

National Green Corps (NGC) and National Environmental Awareness Campaign (NEAC)

Minutes of the

Special Planning Meeting of the Nodal Agencies & Resource Agency and Regional Resource Agencies of the North Eastern States held on 5th July, 2012 at Guwahati



जहाँ है हरियाली।
वहाँ है खुशहाली।।

Ministry of Environment & Forests
Government of India

Minutes of the meeting:

A special planning meeting of the Nodal Agencies & Resource Agency of National Green Corps (NGC) Programme and Regional Resource Agencies of the National Environment Awareness Campaign (NEAC) of North Eastern States was held in the Hotel Pragati Manor at Guwahati on the 5th July, 2012. Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) **Dr. (Ms.) Nandita Chatterjee** chaired the meeting. List of participants is attached as Annexure I.

Introductory remarks of the Chairperson:

The meeting started with an introductory remark by the Chairperson, followed by the introduction of the participants from different NE states.

In her introductory remarks, the Additional Secretary explained the background of the meeting. On 9th May, 2012 a meeting for strengthening EEAT was held in MoEF, New Delhi where some of the coordination issues regarding NGC programme and unreached areas of NEAC programme in North East States had been discussed. A meeting had been proposed with all the SNAs, RAs of NGC programme and RRAs of NEAC programme and this led to convening the meeting with NE states. The AS emphasized on having process indicators for all programmes and linking of the process indicators of different programmes like NGC and NEAC to the OUTCOMES listed in the EEAT scheme included in the EFC memo and underscored the need of reaching the unreached geographical areas in North East and also on the convergence of EEAT programmes like NGC and NEAC.

Dr. Chatterjee also said that EEAT was very important from outcome and impact point of view. This kind of planning meeting offers an opportunity to share ideas and best practices and provides an opportunity for learning. Good ideas practised and proven in one part of the country could thus be learnt and replicated elsewhere.

Overall goal of the meeting, AS explained, was an attempt to strengthen the NGC and NEAC programme.

Remarks of JS (EEAT):

Joint Secretary, Mr. BMS Rathore, explained thereafter the expected outcomes of the meeting on which the deliberations had to be focused. He said that this meeting is an opportunity to resolve the coordination issues at different levels (if any), get a good action plan for the next year, and sharing of context specific learning from different Northeastern States. He explained the new reporting system developed by MoEF for NGC programme and narrated how the new reporting forms annexed with guidelines will capture the processes and outcomes. He emphasized the importance of reporting of the activities carried out by Eco-clubs & outcomes of the activities and informed that the reporting

formats have been simplified and now there are three simple forms for Eco-clubs (Schools), State Nodal Agencies and Resource Agencies. He informed about MoEFs attempt to develop an MIS system by using latest Information Technology that will enable the State Nodal Agencies and Schools to directly upload their activity reports. He informed that a small manual on NGC will be prepared by August 2012 and it will be translated to regional languages by the RA. Referring to the unreached geographical areas, especially the remote areas in North East, he suggested the use of GIS based mapping to document NGC activities and prepare a map based on which micro level action plan could be prepared.

Remarks of AD (EE):

Additional Director (EE), Ms. Rita Khanna, made a presentation on the suggested activities/ themes and sub-themes for NGC and NEAC and fund allocation for both the programmes in NE states over the last 3 years. The AD informed participants about the projected fund allocation for NGC and NEAC in 2012-2013. It was informed that about Rs.5 crore has been allocated for the current year for North East out of which about Rs.3.4 crore is for NGC and about Rs.1.6 crore is for NEAC programme. It was also explained that all NGC proposals sent to MoEF should be complete in all respect and then only it can be processed for sanction. The AD demonstrated a format and explained the same to all the Nodal Agencies. All the Nodal Agencies were requested to submit the proposals for 2012-13 as soon as possible, if not already submitted.

The following representatives of the NGC State Nodal Agencies, Resource Agency and NEAC Regional Resource Agencies projected their respective annual action plans based on which the outcomes of the meeting has been summarized below:

Discussion on Assam State Action Plan for NGC:

The State Action plan for Assam was presented jointly by the Director, Assam Science Technology and Environment Council and the Nodal Officer, Mr. Jaideep Baruah. Mr. Baruah informed that the proposal for 2012-13 will be submitted within July, 2012. In the new proposal for 2012-13, there will be an increase of 200 schools (50 each in Baga, Chirang, Kamrup and Udalguri), raising the total number of eco-clubs in Assam to 5407. He also shared a brief report of 2011-12 NGC activities.

In the context of consideration with DIMCs, Nodal Officer informed that coordination with DIMCs in some districts was very difficult during 2005-06. Thereafter, NGOs were involved by the DIMCs and good result was achieved. Such NGOs help in day to day coordination of the project activities and implement the programme on behalf of the DIMCs. Money is transferred to the NGOs through the Deputy Commissioner and they release it to Eco-clubs. In some districts NGOs also organize training programmes from their DIMC coordination fee. They also collect reports from Eco-clubs. This was endorsed

by the Director of ASTEC who informed that DCs are Chairman of the DIMCs, and from 2012-13 ASTEC has made the Inspector of Schools the Member Secretary of the DIMCs. The DI of schools are now authorized to countersign the Utilization Certificates and activity reports. This ensures faster reporting at district levels. He hoped that the delay in reporting and other coordination issues will be suitably addressed with such an arrangement.

The Additional Secretary enquired as to whether the DIMCs or Inspectors of Schools verify the activities of the eco-clubs and what kinds of activities are being conducted by the eco-clubs. The ASTEC Director informed that the DIMCs do verify activities and eco-clubs conduct competitions, plantation, rallies, composting etc. He also informed that the saplings are provided by State Forest Department. The Resource Agency informed that Biodiversity Register, seed bank etc. are maintained by some good eco-clubs.

One RA also informed that maintenance of Biodiversity register has been made compulsory activity in Sikkim.

Additional Secretary also desired to ascertain the frequency of State Steering Committee meetings and the Nodal Officer informed that the SSC was defunct for a long time and recently it has been reconstituted with the Principal Secretary, Forest as the Chairman. JS(EAAT) telephonically requested the Forest Secretary to chair an early meeting of this committee.

The Assam Nodal Officer informed that Assam had received a sanction of Rs. 33 lakhs for NGC teacher training programme in 2010. But the grant has not been received. The Nodal Officer and RA informed that all preparations for the teacher training has been made, a poster was also developed for the eco-clubs to be given as a training materials and two Master trainers' training was also held with resources from the Nodal Office. But due to non-receipt of sanctioned amount from MoEF, the training is still pending. It was decided that the Ministry will verify the matter and revert to ASTEC shortly.

(Action: MoEF)

Assam Nodal Officer informed that some of the districts, believed to be politically disturbed, like Karbi Anglong, Kokrajhar etc. are doing well in NGC. The Joint Secretary instructed the Resource Agency to document the success stories, especially focusing the biodiversity conservation and come up with a regional success story booklet that can be showcased during the CBD COP 11 at Hyderabad in October, 2012.

(Action: RA to send a proposal by 20th July)

The Additional Secretary suggested that funds be transferred by NEFT (Electronic Fund Transfer) to the eco-clubs.

Discussion on Tripura State Action Plan for NGC:

Tripura plan was presented by Mr. Amarendra Jamatia, Asstt. Engineer, Tripura State Pollution Control Board. He demonstrated last year's the details of activities and informed that out of the total annual budget of Rs. 23.57 lakh, Tripura State Government has contributed Rs. 3.02 lakh. This additional amount from the State Plan budget was used for creating 25 additional eco-clubs not covered under the MoEF scheme. Such funds were only used for development of a locally specific brochure.

It was reported that there are 750 eco-clubs in 4 districts.

Concerns were expressed about the delay in UC and reporting on the part of the DIMCs. It was suggested that Tripura may adopt the Assam Model of engaging DIs of schools to resolve the coordination problems with DIMC.

Mr. Jamatia referred to man power shortage in the Nodal Office and requested MoEF to support man power costs for coordinating the NGC activities in Tripura. He also requested that eco-club grants be raised to Rs.10,000 per eco-club.

Additional Secretary proposed that the State Government may be requested for deputing a support staff for NGC. JS informed that MoEF did contemplate raising the eco-club grant to Rs.5000/- but the proposal did not materialize due to lack of funds.

Mr. Jamatia requested the MoEF to prepare an annual calendar mentioning the timeframe of submission of proposals, reporting, fund release etc. JS mentioned that such a calendar of activities will be prepared for NGC and placed in the Ministry's website for general information.

(Action: MoEF)

The SNA informed that they have prepared a small film in Bengali and Kokborok language and featured for eco-clubs. JS informed that a proposal for CMS is under consideration to provide a set of 12 films on EE to 20,000 schools.

(Action: MoEF)

Replying to a question from AS, Mr. Jamatia informed that meetings of State Steering Committee is not held regularly. RA requested MoEF, as to whether MoEF representatives could attend and explain the programme in the said committee meeting. Additional Secretary informed that it was a State level committee and MoEF representative may attend only upon a request from State Government concerned.

(Action: State Govt. of Tripura)

Joint Secretary citing the example of Andhra Pradesh and Delhi stated that if the State Governments can contribute to the eco-club network, it will strengthen the NGC and environment protection movement in our country.

Discussion on Nagaland State Action Plan for NGC:

The Nagaland Nodal Officer, Mr. Rusovile John presented the Nagaland Action Plan for 2012-13. He informed that the programme is active in all the 11 districts and there is no coordination problem with any of the DIMCs. He informed that the Nagaland SNA has prepared a brochure locally from their own financial resources and requested the Ministry to provide fresh resource materials for NGC eco-clubs.

(Action: MoEF)

Nagaland SNA had partnered with the Sarba Siksha Abhiyan Mission last year. The SSA Mission helped in monitoring activities of selected 260 schools in Nagaland.

Mentioning the man power shortage, he requested MoEF to designate the Nagaland Pollution Control Board (State Nodal Agency) as an ENVIS Centre. He said that the man power provided for ENVIS would be able to offer support to NGC.

(Action: MoEF)

Mr. John informed that despite willingness, electronic fund transfer is difficult to be presently implemented in Nagaland on account of lack of core banking facilities in the remote areas.

Discussion on Manipur State Action Plan for NGC:

Manipur State plan was presented by Dr. Gonchandra Sarma, nodal officer. He informed that presently there are 1750 eco-clubs in 9 districts. All the DIMCs are registered as NGOs and the coordination between SNA and DIMC is satisfactory. He informed that the 2011-12 grant has not yet been distributed to the eco-clubs because the Assembly Session is going on and the Chairman of the Pollution Control Board, being a Member of the Legislative Assembly is pre-occupied in the Assembly. He informed that the grant will be released immediately after the Chairman is freed from the ongoing Assembly Session. It was decided that as the grant for 2011-12 has not yet been released to schools, the grant for 2012-13 is not required to be allotted to Manipur.

Dr. Sarma also informed that prior to 2011-12, the state had not got grant for three years. Some of the eco-clubs are functioning well without government support. The Resource Agency representatives informed that about 2%-3% eco-clubs are functioning actively despite non-receipt of grant. In this context, the Resource Agency informed that there are such schools in other parts of North East also. For example, the Best Eco-club of Assam has not received grant for last 3 years. Similarly, all the active eco-clubs of

Sikkim have not got grant since 2006-07, but the Sikkim SNA has linked the better schools to NEAC and they have also arranged training and materials from the State Plan budget. It was opined that such highly committed schools should be rewarded and such schools should be linked to programmes like GLOBE, NEAC etc.

Manipur SNA and RA had organized the Environment Day programme in Imphal and associated with the remote schools so as to cover unreached areas.

Discussion on Mizoram State Action Plan for NGC:

Mizoram State Action Plan was presented by Ms. L. Pacuau, Scientific Officer (B) who informed that Mizoram has been submitting proposals to MoEF to increase the number of eco-clubs (within the ceiling of 250 schools per district). MoEF was yet to respond.

Most DIMCs do not meet regularly but the Member Secretary of DIMCs are active.

MoEF was requested for teacher training and resource materials and man power support. Ms. Rita Khanna, AD clarified that the Audited Utilization Certificates were not submitted by Mizoram in time and hence there was a delay in disbursement of grants. Additional Secretary stated that any proposal has to be complete in all respects for sanction. At present MoEF can consider proposals for only 3 components of NGC, namely, the eco-club grant, the district coordination cost and the Nodal Agency fee (5%) of the previous year. If any state doesn't receive payment after 15-20 days of sanction, they may revert back to MoEF.

(Action: MoEF)

Discussion on Meghalaya State Action Plan for NGC:

Meghalaya did not present any action plan. The State Nodal Agency was represented by Mr. B. Sangdiar, DFO. He informed that the SNA had received grants in 2001-02 and submitted reports and UCs in 2006-07. Subsequently they had also submitted proposals but no sanction has been received from the Ministry. It was decided that MoEF will look into the matter and inform the State Government. RA will obtain a copy of the proposal and follow up with AD(EE).

(Action: MoEF, RA)

The Joint Secretary, referring to the communication gaps in case of Assam Teacher Training proposal, and Meghalaya proposal said that from now on, State Nodal Agencies should copy their proposals and NGC related communications addressed to MoEF to the Resource Agency. The Regional Coordinator of CEE (Mr. Simanta Kalita) will be the One-Point-Contact for following up with the MoEF. Mr. Kalita, after receiving the copies from the states should follow up with the MoEF and inform the SNA if there is any shortcoming in the proposals.

(Action: RA)

All Nodal Agencies opined that Teacher's Training is required. It was decided that MoEF will look into the matter.

(Action: MoEF)

Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim were not represented in the meeting. Sikkim, however, had forwarded their Action Plan to the Resource Agency. Additional Secretary requested Resource Agency to present a brief on the activities in these two states and to ensure follow-up action for preparation of Action Plan. Joint Secretary stated that he will take up with the Forest Department in Arunachal Pradesh to reactivate the NGC programme in the state.

NEAC programme in NER:

NEAC RRAs made their presentations. All the RRAs presented the total number of proposals received for 2012-13. All RRAs are short listing the proposals received from the participating agencies and they are prepared for pre-scrutiny by the Centre of Excellence (CEE).

(Action: RRAs)

Additional Secretary confirmed that the time frame given in the annual action calendar developed by MoEF is to be followed.

(Action: RRAs)

Meghalaya RRA had received their sanction from MoEF but no funds in the previous year. MoEF is to look into the matter.

(Action: MoEF)

Currently there being no standard way of reporting and monitoring of the participating agencies of NEAC. Joint Secretary suggested a small consultative workshop who will prepare the guidelines and a manual for reporting of NEAC.

(Action: MoEF)

It was reported by the State Nodal Agencies and Resource Agency of the NGC and Regional Resource Agencies of the NEAC programme, that synergy between NGC and NEAC has been demonstrated well by Mizoram, Sikkim, Nagaland and Assam. Many eco-club schools are participating in NEAC programme and since the eco-clubs have trained teacher and student force, they perform better in NEAC programme as well.

The COE informed that the Regional Committee meetings will be held from 16-19 in Hotel Pragati Manor, Guwahati.

Outcomes of the meeting (NGC):

- 1.0 Annual action plan for EEAT (including NGC and NEAC) for 2012-13**
- 1.1 NGC:**
- 1.1.1** As per the guideline, following the ceiling of 250 schools in every district, SNAs will continue to enrol new eco-clubs wherever possible and prepare the 2012-13 proposals accordingly.
- 1.1.2** An annual action calendar including the suggested time frame for submission of proposals and release of grant should be developed by MoEF.
- 1.1.3** Activity calendar for celebrating the environmentally important days has been developed by the RA which is circulated to the SNAs. SNAs should refer to the suggested calendar while preparing state specific annual plans.
- 1.1.4** RA will document the best eco-clubs especially focusing on the biodiversity activities and publish it in a book format which is to be showcased during COP 11. The first draft will be shared with MoEF by mid September. RA will submit a proposal towards this to MoEF within 15 days.
(Action : SNA and RA)
- 1.2 NEAC:** The time frame given in the annual action calendar developed by MoEF is to be followed
(Action: RRAs)
- 2.0 Strategies to ensure improved Coordination between the State Nodal Agency and District Implementation and Monitoring Committee and development of a road map (relevant to NGC only)**
- 2.1 NGC:**
- 2.1.1** Based on the Assam experience, it was felt that the increased role of the District Education Offices/ Inspectors of School be encouraged for better coordination at the district level .
(Action : SNA)

3.0 Sharing and better understanding of different locale specific implementation strategies adopted by different NE states.

3.1 NGC:

3.1.1 DIMCs in Manipur are registered as Societies. Deputy Commissioner of the District chairs the DIMC meetings. This model is working well and it may be replicated by others

3.1.2 NGC Schools are organizing events involving non-NGC schools in Assam. This could be replicated in other states

3.1.3 Tripura, Assam and Sikkim has linked NGC with ENVIS News Letter. This has helped in creating greater visibility of NGC. This can be replicated in other states.

3.1.4 Radio and television have been used by Manipur for broadcasting local language programmes for eco-clubs. This can be replicated.

3.1.5 Nagaland partnered with SSA Mission for monitoring of the Schools. This can be replicated in other states.

(Action: SNAs & RA)

3.2 NEAC:

3.2.1 Schools organizing NEAC events are involving non-NEAC schools in Assam. This may be replicated in other states.

(Action: RRA)

4.0 Reporting and Monitoring system

4.1 NGC:

4.1.1 MoEF has simplified the annual reporting mechanism by bringing down the number of formats from 5 to 3, namely:

- Annual report format for NGC Schools
- Annual report format for SNA
- Annual reporting format for Resource Agencies

All these formats are annexed with a guideline. A manual about the reporting criteria/indicators is being developed by MoEF which will be circulated shortly.

(Action: MoEF)

4.1.2 SNA in consultation with RA will develop state specific indicators for NGC. There needs to be outcome indicators at individual (student) level, at eco-club (School) level and neighbourhood level. This will help in achieving the outcomes listed in EFC.

(Action: SNAs & RA)

4.1.3 While monitoring and documenting case studies, new geographical areas should be covered by RA/SNAs every year.

(Actions: As detailed out in Sub Para 4.1.1 to Sub Para 4.1.3).

4.2 NEAC:

4.2.1 A small consultative workshop to be organized to prepare guidelines and a manual for reporting of NEAC

(Action: MoEF)

5.0 Develop strategies on how to reach the unreached areas.

5.1 NGC:

5.1.1 Organizing events like World Environment Day and involving remote area schools in those events

5.1.2 Film festivals to be promoted to reach out to maximum possible eco-clubs

5.1.3 Synergy between NGC and NEAC has been demonstrated well by Mizoram, Sikkim, Nagaland and Assam. This would be further promoted to reach the unreached areas.

(Action : SNAs and RAs)

5.2 NEAC:

5.2.1 Synergy between NGC and NEAC has been demonstrated well by Mizoram, Sikkim, Nagaland and Assam. This would be further promoted to reach the unreached areas.

(Action: RA and Concerned SNAs)

6.0 Recommendations on strengthening of the NGC & NEAC Programme.

6.1 NGC:

- 6.1.1** Tripura has made budgetary provision from State Plan budget for publication of resource materials. Sikkim has made budgetary provision from State Plan budget for trainings and development of resource materials. Similar contributions should come from other states to strengthen the programme.
(Action: SNAs)
- 6.1.2** All the SNAs and RA recommended that there should be training for eco-club in-charge teachers.
(Action: MoEF)
- 6.1.3** Selection of best eco-club should be done following the new reporting format and they should be rewarded (award/ certification/ linking to other programmes like GLOBE), links with Mission for Green India.
(Action: MoEF)
- 6.1.4** State Steering Committee meetings should be held regularly.
(Action: SNAs)
- 6.1.5** State Nodal Agencies should mark the proposals and NGC related communications sent to MoEF, to the Resource Agency and the Regional Coordinator of CEE (Mr. Simanta Kalita) will be the One-Point-Contact for following up with the MoEF. Mr. Kalita, after receiving the copies from the states should follow up with the MoEF and inform the SNA, if there is any shortcoming in the proposals.
(Action: SNAs, RA)
- 6.1.6** Schools exhibiting interest and those actively involved in Environment awareness yet not receiving government grant may be rewarded.
(Action: MoEF)
(Action : As shown against sub para 6.1.1 to 6.1.5)
- 6.2** NEAC
- 6.2.1** Synergy between NGC and NEAC has been demonstrated well by Mizoram, Sikkim, Nagaland and Assam. This should be further promoted to reach the unreached areas.
(Action: All SNAs, RRAs and RA)

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Annexure-I**LIST OF OFFICERS PARTICIPATED IN THE PLANNING MEETING
HELD ON 5TH JULY 2012 AT GUWAHATI**

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| 1. | Ministry of Environment and Forests, GOI | Dr. (Ms.) Nandita Chatterjee, Addl. Secretary |
| 2. | Ministry of Environment and Forests, GOI | Mr. BMS Rathore, Joint Secretary |
| 3. | Ministry of Environment and Forests, GOI | Ms. Rita Khanna, Additional Director |
| 4. | NGC State Nodal Agency, Assam (ASTE Council) | Mr. A. Dutta, Director, ASTEC
Mr. J. Baruah, Nodal Officer, NGC |
| 5. | NGC State Nodal Agency, Manipur (MPC Board) | Dr. G. Sarmah, Nodal Officer |
| 6. | NGC State Nodal Agency, Mizoram (MPC Board) | Ms. L. Pacuau, SO (B) |
| 7. | NGC State Nodal Agency & NEAC RRA, Nagaland (NPC Board) | Mr. Rusovile John, Nodal Officer |
| 8. | NGC State Nodal Agency & NEAC RRA, Tripura (TSPC Board) | Mr. A. Jamatia, Astt. Engineer |
| 9. | NEAC RRA, Assam (Assam Science Society) | Mr. Chandra Barman |
| 10. | NEAC RRA, Manipur (Env & Ecology Wing) | Mr. Bhogen Singh, Jr. SO |
| 11. | NEAC RRA, Meghalaya (Forest & Env. Dept.) | Mr. B. Sangdiar, DFO |
| 12. | NEAC RRA, Mizoram (Centre for Env. Protection) | Dr. (Ms.) Rosy Lalrunsangi |
| 13. | NGC Resource Agency & Centre of Excellence | Mr. Simanta Kalita, Regional Coordinator |
| 14. | Monitoring and Coordination Cell | Mr. Shrawan Kumar, Programme Officer |

(MoEF, EE Division)

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