



Minutes of the meeting chaired by the Chief Secretary on 22/07/2022 to review the compliance of the directions of the Hon'ble National Green Tribunal (PZ) in OA No. 462/2018 & connected matters pertaining to carrying capacity assessment of Ecological Sensitive Zones/Ecological Fragile Areas in the State .

Meeting commenced at 11:15 AM with the Chief Secretary in chair. The Additional Chief Secretary, Environment Department, Principal Secretary, Forest & Wild Life Department, Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife) & Chief Wildlife Warden, Director, Environment, Chairman & Member Secretary, Kerala State Pollution Control Board and other officials concerned were present

The National Green Tribunal in the Order order dated 21/04/2022 in M.A. No. 29/2022 (SZ) in OA No. 462/2018 (PZ) with 76/2015 (SZ) & connected matters has directed States to identify Eco Sensitive Zones (ESZ) for preparing and regulating Conservation Plans to prohibit / regulate activities which are likely to cause environmental degradation. PCCF (Wildlife) & CWW presented the details of Protected Areas in the State and action so far taken for notifying ESZs. The Director, Environment & Climate Change briefed the order of the Tribunal in detail and informed that ESA in Western Ghat is on draft stage .

Following recommendations were offered after detailed discussions and deliberations:

1. Protected Areas in the State and Preparation of Zonal Master Plan:

PCCF (Wildlife) & CWW informed that there are 24 Protected Areas (PAs) in the State, which consists of 18 Wildlife Sanctuaries (WLS) and 6 National Parks (NP). Seventeen (17) Eco Sensitive Zone (ESZ) proposals around 23 PAs were submitted to the Ministry of Environment Forests & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) from the State Government on 03/01/2020. Subsequently, the MOEF & CC had published the draft notification for 21 PAs. Final ESZ notification is issued only for Mathikettan Shola National Park, on 28/12/2020. It is mandatory to prepare Zonal Master Plan (ZMP) within a period of two years from the date of publication of the notification. Carrying capacity study is to be part of the ZMP. As per NGT order ,carrying capacity study has to be taken up in ESZs. As on today, the Mathikettan Shola National Park is the only PA around which ESZ is notified in the State of Kerala. Chief Secretary directed the Forest Department to prepare ZMP (incorporating carrying capacity study) for Mathikettan Shola National Park, the only notified ESZ in the State, at the earliest .

(Action: Forest & Wildlife Department, PCCF (Wildlife) & CWW).

The meeting come to a close by 11:35 AM

**DR V P JOY
CHIEF SECRETARY**

O/O CHIEF SECRETARY