones (with special emphasis on Tajpur, Udaipur)
- iii) Lake and Reservoir Zones (with special emphasis on Gajoldoba, Mukutmonipur, Central Park, Subhas Sarabor)
- iv) Wetland Zones (with special emphasis on East Kolkata Wetland)

- v) River Zones (with Special emphasis on Sabujdwip, river banks of the Teesta and the Hoogly)
- vi) Heritage Zones (Bishnupur, Murshidabad, Maldah, Krishnanagar, Nabadwip, holy places in Birbhum)
- vii) Theme Zones (with special emphasis on places connected with traditional and famous melas and congregation)
- viii) Tea Tourism zone (tea gardens of North Bengal)

The precise area of Eco tourism zones will also be specified by the Ecotourism Board.

1. E. The Board will also propose suitable amendments in W.B. Panchyat Act Bengal Municipal Act, Acts relating to Municipal Corporation and Notified Area Authorities, W.B. Town and Country (Development & Planning) Act. etc for the purpose of identification of Eco Tourism Zones.

1. F. Urban Development Department, Government of West Bengal will take up amendment of West Bengal Town and Country (Planning and Development) Act., 1979 and rules made there under and also frame new

rules, wherever required, to provide the required statutory basis for the Eco Tourism Board, its function and functionaries.

While considering amendment of the act/rules and framing of rules the Urban Development Department shall consider the following:

- a) Changing the preamble of the act to ".....provide for the planned, eco friendly, holistic and sustainable development of rural and urban areas....." so as to widen scope of the act to cover ecotourism as well.
- b) Adding a new chapter, Chapter II A, on the Ecotourism Development Board" to cover the role and duties of Ecotourism Board, Composition of the General Body and Executive Committee of the Board, other functionaries etc. Rules may be amended/framed.
- c) Delineating Ecotourism area within Land Use and Development Control Plan (LUDCP) of the Development /Planning Authority concerned.

1. G. The General Body of the Eco Tourism Board will be headed by Hon'ble Chief Minister as Chairperson and MIC; Finance Department will act as vice Chairperson. Ministers-in-Charge of Tourism Department, Forest Department, Environment Department, Fisheries Department and

Chief Secretary, West Bengal and Additional Chief Secretaries / Principal Secretaries/Secretaries in Charge of Forest Department, Tourism Department, Environment Department, Urban Development Department, L&LR Department, MSME Department, Panchyate & Rural Development Department, Finance Department, Municipal Affairs Department, Fisheries Department and Director General of Police, West Bengal and Principal Chief Conservator of Forest & Hoff and Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wild Life) will be members of the Board. Three experts will be nominated as members for three years and their tenure may be extended by the State Government, Chief Executive Officer, West Bengal Eco tourism Board will act as Member Secretary. The General Body may decide on inclusion of invitee members.

1. H. The Executive Committee of the Board will be chaired by Chief Secretary, WB and ACS /Principal Secretary/Secretary in charge of Forest Department and Tourism Department, Chief Executive Officer, WB Ecotourism Board and two nominated experts will be members of the Executive Committee. The nominated Experts will hold office for three years unless this is extended by the State Government. The procedures to be adopted by the General Body and Executive Committee are to be finalized in consultation with Finance Department.

1. I. The Chief Executive Officer of West Bengal Ecotourism Board will be a government officer of appropriate seniority. He will be posted in the Board on deputation.

1. J. An Additional Chief Executive Officer will be posted in the Board and he will be drawn from a non forest department or have a background in tourism activities. Remuneration and other service conditions of officers posted as CEO or Additional CEO will be determined in accordance with respective service rules.

1.K. Remuneration and other service conditions of other support staff will be decided in due course with approval of the State Govt. Redeployment of Staff from West Bengal Wasteland Development Corporation will also be considered for this purpose.

1. L. The nominated members of General Body/Executive Committee will be given sitting fees and traveling and daily allowances at the highest rate admissible in the State Government.

1. M. The Government will provide fund as grants to the Board for the conduct of business of the Board, functioning of the Office of CEO and evaluation and monitoring of projects. To enable the Board to draw fund as a grantee organization a head of account will be created in

consultation with Finance Department and AGWB and necessary fund provided under the newly created head during current financial year.

1. N. The Government in Forest Department. will write to the appropriate departments for amendment of Rules of Business so as to include Eco Tourism as an item for Forest Department

1. O. The Board shall submit reports to the Government on such dates, at such intervals and in such forms as may be prescribed.

1. P. The Board shall follow standard accounting and auditing procedures.

2. **Finance Department Concurrence:** Finance Department have vide their U/o/ No. Gr.P2/2014-2015/228 dt.16.09.14 agreed to creation of Eco Tourism Board, creation of one post of CEO and one Post of Additional CEO for the proposed Board. They have also advised that the Board should get themselves registered as a society under Societies Registration Act or as a body under the existing act. As regards budget head, fund, employment of support staff, rates of payment, services conditions etc, they have advised action be taken in due course.

3. **Points on which approval is required:** Approval is required for the constitution of West Bengal Eco tourism Board, assignment of duties to the Board and its General Body, Executive Committee and Chief Executive Office, creation of posts of Chief Executive Officer and Additional Chief Executive Officer, in principle concurrence for employment of support staff and /or redeployment of staff for WBWDC in such manner as Finance Department may agree upon receipt of detailed proposal from the Board and authorizing, the CEO to act as executive head of the Board for day to day administrative of the Board's Office.

4. **Implementation Schedule :** Necessary Government orders resolutions constituting the General Body, Executive Committee etc, will issue within 3 (three) weeks of Cabinet approval.

5. Hon'ble Chief Minister has kindly given her consent on placing the matter before the Cabinet.

6. The matter is now placed before the cabinet for consideration of the proposal at Para 3 above.