



CHAPTER – VIII

CONCLUSION

15.1 The rising human population and their growing demands for socio economic development have placed tremendous stress on forest areas both directly and indirectly. Thus, there is a need to strike a balance between development and conservation.

15.2 During the course of performance audit on 'KNP – Issues and Challenges', number of good practices as well as initiatives on the part of the Government to strengthen the existing mechanisms were noticed. However, the study also brought out a number of issues needing immediate attention ranging from planning, financing, manpower deployment, management of habitats as well as buffer areas and anti-poaching measures. These are discussed in the following paragraphs.

15.2.1 Despite preparation of a management plan encompassing all activities with costs involved, the KNP authorities did not review it mid-term; while the APOs had to be prepared in accordance with the emerging challenges putting thrust on anti-poaching measures which was not foreseen as a major concern in the management plan. Consequently, there was mis-match between the two and the activities planned through the APOs had to deviate from the long term strategies. Apathy on the part of the Department to install a mechanism for monitoring the allotment of funds as per the demands of the KNP resulted in tremendous financial crunch forcing the wildlife managers to cut short their annual plans hampering important functions like habitat management, intelligence gathering and protection measures.

*Management Plans
and financials*

15.2.2 There was shortage of manpower *vis-à-vis* sanctioned strength and the sanctioned strength was reviewed only in 2011 although the Park was established in 1974. Dearth of manpower coupled with lack of training certainly was one of the contributing factors for inability of the wildlife authorities in effectively tackling poaching problem. The weaponry available with the Park authorities were outdated while the numbers of gadgetry was grossly inadequate. Though the wildlife guards were involved in arduous nature of duties, there was no special allowance commensurate with the works involved, except tiger allowance. Even this allowance

*Human Resource
management*

had to be used for arranging ration as the ration allowance was very low in comparison with the prevailing market rates for food items. Besides, there were anomalies in granting allowances, uniforms etc to the wildlife guards, casual labourers, AFPF jawans. Family members of the wildlife guards dying in harness could only get casual jobs instead of appointments, neither was there adequate insurance for the lives of these guards. A number of anti-poaching camps were in dilapidated condition needing immediate repairs while there were other problems like drinking water, regular power supply etc.

15.2.3 There is dearth of anti-poaching camps on the boundary coupled with absence of a foolproof periphery protection plan. Arbitrary transfer of newly recruited staff from KNP has resulted in majority of the personnel manning the frontline workforce being above 45 years. Besides, the training needs needed more focus as none of the frontline staff had undergone any training during the five year period 2008-09 to 2012-13. Management of the AFPF personnel by a separate set up coupled with their training modules aligned to that of Police forces resulted in this force remaining as an additional force without being amalgamated with the wildlife protection system. Deficiencies in weaponry and gadgetry added to the constraints of the wildlife guards in effectively resisting the poaching attempts. In view of the above deficiencies, intelligence gathering was the only way out to prevent poaching; yet, enough funds were not allocated on the same. Neither was there a system of using information and communication techniques in monitoring the poachers/linkmen. The Department/Directorate did not initiate action to analyse the reasons behind zero conviction of poachers over the years.

*Anti-poaching
action plan*

15.2.4 Deficiencies in funding adversely affected the management of wetland/grassland. Due to inability of the authorities to contain the erosion of land mass by river Brahmaputra on the north side of KNP, about 30 sq km of the core area had since been washed away by the River. Negligence of the Revenue as well as the KNP authorities had hampered taking over of the possession of land falling under 2nd, 3rd and 5th additional areas. Taking benefit of this, largescale encroachment, both human settlements as well as cultivations, took place in these areas. The entire population evicted from the 1st additional area had re-settled illegally on the other side of NH 37. Though the 6th additional area is strategically important, protracted litigations and interferences from various quarters had resulted in continuing encroachments with criminal activities like poaching/abetting to poaching of Rhinos besides other crimes.

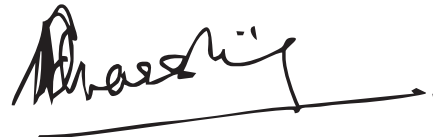
*Habitat management
and Additional areas*

15.2.5 Though 33 EDCs out of 110 villages around KNP were registered in 2002, none of these had started functioning formally even after 12 years. The formation and co-ordination between the EDC and the wildlife authorities were found to be unsatisfactory which largely hampered inflow of intelligence inputs. The ESZ could not be finalised and notified for more than 12 years; even the default notification of GoI dated July 2013 had not been acted upon. Consequently, there had been largescale construction of houses, multistoried buildings, resorts, dhabas, parking lots in the ESZ. These blocked designated animal corridors. In the wake of immense pressure on poaching, the most important aspect of wildlife management, *i.e.* management of habitats, took a back seat.

Other issues

Guwahati

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