

Minutes of the meeting of Monitoring Group of National Authority held on 7.02.2020 at MoEF & CC

The first meeting of the Monitoring Group of National Authority has held on 7th February 2020 at Krishna, MOEF & CC, New Delhi. The following members of the Monitoring Group have attended the meeting.

1. Shri A.K. Bansal, Retd ADG, MoEF & CC
2. Shri A.K. Srivasatva, Retd ADG, MoEF & CC
3. Dr. Subhash Ashutosh, DG FSI

In addition to above, following special invitees have also attended the meeting

1. Shri A.N. Sharan, CEO, National Authority
2. Shri Sanjay Kumar Ojha, Joint CEO, National Authority
3. Shri Brijendra Swaroop, Deputy CEO, National Authority
4. Shri Prakash Lakhchaura, Deputy Director General, FSI

At the outset, DG FSI, being the convenor of the Monitoring Group (MG) has welcomed all the members and special invitees and briefly explained the role of MG and the progress of works carried out by FSI towards it. Thereafter agenda items were taken up for deliberations.

1. Agenda item No. 1 - ToR of the Monitoring Group

The Monitoring Group is to assist the governing body of the National Authority in performance of its functions and powers under the CAF Act, 2016. The three-fold mandate of the MG as per the CAF Act 2016 is to:

i) Evolve independent system for concurrent monitoring and evaluation of the works implemented in the States and Union territories utilising the funds released by the National Authority and State Authorities to ensure effective and proper utilisation of funds by utilising the services of the regional offices, of the Central Government in the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change:

Provided that the Central Government may also undertake third party monitoring and evaluation of the works implemented in the States and Union territories utilising the funds released by the National Authority and State Authorities through individual and institutional experts including remote sensing agencies;

(ii) Inspect and undertake financial audit of works executed by utilising the funds released by the National Authority and State Authorities in the State and Union territories;

(iii) Devise measures for transparency and accountability. (2) The monitoring group shall meet at least once in three months.

The monitoring group shall meet at least once in three months as per the date & place and agenda to be decided by the DG FSI.

2. Agenda item No. 2 – Current status of efforts for concurrent monitoring and evaluation of works implemented under CAF.

- DG FSI informed that recently following two proposals of FSI have been approved;
 - (a) Developing a monitoring protocols for monitoring of plantations and assets created by SFDs under CAF; and
 - (b) Establishing FSI Cell in Each State for Strengthening Monitoring and Forest Resource Assessment.
- He further informed that FSI has initiated works on item (a) above and are likely to be operational in next six months.
- The current status of implementation of e-Green watch, which caters to monitor activities under CAMPA, was briefly discussed and DG FSI highlighted its limitations. It was informed that in due course e-Green watch will be subsumed in the portal being developed by FSI under (a) above.
- The MG noted the proposed establishment of FSI cell in each state which should address the limitations of e-Green watch including the one related to timely uploading of correct information of data related to activities taken up from CAMPA funds. One cell is to be established at the National Authority of CAMPA.
- Noting that the monitoring protocols developed by FSI will be an important input to the monitoring group for evolving independent concurrent monitoring and evaluation of works implemented in the State/UTs utilising the funds received from national and state authority, it was decided that .FSI will (i) circulate the latest/updated version of the proposal regarding development of monitoring protocols to all the members of the monitoring group; and (ii) present the proposed monitoring protocols and expected output before the monitoring group during the next meeting. The monitoring group will deliberate on the same.
- It was learnt that presently at CAMPA National Authority does not have detailed information about the works actually undertaken in various States/UTs from CAMPA funds. It was decided that DG FSI will write to all States/UTs giving background of the constitution and mandate of the MG, and request for furnishing information on the all activities under taken under CAMPA including afforestation during the last 10 years to FSI for monitoring by the FSI and monitoring group. Mr. Bansal agreed to prepare a draft format for information to be obtained from States/UTs.

3. Agenda item No. 3 –Extent of field inspections and Financial Audits

- For physical inspections and financial audit of works executed by utilising the funds released by the National Authority and State Authorities in the State and Union territories, monitoring group will decide modalities and number of states/UTs to be visited during a particular year in its next meeting. By then some info about various works undertaken in States/UT may also be available.

4. Operational Procedures and Mechanism for servicing the Monitoring Group

- It was observed that Necessary secretarial assistance with dedicated staff, hardware and software will be provided by the office of National CAMPA authority to the monitoring group so as to discharge its duties as provided in the CAF Act.

5. Other matters

- It was agreed that one of the officer from National Authority will invariably will be invited as a special invitee to attend the meetings of the Monitoring Group.
- National Authority office will arrange home ministry passes to the non-official members as per the extant rules/procedure.
- The next meeting of the monitoring group will be held during month of March 2020.

The meeting ended with thanks to all the members and special invites.

Minutes of the second meeting of Monitoring Group of National Authority held on 5th August 2020 on through VC.

The following members of the Monitoring Group have attended the meeting.

4. Shri A.K. Bansal, Retd ADG, MoEF & CC
5. Shri A.K. Srivasatva, Retd ADG, MoEF & CC
6. Dr. Subhash Ashutosh, DG FSI
7. Dr. A. S. Rajawat, Scientist SAC

In addition to above, following special invitees have also attended the meeting

5. Shri Sanjay Kumar Ojha, Joint CEO, National Authority
6. Shri Prakash Lakhchaura, Deputy Director General, FSI
7. Smt. Meenakshi Joshi, Joint Director FGD
8. Shri Kamal Pandey, Deputy Director, FI

At the outset, DG FSI, welcomed all the members and special invitees. Thereafter, he asked Shri Prakash Lakhchaura to give a small presentation on the role of MG as per the CAF Act and action taken on the decisions during the first meeting of the MG. Thereafter agenda items were taken up for deliberations.

3. Agenda item No. 1 - Discussion on independent system of concurrent monitoring and evaluation of the works implemented in the States and UTs utilizing funds under CAF.

DG FSI made a presentation on the new proposed web GIS platform for monitoring of plantations and assets created under CAF. In the presentation, the limitations of e-Green were also mentioned. The features of the web GIS platform was explained during the presentation. The agenda item was followed by discussion. The following decision has been made.

1. A presentation on e-green watch will be given in the next meeting of MG, preferably by the Technical Director, NIC responsible for e-green watch.

4. Agenda item No. 2 – Discussion and decision on the format prepared by Shri A. K. Bansal, Member MG for obtaining information from State/UTs for all activities undertaken under CAF funds.

A discussion was held on the format prepared by Shri A. K. Bansal for collection of necessary information required by MG for monitoring and evaluation of the works implemented by the SFDs under CAMPA in the previous years.

It was decided that FSI will circulate the format to State Forest Departments giving brief introduction of constitution of monitoring group. The data for the last 10 years will be asked from the SFDs. An excel format prepared by Shri A. K. Bansal will be sent to SFDs for sending the information along with the letter.

5. Agenda item No. 3– Discussion about the scope, framework/institutional mechanism for inspection of financial audit of works executed by utilizing the funds released by the National Authorities and State Authorities in State/UTs.

Discussion was held on the agenda item that how the MG will carry out financial inspections and audit. Shri Sanjay Ojha, Joint CEO will give detailed information for the setup of a PMU for assisting MG for physical and financial evaluation of the works.

6. Agenda item No. 4 – Clarity about the chairperson of Monitoring group.

It was pointed out that there is no mention of Chairman of the MG so the question was raised who should act as chairman? Going through the section19.(3) the monitoring group of the National Authority shall meet at on such date and place and agenda as may be decided by the Director General, Forest Survey of India, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India. **The members were of the view that DG FSI should act as the Chairman of the Monitoring Group.**

7. Agenda item No.5 - Any other matter

Following decisions were taken.

- due attention will be given to ANR/RDF works in the sampling design.
- Logistics and working arrangement of the MG is to be decided by National Authority.
- The next meeting of the monitoring group will be held during fourth week of September, 2020.

The meeting ended with thanks to all the members and special invitees.