Workshop notes

Date: 15th April, 2024
Venue: Convention Hall, Hotel: The Ashok
Organizer: National Highway Authority of India (NHAI)

A One-day workshop on preparation of Forest Clearance (FC), Environment Clearance (EC) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) – Environmental Management Plan (EMP) proposals including Eco-friendly Mitigation Measures and Challenges with respect to Statutory Clearances was organized by National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).

WWF-India participated in this workshop together with almost 450 participants from multiple sectors including Governmental authorities including Ministry of Road, Transport and Highways (MoRTH), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. (NHIDCL), National Accreditation Board for Education and Training (NABET), among other NGOs and stakeholders.

This workshop organized by NHAI was a first of its kind which engaged such diverse stakeholders aimed at resolving issues related to FC, EC, EIA-EMP proposals in terrestrial landscapes including the coastal zones. The issues of Wildlife clearances and opportunities in regards to incorporating Wildlife friendly approaches to developing linear infrastructures were discussed in the workshop.

Major takeaways:

- Multiple linear infrastructure (LI) development projects are delayed because of lagging Forest and Environment Clearances which results in the total average sum of 1250 lakh crores.
- The delays in receiving the clearance are because of incompetent DPRs, EIA reports, mismatched and incomplete information.
- The technical resources – mainly consulting firms with competent expertise in producing the technical reports (Detailed Project Report, Environmental Impact Report) are scarce.
- There is a need of consideration of landscape level understanding when it comes to natural resources safeguards that Wildlife considerations should be thought beyond Protected Areas as well.
➢ Poor quality of DPRs and EIA reports are because of lowest bid approach which should eventually be changed upon time. A proper report requires proper investment in time, expertise and eventually cost which should not be compromised.

➢ There is always a lack in accessible data and information on ecology and biodiversity experts who could be accessed during the infrastructure planning and implementation phases – This calls out for a collaboration between development and conservation partners.

➢ There is a lack of access to vital and credible ecology and biodiversity database.

➢ There is a need of developing a geographical information system (GIS) database of all national and state highways passing through critical biodiversity areas including Protected Areas and forests of ecological importance.

➢ There is a need of collaboration between clearance authority and development authority to engage in project cycle since the project feasibility stage to ensure proper considerations are in place.

➢ There is a need of capacity building to the technical professionals at the front of Environmental and Natural Resource Safeguards.

Some photographs of the event:
The National Highways Authority of India
Cordially invites and solicits your kind presence at the

“One Day National Workshop on Preparation of FC, EC and EIA-EMP Proposals including Eco-friendly Mitigation Measures & Challenges w.r.t. Statutory Clearances”

being organized at

Convention Hall, Hotel: The Ashok, 50, Niti Marg, Diplomatic Enclave, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi-110021

on 15th April, 2024, 9.15 AM onwards.

Shri Anurag Jain, IAS
Secretary, Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Govt. of India, has kindly consented to be the ‘Chief Guest’ for the National Workshop,

and

Shri Jitendra Kumar, IFS
Director General & Special Secretary (Forests), MoEF&CC, Govt. of India will be the ‘Guest of Honour’ for the event.

Kindly make it convenient to attend, participate and grace the occasion.

Encl: Programme details.

RSVP:
Alok Kumar, General Manager (Environment & GHD), NHAI-HQ.
E-mail: alokkumar@nhai.org
**One Day National Workshop on Preparation of FC, EC and EIA-EMP Proposals including Eco-friendly Mitigation Measures & Challenges w.r.t. Statutory Clearances**

**Date:**
15th April, 2024

**Venue:**
Convention Hall, Hotel: The Ashok, 50 Niti Marg, Diplomatic Enclave, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi-110021.

**INaugural Session**

**Registration:** 9.15 AM Onwards

**10.00 AM to 10.45 AM**
- Welcome and Introduction to the Workshop by Dr. Nagin Nanda, Advisor (Env.), NHAI.
- Address by Sh. Vishal Chauhan IAS, Member (Admin), NHAI.
- Address by Sh. Vinay Kumar IAS, Joint Secretary (RTH), MoRTH.
- Address by Sh. Krishan Kumar IAS, MD, NHIDCL.
- Keynote Address by Sh. Santosh Kumar Yadav IAS Chairman, NHAI.
- Address by the Guest of Honour, Sh. Jitendra Kumar IFS, DGF&SS, MoEF&CC.
- Inaugural Address by the Chief Guest, Sh. Anurag Jain IAS, Secretary, MoRTH.
- Vote of Thanks by Sh. W. Blah, CGM (Environment & GHD), NHAI.

**Tea Break: 10.45 AM to 11.00 AM**

**Technical Session-1**

**11.00 AM to 11.30 AM**
*Speaker: Prof (Dr.) Varinder S. Kanwar, CEO, NABET.*
**Topic:** Process and selection of quality Consultants for the Road Infra Sector & Attributes of a good DPR Consultant.

**11.30 AM to 12.00 Noon**
*Speaker: Sh. Ramesh Pandey IFS, IGF (FC), MoEF&CC.*
**Topic:** Common shortcomings in proposals for Forest Clearance of DPR Consultants under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and Rules framed thereunder and ways and means to avoid the delays.

**12.00 Noon to 12.30 PM**
*Speaker: Dr. S. P. Yadav IFS, Fmr. Addl. DGF (Wildlife) and Advisor MoEF&CC.*
**Topic:** Common shortcomings in proposals for the Wildlife Clearances of DPR Consultants including mitigation measures under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and Rules framed thereunder and ways and means to avoid the delays.

**12.30 PM to 12.45 PM**
*Speaker: Dr. Nagin Nanda, Advisor (Environment & Clearance)*
**Topic:** NHAI perspective of Environment Laws and Status of Environment Clearances/Forest Clearances/Wildlife Clearances and related issues.

**12.45 PM to 01.00 PM**
*Speaker: Sh. L.P. Padhy, CGM (T), NHAI.*
**Topic:** Improvements in selection and evaluation processes of DPR Consultants in NHAI.
Lunch Break: 1.00 PM to 2.15 PM

TECHNICAL SESSION-2

02.15 PM to 03.00 PM (35 minutes plus 10 minutes discussion).
**Speakers:**
1. Sh. M.S. Negi IFS (Retd.), Chairman EAC (Infra-I).
2. Dr. Deepak Apte, Fmr. Chairman EAC (Infra-I) & Member, Expert Advisory Committee, MoEF&CC.
3. Dr. Amardeep Raju, Member Secretary, EAC (Infra-I), MoEF&CC.
**Topic:** Key Issues w.r.t. EC-EIA & EMP & CRZ Clearances. Evaluation process w.r.t. EC-EIA/EMP and Common shortcomings in the EC-EIA/EMP proposals prepared by the DPR Consultants.

03.00 PM to 03.15 PM (15 minutes including discussion)
**Speaker:** Dr. M. V. Ramana Murthy, Scientist-G, Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), Govt. of India.
**Topic:** Coastal Zone Regulations in India and its applicability of Road Infra Projects and Common shortcomings in proposals of DPR Consultants.

03.15 PM to 03.30 PM (15 minutes including discussion)
**Speaker:** Sh. Virendra R Tiwari IFS, Director, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun.
**Topic:** Insight on ‘Eco-friendly Measures to Mitigate Impacts of Linear Infrastructure on Wildlife’.

Tea Break: 03.30 PM to 03.45 PM

Way Forward

03.45 PM to 04.30 PM
**Panel:**
*In Chair:* Sh. Vishal Chauhan IAS, Member (Admin) NHAI.
**Panellists:** Sh. K. Venkata Ramana, Member (PPP); Dr. S.P. Yadav; Sh. Ramesh Pandey; Prof (Dr.) Varinder S. Kanwar; Representative of DPR Consultant; and Representative of NBHF.

Vote of Thanks

04.30 PM to 04.45 PM
**By:** Sh. Alok Kumar, GM (Environment & GHD), NHAI.

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**Participants:** MoRTH, NHAI, NHIDCL, MoEF&CC, QCI-NABET / DPR Consultants / Concessionaires / AE / IE Organisations