

**PART V**

**RATIONALISATION  
OF THE  
FUNCTIONS, ACTIVITIES AND  
STRUCTURE OF THE  
MINISTRY OF  
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS**

# **Rationalisation of the functions, activities and structure of the Ministry of Environment and Forests**

## **Table of Contents**

Executive Summary .....	1
I. Evolution of the Ministry of Environment and Forests.....	4
II. The Present Set up.....	8
III. Suggestions for Restructuring .....	17
a. Environmental Clearances .....	17
b. National River Conservation Directorate.....	18
c. National Afforestation and Eco Development Board.....	20
d. Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education.....	23
e. Botanical Survey of India, Zoological Survey of India and Forest Survey of India....	25
f. Directorate of Forest Education, Dehradun .....	27
g. Autonomous Organisations .....	27
h. Centres of Excellence: .....	29
i. Environmental Information Service Centres .....	30
j. Main Ministry .....	31

## ***Executive Summary***

1. The work relating to environment clearances could be centralised under the charge of the Special Secretary. The Divisions dealing with impact assessment, hazardous substances movement management, control of pollution and common Effluent Treatment Plants could function under the Special Secretary.
2. The decisions already taken in the National River Conservation Directorate for streamlining the procedures for sanctioning of projects and for release of funds should be put in place without delay. In order to enable the Project Director to devote full attention to the work of the directorate, the present practice of entrusting this Director with additional responsibilities in the Ministry should be discontinued. This organisation is ideally suited for the adoption of 'level jumping' and 'Desk Officer' system as recommended by the last Pay Commission. The SIU should be required to undertake a fresh assessment of the staff strength of this directorate on the basis of adoption of these suggestions. In the meantime, the 34 posts, found surplus on the basis of an internal work study in 1993 should be abolished forthwith.
3. The National Afforestation and Eco Development Project should be made the main instrument for the realisation of the objectives for the Nation Forest Action Plan. Towards this end the Ministry should take all efforts for accessing international donors for increasing the coverage under the greening programme. The Ministry should also establish procedures for working in tandem with the Ministry of Rural Development, so that the funds available in the 1,70,000 villages adjoining forest areas under the Sampoorna Gram Vikas Yojana could be accessed for meeting the wage component of the various works undertaken by NAEB in these villages and in the adjoining forest areas.
4. The Director General of Forests should be made the Chief Executive of NAEB. In order that the DG, Forests is able to devote adequate attention to NAEB's work, which is likely to increase in the coming years, necessary arrangements would need to be put in whereby the DG, Forests, in his capacity

as Special Secretary, Forests, in the Ministry is required to handle only IFS cadre management matters and the more important of the issues on the forest side.

5. As in the case of the NRCD, this organisation should also be made fully officer oriented. The SIU should be required to undertake a quick study for downsizing the staff strength in this organisation on this basis.

6. ICFRE's activities need to be sharply focussed and its programmes implemented in a time bound manner. A number of activities (as listed in the report) which have become redundant over the years or which can well be undertaken better in the private sector need to be wound up. There is thus a case of a drastic downsizing of ICFRE's staff strength. Pending finalisation of these detailed proposals, action should be taken to abolish immediately all the 936 vacant posts.

7. The three survey organisations, BSI, ZSI and FSI should be brought under the supervision of the Additional Secretary so as to ensure a coordinated approach to ecological thematic mapping. In these three agencies there is need for more focused work and implementation of activities in a time bound manner. As in the case of the BSI, there is need for a drastic downsizing of the staff at the support levels in ZSI and FSI also. The SIU should be required to undertake this examination immediately.

8. In the absence of the need for providing induction training to direct recruits on a regular basis, the need for continuance of the three forest service colleges at Coimbatore, Burnihat and Kurseong has come into question. The concerned State Governments should be encouraged to take over these institutions for providing in-service training to other cadres, by providing grants on a sliding scale in the initial years for meeting the recurring expenditure of these institutions.

9. The autonomous organisations under the Ministry should be advised of a likely reduction in budget support in the coming years because of fiscal constraints and they should be required to draw up action plans both for maximising internal resources and for accessing other sources of funds as well as for reducing expenditure commitments. These action plans together with the

Ministry's proposals for diluting its control over these organisations should be incorporated in the Memorandums of Understanding entered into with these organisations.

10. A similar approach needs to be followed in the case of Centres of Excellence as well. The objective should be to ensure that the Budget support for the existing Centres of Excellence is reduced out over a period of time, giving the ministry the needed flexibility for promoting new Centres of Excellence in other sectors and in other areas.

11. The performance of the 26 Environmental Information Service Centres (ENVIS) needs to be quickly assessed so that Budget support for those that are not functioning well or serving a useful purpose could be withdrawn. Till the completion of this review there should be a freeze on funding of new ENVIS centres.

12. The remaining 51 posts found surplus in the Ministry on the basis of the earlier internal work measurement study, should be abolished straightaway.

13. The Environment Wing of the six regional offices of the Ministry should be closed down. The follow up of work relating to environmental clearance can be undertaken by the six zonal offices of the Central Pollution Control Board.

14. The Ministry's proposal to set up a Wild Life Crime Cell is a welcome one. Matching savings should be found by surrendering sufficient number of posts in the Ministry.

15. The suggestions made for the handling of work in the NRCD, NAEB and for environmental clearance cases, should, by reducing the flow of routine work in these three areas, enable the Secretary to focus more on policy formulation, promotional activities and project implementation.

16. There should be some flexibility in the positioning of Scientists, Forest Officers and generalists at the middle and senior levels. There is also need for induction of specialists from other disciplines as highlighted in section 2.

## **Rationalisation of the functions, activities and structure of the Ministry of Environment and Forests**

### ***I. Evolution of the Ministry of Environment and Forests***

1.1 The Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) has its origins in the National Committee on Environmental Planning and Coordination (NCEPC) set up in the year 1971 to prepare country documents for India to be sent to the UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm held in June 1972. The Committee was headed by the then Member (Perspective Planning) of the Planning Commission. The selection of a member of the Planning Commission as Chairman was itself suggestive of the multidisciplinary nature of the subject of environment and of its importance in planning for socio-economic development. NCEPC was envisaged as a focal point in the government acting as a think tank and a catalyst – in addition to performing some functions of its own – to persuade other ministries to integrate environmental concerns into their plans and programmes. The Committee had members drawn from diverse subject areas and included naturalists, economists, medical researchers and eminent public men. The NCEPC was serviced by the Department of Science & Technology (DST) within which a small group of officers formed the secretariat of the Committee.

1.2 In the year 1985, a Department of Environment was created which became the Ministry of Environment and Forests. It is significant to note that Forests earlier formed part of the Ministry of Agriculture. Though this was quite logical, it was probably felt that issues relating to forests could be overshadowed by the more urgent issues surrounding agriculture in such an arrangement, and that a more appropriate placement for forests would be with environment. The formation of the new ministry signified the growing importance of the subject of environment in general and the role of forests in particular in environmental conservation. Animal welfare was also brought into the fold of the ministry but has now been taken out.

1.3 The addition of Forests and Wildlife has made the ministry a superbody. With 22.5% of the country's land area reported to be under forests, the subject of

forests and wildlife being brought under the Concurrent List and with 87 national parks and over 400 sanctuaries, the work of the forest wing of the ministry is, today, very much more than what the forest wing in the ministry of Agriculture had to deal with in earlier years. The sustainable management of forests and wildlife is an important issue in Centre-State relations. The National Forest Policy of 1988 aims to bring one-third of the land area of the country under tree cover. The National Forestry Action Plan (NFAP) drawn up recently would involve a massive nationwide effort in its implementation. The ministry is also the controlling authority for the nearly 3000 strong Indian Forest Service cadre.

1.4 Since pollution of rivers is a highly visible form of environmental degradation, it is but natural that the task of cleaning up the country's major rivers should fall on the MoEF. What started as the Ganga Action Plan (GAP) spread to the Yamuna and the Gomti and at present almost all the major river basins in the country are covered under the National River Conservation Plan (NRCP). The Plan is administered by a Directorate within the Ministry.

1.5 Over the years, a number of laws related to environment have been enacted by the Parliament and considerable subordinate legislation has also come into force. These have made the MoEF play an increasing role in regulatory matters. For example, the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, the Notification on Environmental Impact Assessment Procedures making environmental clearances mandatory for selected groups of industries and other activities (1994), the Coastal Regulation Zone Notification of 1991, the Management of Hazardous Wastes Rules and the rules governing introduction of and experimentation with living organisms have all made the regulatory role of the ministry more pronounced than before. Nearly 100 development projects, both in the public and private sectors, are cleared every year by the ministry. Under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, over 350 proposals are cleared in a year.

1.6 Two other important developments since 1972 need to be noted. One is the introduction of Article-48A and Article-51A(g) in the Constitution of India in 1977 which have cast a binding obligation on the state to protect and improve the

environment and a corresponding duty on the citizen. Article-48A has been interpreted by the Supreme Court of India in conjunction with Article-21 (Right to Life) as conferring on the citizen a fundamental right to enjoy a clean and healthy environment. This development, in particular, has increased the burden of responsibility on the ministry manifold.

1.7 Courts have held that the duty cast on the state under Article-48A of the Constitution of India has to be discharged in a proactive and not in a passive manner. That is, the state should, on its own volition, take steps to protect and improve the environment instead of springing into action only when disaster strikes. Several examples can be quoted in this context. The introduction of unleaded fuel in the metro cities in April 1995, drastic reduction in the sulphur content of diesel all over the country, introduction of European emission norms for automobiles, controlling pollution of rivers like the Ganga and Yamuna, directions given to leather tanneries to treat effluents and pay the costs of environmental remediation are some of the notable instances where the ministry had to take urgent action following the Supreme Court's directives.

1.8 A consequence of these developments is that litigation has come to occupy a good deal of time of the ministry's officials. Public Interest Litigation (PIL) has emerged as a distinctive feature in the Indian legal scene to compel the executive branch of the state fulfil environmental imperatives. The 'Green Judiciary', a development of the last decade, has donned the mantle of an environmental watchdog and through its various pronouncements has evolved a new area of jurisprudence defining the roles of the state and the citizen in environmental protection and improvement and bestowing a new interpretation on the Law of Torts as it applies to environmental damage.

1.9 The other notable development since 1972 is the coming into being of many international conventions concerning various aspects of the environment and the Earth Summit of 1992 which adopted Agenda-21, a blueprint for sustainable development. Conventions like the Montreal Protocol, the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biodiversity have given rise to several initiatives in the ministry. To implement the Montreal

Protocol, an Ozone Cell was set up and rules governing phase-out of ozone depleting substances in India have been notified. As part of the Climate Change Convention, a Centre for Clean Development Mechanisms has come into being. To give effect to the Biodiversity Convention, a Biodiversity Bill has been introduced in the Parliament. The Basle Convention on Transboundary movement of hazardous wastes is another important convention for India as the country being poor in non-ferrous metals imports substantial quantities of metal concentrates and recyclable material for meeting its primary metal requirements. Likewise, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) has increased greatly the surveillance functions of the ministry.

1.10 The organizational chart of the ministry (Annex-I) indicates its wide spread of functions ranging from 'brown' issues like control of pollution to 'greening' the country, from management of hazardous wastes to management of wildlife and from promoting clean industrial technologies to research in sylvicultural genetics.

1.11 Some aspect or other of environmental concerns is dealt with in many other wings of the government, notably the Planning Commission, the ministries of Urban Affairs, Agriculture, Energy, Health, and the departments of Biotechnology, Rural Development and the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). Environment is too vast a subject to be dealt with by one ministry and hence any Ministry of Environment can and should be principally a catalyst and a coordinator though it can discharge some functions of its own not dealt with specifically by any other ministry.

## ***II. The Present Set up***

2.1 The functions presently allotted to the Ministry are set out in Annex II. This list fully reflects the additional responsibilities vested in this organisation over the last three decades. In line with the enlargement of the range of duties, the staff complement which was a miniscule half a dozen officers who acted as the Secretariat of NCEPC when it was set up in 1971, has increased to over 850 in the Ministry alone. Inclusive of the staff strength of the Attached and other offices, the total number is over 9000 (Annex III). More important that this number, is the number of different, distinct areas of work in the Ministry, as reflected by the separate 'boxes' in the organisational chart at Annex I.

2.2 The environmental concerns cut across numerous sectors. As such various other Ministries/Department also have a role to play in addressing environmental concerns. The placing of both Environment and Forest in a single Ministry should facilitate a holistic view being taken of these areas. In actual practice, however, these two often function as two water tight compartments. What is more with NAEB functioning under a Special Secretary/Additional Secretary, this area of work has got separated to a large extent from the National Forestry Action Plan.

2.3 The Ministry has a total budget of Rs.911 crore in BE 2001-2002, of which the provision for non-plan expenditure is Rs.111 crore. There a large number of plan schemes, with a total outlay of Rs.800 crore, of these the National River Conservation Plan, with an outlay of Rs.191 crore and the National Aforestation & Eco Development with an outlay of Rs. 137 crore are the two biggest programmes. There are 20 Centrally Sponsored Schemes with an outlay of Rs. 493 crore.

2.4 Broadly, work on both the environment side and the forest side can be divided into the following areas:-

### **❖ Policy and Planning**

(eg:- Pollution abatement policy, National Forest Policy)

❖ **Regulatory Functions**

- a) Clearances for projects under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, and the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980; setting of pollution standards, implementation of Coastal Regulation Zone Notification, 1991, and other notifications like those governing storage, handling and transportation of hazardous wastes and hazardous chemicals; clearances for introducing genetically modified organisms in the country,
- b) legal work consisting of framing new legislation; representing the government in public interest litigations,

❖ **Project implementation**

National River Conservation Plan (NRCP); National Lake Conservation Project, National Environmental Awareness Education Campaign; Multilaterally and bilaterally aided projects; National Afforestation and Ecodevelopment Board (NAEB) to promote greening of denuded forest lands and adjoining areas; National Forestry Action Plan; Project Tiger and Project Elephant.

❖ **Promotional and extension activities**

Promoting environmental education and research through the Ecosystem Research Group, the Environment Research Committee and other Committees and through financial assistance to centres of excellence.

❖ **International Relations**

Administration of international conventions, bilateral agreements and interaction with UN bodies.

2.5 As the following analysis will bear out, it will not be an exaggeration to state that in the pre-occupation with regulatory functions, international

commitments and responses to judicial activities, areas like policy and planning, project implementation and promotional activities have not received the attention that they deserve.

2.6 Of the above items of work, the one which occupies much of the energies of the ministry today is regulatory work. Regulatory functions like according environmental clearances consume a significant part of the time and efforts of the ministry. With industrial liberalization having done away with customary licenses, the only license required today at the central level is environmental clearance. Industrial liberalization and inflow of foreign direct investment have led to an increase in projects of physical infrastructure and manufacturing all of which needing environmental clearance.

2.7 Environmental clearance is a fairly lengthy and arduous process both for the project proponent and the ministry. It calls for the preparation of a detailed environmental impact assessment report spread over seasons and an environmental management plan by the proponent. The level of detail remains more or less the same for all categories of projects and with certain projects like mining or hydroelectric power generation a two-stage clearance is necessary. About 180 project proposals are received in a year of which about 100 are accorded clearance and 80 are either rejected on merits or closed for want of necessary information from their proponents.

2.8 Environmental clearance is a time-bound process as the EIA Notification of 1994 requires the ministry to clear or reject a proposal within 90 days of receipt complete with impact assessment and management plan. Although the ministry is assisted in the process of examination of proposals by committees of outside experts, its senior officials are expected to weigh and consider the recommendations of these committees and profer their advice to the Minister to accept or reject any proposal. Similar is the case with proposals received under the Coastal Regulation Zone Notification of 1991. The country's 8000 km long coastline can spur economic growth and become a major tourism destination in the world. This factor has given rise to a number of project proposals on the coast calling for careful scrutiny. Forest clearances are an added regulatory

burden on the ministry with close to 400 proposals received in a year. It can be stated safely that project clearance has emerged as a major function in the ministry in recent years.

2.9 Another preoccupation forced on the ministry is litigation brought about by 'Public Interest' petitions. Since any developmental project has a bearing on the environment and since environmental protection itself is a wide term covering protection of land, water and air from any form of adverse biotic interference, launching public interest litigation against developmental projects has become a way of life with some groups in the country. MoEF invariably turns out to be a respondent in these petitions even though the subject matter of the petition may or may not fall within the business allocated to the ministry. The ministry is thus forced to deal with subjects familiar to it at times and unfamiliar at other times. This also necessitates gathering information from many other ministries and their agencies and state governments and in ensuring finally that the concerned ministry or the state government acts in accordance with court directives. MoEF is held accountable by the courts for compliance of their directives irrespective of the fact that the burden of compliance should also fall on other ministries and the state governments.

2.10 On the forest side the regulatory role takes the form of granting or rejecting permission under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, for converting any forest area for non-forest purposes. But this regulatory role is somewhat different from the regulatory function of environmental clearance on the Environment side of the ministry. Its scope is limited and the only condition imposed while granting clearance is that the project proponent should provide funds for afforesting an equal area of denuded forest lands or twice the area of non-forest land. Further monitoring is not necessary as it becomes the duty of the state governments to take up the compensatory afforestation work that has been paid for. An important point, however, is involved in this exercise. Often, delicate Centre-State issues arise like legalizing encroachments on forest lands with the state governments supporting such legalization and the Centre not being in a position to agree. Where a state government itself is a promoter of a project,

as in the case of a hydro-electric or irrigation project involving forest area, MoEF's rejection of the proposal for forest land conversion is received with reservations by the state government. Often, intervention at the level of the Minister of Environment and Forests becomes necessary.

2.11 The preoccupation of the ministry with environmental clearances and litigation comes in the way of paying adequate attention to other and equally important items of work. One such area is policy making. Policy statements often tend to be too general and not specific. As an example of the absence of detailed policy requirements, one can cite the provision in the Pollution Abatement Policy to introduce market based instruments for pollution control. The policy is silent on which instruments would suit Indian conditions better than others. There has been no move to make an attempt to introduce such instruments so far although many models are available abroad. In such a situation, the policy statement has remained a mere pronouncement. Again, the insistence of 'Best Available Technology' solutions for pollution control in industry ignore costs and this has been responsible for the industry to looking upon pollution control as an imposition than a help. Industry specific cost-benefit studies on pollution abatement and waste minimization and reuse are noticeably absent. This is not to say that the ministry itself should be engaged in such studies. Necessary surveys and research work could be sponsored in Universities, Institutions of Technology and Management Institutes or even got done through consultants.

2.12 Besides the load of regulatory work, there could, perhaps, be another reason for the inadequate attention being bestowed on policy and related work. There has been a long held view that environment is purely a 'scientific' subject and that too confined to botany or zoology. Absence of realization that other scientific disciplines like occupational and community health, industrial toxicology, soil sciences, hydrology, chemical engineering, to quote a few examples, should also be harnessed to deal with environmental matters is palpable. Further environmental protection is not a matter of mere scientific or technological quick-fix. It straddles economics and sociology. Unless a protection strategy is economically viable, it is bound to meet with resistance

from those called upon to ensure such protection. Lack of sociological inputs into policy making and programming arouses the ire of local populations and NGOs as is often witnessed when populations are displaced to make way for developmental projects. It would, therefore, be necessary to equip the ministry with adequate and appropriate human resources.

2.13 Subjects like 'green accounting' and 'assessment of environmental damage' call for qualified economists who are not available in the ministry. Infact, the subject of economics, so integral a part of sustainable development strategy, is conspicuous by its absence in the ministry.

2.14 Similarly, legal work, which is considerable, is poorly looked after often leading to criticism from the courts. Almost all legislations dealing with various aspects of environmental protection need to be given a fresh look in the light of changed circumstances and experience gained so far. Some like the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, and the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, need to be amalgamated. A legislation on solid waste management deserves to be brought on the statute book. A strong legal cell needs to be established in the ministry. Further, international conventions have legal and economic dimensions. For instance, the Framework Convention on Climate Change holds much significance for the country's economic growth. The convention has already led to the creation of international markets for trading in 'carbon credits.' The WTO Agreement has substantial environmental features in it and environmental considerations are often invoked to erect non-tariff trade barriers by some countries to block imports from India. In the forthcoming Doha ministerial meeting of the WTO, environment and social clauses are most likely to figure. The handling of these subjects in the ministry cannot be said to be adequate at present.

2.15 Another area which attracted greater attention in the earlier years was research. The Man and Biosphere Programme (MAB) initiated by the UNESCO in the sixties received enthusiastic support in the NCEPC and even today the Ecosystems Research Scheme and other special schemes support research projects in universities and other higher scientific institutions. Similarly, the

Environmental Research Programme has been funding research in pollution related activities and resources conservation and management. Besides these schemes run directly by the ministry, there is considerable research work going on in institutions under the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education and in institutions like the Govind Ballabh Pant Institute of Himalayan Ecology.

2.16 Promotion of research should have a high visibility in the working of the ministry. However, one can sense research occupying only backroom space in the face of more pressing and sensational nature of other items of work of the ministry. With a strong support for research, the ministry would be in a position to speak with authority on subjects which are now before the judiciary and are those which are covered by international conventions.

2.17 Although a number of research projects are sponsored by the ministry, it is seen that the proposals are more academically and not policy oriented. While academic research has its importance, the ministry should identify major areas for research based on its needs and invite proposals from institutions instead of merely scrutinizing and sanctioning whatever that comes before it.

2.18 Again, research proposals are invariably on the side of natural sciences. There are hardly any projects on health related aspects or on 'brown' subjects or on the humanities side. Identifying suitable projects in these areas and funding them would go a long way in obtaining inputs for policy and law making.

2.19 Promoting environmental education and creation of nationwide awareness of the need to protect the environment are among the responsibilities of the MoEF. An important aspect of this effort is the availability of sufficient number of MoEF will have to identify such gaps and institute steps to fill these with the cooperation of the UGC, All India Council of Technical Education etc. Again, giving high visibility to grassroots work being done by many individuals and NGOs all over the country and propogating adoption of successful, traditional and appropriate technologies in soil and water conservation or forest management is another area which merits greater attention.

2.20 Likewise on the forest side also with the clearance work and day to day fire fighting taking up most of the time the National Forestry Action Plan remains

largely on paper, while, in the Ministry there have been no attempts at sharpening the focus of research work in ICFRE. The NFAP envisages an investment of RS.1,20,000 crore over a twenty year period by the Centre to the States with a view to achieving the target of covering one-third of the country with forests. Compared to this the annual outlay of NAEB, the main investment with the Ministry for achieving this target has been less than Rs.100 crore per annum (increased to Rs.137 crore this year). ICFRE's activities are so numerous and diverse, and staff strength so large, as to make staff management itself the main focus of attention of the top management, that there have been no major efforts for time bound action plans for core research work. In the case of FSI, ZSI and BSI there is need for drawing clear cut and focused programme of work, to be implemented in a time bound manner. In the area of wild life, illegal trade has grown alarmingly and is threatening the survival of many an endangered species. Concrete steps for countering this threat need to be taken urgently.

2.21 The progress in various promotional activities as well as in project implementation has also been somewhat tardy. One of the major indicators for assessing the performance in these areas is the utilisation of funds allocated. As will be seen from the statement below there have been significant shortfalls almost every year in the last six year period, the shortfall being as high as 34% in 1998-99.

**Annual Plan Outlay (B.E.)**

**Rs. crore**

Sl. No.	Sector	YEAR						
		1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
1	Environment	80 (63)	125 (124)	198 (115)	211 (115)	192 (118)	231 (155)	213
2	National River Conservation Plan	79 (42)	106 (122)	109 (99)	192 (108)	200 (157)	210 (128)	191
3	Forest & Wild Life	108 (98)	148 (95)	145 (124)	209 (173)	215 (178)	257 (173)	259
4	National Afforestation & Eco Dev.	104 (93)	90 (88)	92 (68)	92 (72)	94 (87)	152 (94)	137
	<b>Total</b>	<b>371 (296)</b>	<b>469 (429)</b>	<b>544 (406)</b>	<b>704 (468)</b>	<b>700 (540)</b>	<b>850 (610)</b>	<b>800</b>

The Figures in brackets indicate the actual expenditure in the year.

2.22 A number of reasons, including drastic reduction in the outlays at the revised estimate stage on grounds of fiscal stringency are advanced for explaining the shortfall. The consistent shortfall however clearly underlines the need for tightening up of the procedures for sanctioning of funds and in implementation of projects.

2.23 The shortfalls cut across virtually every major activity on the plan side. For instance, last year (2000-01) on the environment side as much as Rs. 8.90 crore out of the budget provision of Rs.10 crore for the National Lake Conservation Plan was surrendered; under the pollution control projects the surrender was nearly Rs.5 crore representing 20% of the outlay; under the Taj Protection Mission half of the budget provision of Rs.50 crore was surrendered, while in the India Environment Management Capacity Building Technical Project nearly Rs.19 crore of the original provision of Rs.32 crore was surrendered. In the case of the lump sum provision for the North-East also a sum of Rs.20 crore out of the total available provision of Rs.85 crore in the budget was surrendered. In the single largest programme, namely, National River Conservation Project as much as Rs.76 crore out of the original budget provision of Rs.193.50 crore was surrendered. There are similar shortfalls under the various programmes on the forest side as well, though the picture is somewhat better compared to the environment side. Thus in the Eco Development around Protective Areas nearly Rs.12.50 crore was surrendered out of the original budget provision of Rs. 54 crore. Under Integrated Afforestation and Eco Development Project Rs. 22.10 crore out of a budgetary allocation of Rs.72.50 crore was surrendered. In respect of the research programmes of the ICFRE, Rs.4.15 crore was surrendered.

2.24 All these clearly highlight the need for a fresh look at the various procedures for the release of funds and in project implementation if the promotion schemes and the various projects are to play their part effectively.

### ***III. Suggestions for Restructuring***

3.1 The several issues highlighted in the earlier section underline the need for the restructuring proposals to focus on the following:

- i. Improving project implementation capacity in the various wings of the Ministry; in particular adopting less cumbersome procedures in the NRCD and strengthening the NAEB.
- ii. Redefining the core activities of the ICFRE and drawing up a time bound action plan in key areas of research.
- iii. Making Autonomous Bodies and Centres of Excellence more self reliant, working towards specific goals.
- iv. Placing the environment clearance work under the Special Secretary so that only the more important cases have to go through the Secretary.
- v. Re-grouping the activities within the Ministry so as to make these more compact and
- vi. Above all, in almost all areas drastically downsizing of the staff strength and shedding unnecessary activities. This is necessary if each organisation in the Ministry and the main Ministry itself is to be made lean and efficient and achieve a greater focus in its functions.

3.2 The specific suggestions in respect of some of the organisations in the Ministry and for the Ministry itself are set out in the succeeding paragraphs.

#### ***a. Environmental Clearances***

3.3 The work relating to processing of environmental clearance cases could be brought under the charge of the Special Secretary in the Ministry. The divisions dealing with Impact Assessment, Hazardous Substances Management, Control of Pollution and Construction of common effluent treatment plants could report to this officer. The Special Secretary could put up papers, directly to the Minister, except for the more important ones, which alone would be required to be routed through the Secretary.

3.4 If this arrangement works well, in due course it could pave the way for entrusting this work to a separate Authority, outside the Ministry.

3.5 Considering that over 180 project proposals are received every year for obtaining environmental clearances and each project would involve an outlay of not less than Rs.50 crore, it is suggested that a fee proportionate to the investment is levied on the proposals received. To cite an example, Government of Tamil Nadu charges a front-end fee running to lakhs of rupees on applications for clearances under the Coastal Regulation Zone notification.

**b. National River Conservation Directorate**

3.6 The National River Conservation Directorate (NRCD) with its headquarters at New Delhi and two regional offices at Allahabad and Kolkata has a sanctioned staff strength of 117. This Directorate which was earlier implementing the Ganga Project has taken up number of other river projects as well in recent years. In view of the expanded mandate a proposal for winding up the two regional offices at Kolkata and Allahabad, which were set up for intensive monitoring of the Ganga Project implementation is already under consideration of the Ministry.

3.7 As brought out in the statement on page 15, there have been large shortfalls in utilisation of plan funds allocated for this project. In 1998-99 the surrender was Rs. 84 crore (40%), in 1999-2000, Rs. 43 crore (22%) and in 2000-01, Rs. 82 crore (40%). Such large shortfalls are attributed to two factors. First, was the practice of getting a proposal from the State Government in an outline form and then on the basis of a detailed examination of this outline in the NRCD, the State Governments being required to prepare a detailed project report, which was again scrutinized thoroughly in the NRCD before approval was given. A decision has reportedly been taken recently, though yet to be implemented, that in future even in the first instance the State Governments would be required to prepare a detailed project report with the help of outside consultants, which would be examined in overall terms only by NRCD before being approved. This change when put into effect is expected to reduce considerably the time taken in according approval. The second problem faced

has been in getting the utilisation certificates from the State Governments. Under the present arrangements, wherein funds are released to the State Governments there is considerable time lag in the project authorities getting the funds released by the State Government. As a result, the project authorities are starved of funds for several months and are not able to absorb the full allocation for the year. Here again a decision appears to have been taken recently that the funds should be released directly to the project authorities. A better alternative to bypassing the State budget would be for the NRCD to discuss this matter with the State Governments and put in arrangements for ensuring timely release of funds to the project authorities. This could be achieved by informing the State Governments, well before their budget is finalised, of the order of funds to be allocated in the next year by NRCD for the projects in their State, so that adequate provisions are made in the State Budget. This way, as soon as NRCD releases funds to a state, that state should have no problems in releasing the necessary funds to the project authorities from out of the provision already made in their budget.

3.8 Clearly, there is need for greater attention to project approvals and timely release of moneys particularly with the large expansion in the sphere of work of this directorate. This then should be the top priority for this Directorate. In order to enable the Project Director to devote full attention to the work of the Directorate, it would be necessary to discontinue the present practice of entrusting to this officer additional responsibilities in the Ministry as well.

3.9 It is seen that in the Directorate there are 6 senior level functionaries including the Project Director, 12 Scientists and a compliment of nearly 100 support staff headed by two Under Secretaries. In organisations like this Directorate every attempt should be made to put in modern methods of office management and for making full use of the advances in the IT sector and for farming out of support services. Making the office lean is a basic requisite if the office is to function in an efficient manner as otherwise a good part of the time of the top management is lost in managing the Directorate office itself. In these circumstances it is recommended, that Staff Inspection Unit (SIU) should be

required to take up a fresh assessment of the staff strength of this Directorate so that it could be drastically pruned. An internal work study undertaken in the Ministry in 1993 had come to conclusion that the non-scientific staff could be downsized from 86 to 52 (Statement at Annex IV). Perhaps this was not followed up because of the expansion in the responsibilities of this directorate. This reduction of 34 posts and as also the winding up of the regional offices at Allahabad and Kolkata should be given effect to immediately. If in line with the expansion in the role of the Directorate, some additions at the senior/scientific levels are considered necessary that could be examined separately.

**c. National Afforestation and Eco Development Board**

3.10 The National Afforestation and Eco Development Board (NAEB) is the main instrument that the Ministry has under its direct supervision for achieving of the National Forestry Action Plan (NFAP). However, while NFAP envisages an investment of the order of Rs.1,20,000 crore over a 20 year period by the Centre and the States, the annual plan outlay of NAEB is less than Rs.100 crore (increased to Rs.152 crore in BE 2001-2002)! Thus, if NFAP has to become a reality then the availability of the funds for the NAEB has to register a 30 to 40 fold increase! While this order of increase appears staggering, it is feasible, provided action is taken on two different fronts:

- (a) With the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol there will be sharp increase in the number of international donors, looking for investments in 'carbon sinks' in developing countries. The flows could be substantial, estimated at several US \$ 100 billion. India could and should seek access to these funds in a big way. This will be a major task to be undertaken by the Ministry and the NAEB.
- (b) Government have recently announced a wage employment programme in rural areas titled 'Sampoorna Gram Vikas Yojana'. While an outlay of Rs.10,000 crore has been indicated now one can expect a substantial increase in its outlay once the implementation gains ground. While this programme is to be implemented in all the

villages of the country, NAEB's activities are focused in the 1,70,000 villages, accounting for nearly 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the total number of villages, which adjoin forest lands. Thus, a proper tie-up between NAEB and the department of rural development, could lead to NAEB's allocations being utilised for the material component and Sampoorna Gram Vikas Yojana funds being accessed for the wage component. This way NAEB's coverage could be increased six to eight fold. Greening, putting in soil conservation and moisture retention programme in these 1,70,000 villages and in the adjoining areas would go a long way in providing livelihood security for the people of these villages, increasing density of forest cover in the forests and adjoining areas, and more importantly help arrest the depletion of water resources by promoting increased water retention at the source points. The focus of NAEB should be on catchment area treatment and soil conservation in the 'interior' areas and on greening, fuelwood and fodder plantations on the periphery and in the village commons. This has to be a cooperative effort, with full participation of the beneficiary population and the instrument for this will be the Joint Forestry Management Groups which will have to be set up in all the villages where such work is taken up.

3.11 For ensuring that NAEB becomes the main instrument for the implementation of NFAP, it is necessary to bring about a greater coordination between NAEB and the forest wing of the Ministry on the one hand, and with the State Forest Departments on the other. The Director General, Forest who is a special Secretary in the Ministry should therefore be the Chief Executive of the NAEB. The programmes of NAEB have to be implemented through the forest departments of the various states and the need for close working will increase exponentially when the outlays for the NAEB increase. The appointment of the Director General, Forests as the Chief Executive of NAEB will go a long way in securing this coordination also. As the work load of NAEB increases, the

Director General, Forest would have less time for his role as the Special Secretary in the Ministry. It will therefore be necessary to put in suitable arrangements whereby the Director General Forests, in his capacity as Special Secretary has to devote attention only to IFS cadre management matters as well as to the more important issues on the forest side.

3.12 The NAEB today has a complement of 91 staff of whom 19 are Group A officials including IFS officers and scientists. As the volume of work increases sharply there could be a need for increasing the number of senior level officials on the technical/scientific/managerial side in this organisation. At the same time it will be necessary for the organisation to shed a large complement of support staff. Even the adoption of the pattern as suggested for the NRCD could lead to a reduction of over 30 officials at the Group 'C'/Group 'D' level. This should be done straightaway and as this work is organized on more modern and efficient manner, making full use of the advances made in communication technology, the number of support staff could be reduced further.

3.13 The NAEB today now has a Council, which is rather unwieldy with over 30 members. This Council which is presided over by the Minister for Environment & Forests should be made a more compact one. Its membership could consist of the Secretaries of the concerned Ministries – Environment and Forest, Expenditure, Rural Development, Land Resources, Agriculture and Water Resources and also have half-a-dozen of leading lights of NGOs and eminent persons in this field. The Director General as the Chief Executive would function as the Member Secretary. While the Council could meet once in three or six months, there could be a Board presided over by the Secretary of the Environment Ministry and consisting of Secretary (Expenditure), Secretary (Rural Development) and the Directorate General, Forest to meet every month to take decisions on all operational matters. This way the NAEB could be put on a single file system with the Ministry instead of its proposals having to be examined afresh in the Ministry.

#### ***d. Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education***

3.14 For placing forestry research on a sound footing, it was considered necessary to set up an apex body to serve as an umbrella organisation for both forest research and education. The result was the establishment of Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) in December 1986. This body was made an autonomous organisation in June 1991. The major objectives of the council are:

- (1) to undertake, promote and coordinate forestry education, research and its application.
- (2) to develop and maintain a national information centre for forestry and allied services.
- (3) to act as a clearing house for research and general information relating to forest and wild life.
- (4) to develop forest expansion programmes and propagate the same.
- (5) to provide consultancy services in these areas.

3.15 It has under its charge eight research institutes and three advanced centres in various parts of the country catering to the research need of different biographical regions of the nation. The eight research institutes are:

- (1) Forest Research Institute (FRI), Dehradun
- (2) Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding (IFGTB), Coimbatore
- (3) Institute of Wood Science and Technology (IWST), Bangalore
- (4) Tropical Forest Research Institute (TFRI), Jabalpur
- (5) Institute of Rain and Moist Deciduous Forests Research (IRMDFR), Jorhat
- (6) Arid Forest Research Institute (AFRI), Jodhpur
- (7) Himalayan Forest Research Institute (HFRI), Shimla
- (8) Institute of Forest Productivity, (IFP), Ranchi

3.16 It also has numerous divisions and centres each addressing a specialised area of requirement.

3.17 ICFRE has a total staff strength of over 2800, including 1526 scientific and technical officials. The Forest Research Institute, Dehradun is the oldest (set up in 1906), the largest (has a staff strength of more than 1600) and also the most well known, domestically and internationally, for its pioneering work in research as well as education in the forest sector.

3.18 A common perception, shared even at the senior levels of the Ministry is that the range of activities of the ICFRE is so wide and diverse that its work lacks focus. Some of the areas of work are no longer relevant while some others could be better done in the private sector. The staff strength is also excessive. For instance, the Institute of Applied Manpower Research (IAMR) which had undertaken the human resource development consultancy work in 1998 of ICFRE and its institutes has placed the surplus staff strength at 494 in FRI, 42 in AFRI, 40 at TFRI, 90 at IRMDFR, 37 at IWST, 33 at IFGTB, 18 at HFRI and 25 at IFP! The surplus staff identified is well over 25% of the total staff strength of these organisations. IAMR has also pointed out that even at the level of scientists and research and technical assistants there is no need for fresh recruitment for some years to come. The report has further pointed out that in most institutes LDCs do not have enough work; that vehicles holding and drivers strength would need to be rationalised; that the cellulose and paper plant has been non-functional; that the three presses put up with huge capital cost are functioning much below capacity; etc. etc.

3.19 In the circumstances it is necessary that the Ministry undertakes urgently, through a group of experts a review of the functions and activities of ICFRE, so as to identify the core areas on which it should focus and undertake all its activities in a time bound manner; shed all those activities which are either no longer relevant or could be better undertaken by the private sector; and downsize the staff strength to make these organisations lean and efficient ones. Pending such a comprehensive and detailed analysis, some of the areas, as identified in the course of discussions with concerned officials, which could be taken up for examination straightaway are:

- (a) Shifting of the Centre for Social Forestry and Eco Rehabilitation (CSFER) from Allahabad to Dehradun.
- (b) need for the ICFRE Centre at Hyderabad
- (c) need for a Paper and Pulp Division at Dehradun – a national level institute is functioning at Sahranpur.
- (d) need for maintaining the three printing presses.
- (e) need for continuance of activities like wood working, wood treatment or paper, all of which are best left to the private sector
- (f) feasibility of merging the Forest Product Division of FRI with IWST, Bangalore; and the Chemistry Division with the MFP Division at FRI, Dehradun
- (g) shifting of the Extension Division to ICFRE headquarters;
- (h) shifting of the Sociology Division at IFGDB, Coimbatore to the ICFRE headquarters; etc.

3.20 At the other end of the spectrum, the Jorhat Institute of ICFRE with the sub centre at Aizwal, Mizoram –would need to be strengthened. Likewise tropical forest related applied research activity has come to occupy international importance in view of the U.N. Convention on Biological Diversity, the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol and developments to bring into being a Convention of Forestry. This area of work would also need to be strengthened.

3.21 Given the scope as well as need for large scale downsizing, pending the exercise suggested above except for some key posts, the 936 vacant posts, including the 455 at scientific, research and technical levels abolished straightaway.

**e. *Botanical Survey of India, Zoological Survey of India and Forest Survey of India***

3.22 Currently Botanical Survey of India (BSI) and the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) are looked after on the Environment side of the Ministry and the Forest Survey of India (FSI) is looked after on the Forest side. This bifurcation of

supervision is quite artificial and goes against the need to integrate the information and data available with the three Surveys. As Ecological thematic mapping is the need of the hour, it is necessary that the responsibility for overseeing the functioning of these three organisations should vest in one senior officer – say the Additional Secretary – in the Ministry. Map preparation has to keep pace with survey work which today has been speeded up vastly, thanks to remote sensing techniques. It is ascertained that the limiting factor is non-availability of technical staff at certain key positions, while availability of (expensive) machinery for map preparation could be considered adequate. In both ZSI and BSI, there is need for increasingly adopting modern approaches to taxonomy like DNA finger printing and adopting of surveying techniques like Global Information and Positioning Systems (GIS, GPS). These organisations should also be involved in implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity and the proposed National Biodiversity Act. Adoption of GIS, GPS techniques would reduce significantly the time taken in conducting field surveys and in cutting down the requirements of non-scientific and non-technical manpower. Thus, in these organisations, particularly in FSI and BSI there may be a need for some strengthening in the scientific and technical cadres. At the same time there is need for a drastic pruning at the support staff levels. In these scientific/technical organisations the ratio between such officers and support staff - should not be allowed to exceed 1:1.5 or at the maximum 1:2. Increased use of IT based office equipments, and farming out of some of the support services, would help to achieve these ratios, leading to a substantial increase in productivity and fall in expenditure outgo. The SIU could be required to undertake and complete this redetermination of staff strength in these organisations within a three months period so that such changes as become necessary could be put in place before the commencement of next financial year. Based on a work study review, 180 posts have been abolished in BSI in August 1999.

**f. Directorate of Forest Education, Dehradun**

3.23 The Directorate has four State Forest Service Colleges under its administrative control. In addition to this, the Directorate has control over admissions, curricula and conduct of examinations in five state government run forest colleges. Of the four under its direct administrative control, efforts have been made from time to time to transfer the colleges at Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu), Burnihat (Assam) and Kurseong (West Bengal) to the respective State Government and keeping only the college at Dehradun under the Central Government. The reluctance of the State Governments to take over these colleges may be, in part, due to many State Governments not making yearly recruitments to state forest service cadres – some have not done so for many years. In the absence of regular recruits, these colleges end up by conducting occasional in-service courses for officers at present. The available infrastructure could be utilised for providing training on a regular basis to the other cadres of the Forest Departments as also to those of some of the allied departments. The efforts for handing over the three colleges to the concerned State Government should be renewed and as an incentive, grants could be offered on a sliding scale, for meeting the recurring expenditure in the initial years.

**g. Autonomous Organisations**

3.24 Inclusive of ICFRE, which has already been dealt with, there are seven autonomous organisations functioning under this Ministry. The other six are :

1. G.B.Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development at Kosi-Kataman;
2. Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), New Delhi
3. Indian Institute of Forest Management (IIFM), Bhopal
4. Wild Life Institute (WLL), Dehradun
5. Indian Plywood Industries Research & Training Institute (IPITRI), Bangalore
6. Central Zoo Authority (CZA), New Delhi

3.25 For all seven taken together the total budget support in year 2000-2001 was over Rs.110 crore. Of this ICFRE and CPCB accounted for Rs.80 crore. The total internal resources raised by these organisations last year was less than Rs.5 crore – in other words these organisations are more or less fully funded by government.

3.26 Most autonomous organisations, in practice, function more as subordinate offices, with little freedom or autonomy in managing their affairs, while at the same time not receiving adequate attention of the Ministry. All government procedures and financial rules are implicitly followed without any change. This position can change only if the dependence on budget support can be reduced to less than 50% of the recurring expenditure. As such, and also as due to fiscal constraints, government budget support for such organisation as a proportion of their recurring expenditure could be reduced in the coming years, it is therefore necessary to put in place arrangements under which these organisations are required to:

- (a) spell out clearly the core activities, which could then be addressed in a focussed and time bound manner;
- (b) shed unnecessary activities, staff and expenditure; and
- (c) meet an increasing part of their expenditures through maximising internal resources, charging fees for services rendered and seeking resources from other sources (like project finances).

3.27 For instance IIFM could endeavour to raise more resources by levying appropriate levels of fees for the various courses run by it. The association of a suitable NGO or an outside professional body in the management as well as part financing of the National Zoo Park in Delhi could be considered. Likewise when funds are made available for Zoos run by State Governments, such association of NGOs or outside professional bodies could be stipulated. The management responsibility of IPITRI could be vested in private units which are quite large and well modernised. The G.B.Pant Institute could seek project assistance, particularly from external donors.

3.28 All these efforts would require that these organisations be given greater freedom and flexibility in organising their work and managing their affairs. As such the Ministry in turn should be willing to dilute its overall control over these organisations.

3.29 It is therefore recommended that these autonomous organisations be informed straightaway that budget support could be progressively reduced in the coming years and also that the Memoranda of Understanding should clearly set out the action to be taken by them in the three areas listed earlier, even as the Ministry on its part will should itself to the dilution of its control over the organisation giving it greater freedom and flexibility in managing its affairs. By way of encouraging these organisations to move in this direction, they could be informed that the budget support in the year 2002-03 would be reduced by 10%.

***h. Centres of Excellence:***

3.30 There are seven centres of excellence promoted by the Ministry so far. These are:

1. Centre for Environment Education (CEE), Ahmedabad
2. CPR Environment Education Centre (CPREEC), Chennai
3. Centre for Ecological Science, Bangalore
4. Centre for Mining Environment, Dhanbad
5. Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology & Natural History (SACON)
6. Centre for Environmental Management of Degraded Ecosystem (CEMDE), Delhi
7. Tropical Botanic Garden & Research Institute (TBGRI), Trivandrum

3.31 The provision, by way of Budget Support for these seven centres is Rs.6.50 crores in BE 2001-02. The internal resources generated and funds raised from other sources by many of these organisations are quite negligible. SACON is more or less fully funded by the Ministry while at the other end no budget support was extended to TBGRI last year. Where there is more or less full funding, all government procedures and financial rules are followed and government scales of pay are also adopted. The implication of full funding under such conditions is that the salary commitment is considered as a liability to be

borne by government. Thus unless this arrangement is terminated early, such centres, with all their staff and other commitments will become a permanent liability for the government, a liability that was not contemplated when the Ministry agreed to extend support for these centres of excellence. At the same time because of fiscal constraints the budget support for these centres is likely to be reduced in the coming years.

3.32 While efforts for promoting environmental research and extension by such centres needs to be encouraged, it is equally necessary for government to inform these bodies that not only could government budget support be reduced in the coming years, because of fiscal considerations, but also that it could be in the form of lump sum grants not earmarked for specific purposes like salary etc. Those centres of excellence which are dependent, on substantial budget support should also be encouraged to reduce, within the next few years, the dependence on government budget support to less than 50% of the recurring expenditure by following the suggestions made in the case of autonomous organisations. In such cases the MOUs should also spell out clearly dilution of government control and the manner in which these Centres will have greater freedom and flexibility in managing their affairs. Those Centres, like TBGRI, which may not require budget support, except for small amounts, and that too only for specific projects/activities, could be exempt from this procedure.

***i. Environmental Information Service Centres***

3.33 Under this scheme, started in 1983, the Ministry has so far helped set up 26 Environmental Information Service Centres (ENVIS). In each case an existing institution was encouraged to set up the centre, by giving a grant initially for funding the hardware, and later, every year, a project finance support. A provision of Rs.1.25 crore has been made in BE 2001-02 for this scheme, compared to an actual expenditure of Rs.1.87 crore last year.

3.34 The outgo, in respect of each Centre is not large – the maximum is under Rs.8.50 lakhs for the Annamalai University , the Centre on Mangroves, estuaries, coral reefs and lagoons. Thus it is very a cost effective way of environmental

data in a large number of areas. However considering that as many as 26 centres have been assisted so far, with many of these in position for 15 years or more, it is necessary to review the work output of these centres, so that those that are not functioning well or serving an useful purpose can be closed down, or at least government support withdrawn. Till such a review is completed, there should be a ban on funding of new ENVIS Centres.

***j. Main Ministry***

3.36 An internal work measurement study undertaken by the Ministry in 1993 identified 105 posts as surplus but at the same time endorsed the need for creation of 51 posts, leading to a net surplus of 54. The category wise distribution of these posts is at Annex IV. It is understood that the Ministry has abolished 51 of the posts identified as surplus and also surrendered 47 more posts, mostly in the civil construction wing in response to the requirement of enforcing a 10% cut in staff strength. As will be seen from the break up statement, the creation of 51 posts recommended in the internal work study included 34 posts by way of leave reserve in categories like Assistants, UDCs, LDCs, Stenos, peons etc. Considering the large number of posts even otherwise available in each of these categories and also the fact that most officials tend to accumulate leave in order to encash it at the time of retirement, clearly there is no need for creating afresh leave reserve posts. The Ministry should therefore take action to abolish the remaining 54 posts identified earlier as surplus, retaining the flexibility to fill up only a few positions that are crucial for the efficient discharge of work.

3.37 The Ministry has its regional offices at Bangalore, Bhopal, Bhuvaneshwar, Lucknow, Shillong and Chandigarh. These offices follow up the conditions stipulated while giving environmental and forest clearances. Each office at present has one Conservator of Forests, two Deputy Conservators of Forests, four Scientists and necessary support staff. The total sanctioned strength of all these offices is 196 of whom 144 are in position. In the case of environmental clearances in most cases the follow up work takes the shape of getting reports from the state Pollution Control Boards and forwarding these to Delhi, with such

inspections wherever called for. Considering that the Central Pollution Control Board also has six zonal offices, each with a good complement of scientist staff and support) it should not be difficult for the follow up of the environmental cases to be undertaken by these zonal offices of the CPCB. In the circumstances the posts sanctioned for following up environmental clearances in the 6 regional offices in the ministry could be abolished. The posts sanctioned for following up Forest Clearance cases, together with minimum support staff could however be continued. As the total staff required in these six offices may not exceed 48 (3 forest service officers and five support staff in each office) the remaining 148 posts, including the 52 posts that are vacant as on date need to be abolished. The post of Additional Director General of Forests sanctioned in the Ministry for coordinating the forest clearance cases however needs to be continued, particularly, in view of the other responsibilities also assigned to this official in the Ministry.

3.38 Illegal trade in wild animals and produce thereof is assuming alarming proportions threatening the survival of many an endangered species. As part of the measures for countering this threat, the Ministry is presently planning to set up a wildlife crime cell for creating a data base to facilitate tackling of habitual and professional offenders. This cell is to consist of two officers of the rank of AIG, supported by two data processors. The setting up of this cell is a welcome move. Matching savings should, however, be found by surrendering some posts (not vacant posts) in the Ministry.

3.39 The position of a Special Secretary in any ministry is an anomalous one. This arrangement also tends to dilute the overall responsibility of the Secretary for the efficient discharge of all functions in the ministry. The arrangements suggested, whereby the DG, Forests will function more as the Chief Executive of the NAEB and the assigning of the Environmental clearance work to the Special Secretary should help to correct the situation considerably. The reduction in the flow of routine work from NAEB, NRCS and Environmental Clearance cases should enable the Secretary to focus more on policy formulation, promotional activities and project implementation.

3.40 At present the senior officers at the level of scientists, forest service officers and generalists function in water tight compartments. While this may be unavoidable to some extent, the adoption of a multi-disciplinary approach would call for some flexibility in interchange of these 3 groups of officers at senior level posts. The Ministry could examine this aspect. As pointed out in paragraph 2.13, 2.14 and 2.15. There is need for including specialists from other disciplines also at the Director/Joint Secretary level.

**Ministry of Environment & Forests**  
**Table of Contents –Annex**

Annex I.....	34
Annex II.....	36
Annex III.....	37
Annex IV .....	38
Annex V .....	40

**Allocation of Business**

1. Environment and Ecology, including environment in coastal waters, in mangroves and coral reefs but excluding marine environment on the high seas.
2. Botanical Survey of India and Botanical Gardens.
3. Zoological Survey of India.
4. National Museum on Natural History.
5. The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 (6 of 1974).
6. The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Cess Act, 1977 (36 of 1977).
7. The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 (14 of 1981).
8. The Indian Forest Act, 1927 (16 of 1927).
9. \*\*\*
10. The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 (53 of 1972).
11. The Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 (69 of 1980).
12. The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 (29 of 1986).
13. The Public Liability Insurance Act, 1991 (6 of 1991).
14. Biosphere Reserve Programme.
15. National Forest Policy and Forestry Development in the country, including Social Forestry.
16. Forest Policy and all matters relating to forests and forest administration in so far as the Andaman and Nicobar Islands are concerned.
17. Indian Forest Service.
18. Wild Life Preservation and protection of wild birds and animals.
19. \*\*\*
20. Fundamental research including coordination thereof and higher education in Forestry.
21. Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park.
22. National Assistance to Forestry Development Schemes.
23. Indian Plywood Industries Research Institute, Bangalore.
24. National Afforestation and Eco-Development Board.
25. Desert and Desertification.

**MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS**

As on 31.8.2001

**Sanctioned Staff Strength**

1	Ministry proper	857
	of which NRCD : 117	
	NAEB : 94	
2	CPCB, New Delhi	517
3	NMNH, New Delhi	153
4	Wild Life Institute, Dehradun	166
5.	G.B. Pant Institute	84
6	National Delhi Zoo Park	269
7	IIFM, Bhopal	157
8	BSI, Calcutta	1374
9	ZSI, Calcutta	1194
10	ICFRE group	2802
	of which FRI : 1642	
	IGNFA : 92	
11	A&N Island Corporation, Port Blair	518
12	Others	969
	Total	9060

## Annex IV

The tentative assessment of the SIU in respect of Non-Scientific Posts at the Headquarters of DPD at New Delhi (excluding the Regional Offices at Allahabad and Calcutta) is as follows:

S.No.	Category of Post	Sanctioned Strength in Delhi	In position at the time of study	Assessment	Remarks
1.	Director	2	1	1	
2.	Jt Director	1	1	1	
3.	Dy. Secretary	2	1	1	
4.	Under Secretary	2	2	-	
5.	PAO	1	1	1	
6.	Desk Officer	-	-	3	
7.	Section Officer	2	2	1	
8.	Hindi Officer	1	1	-	
9.	Hindi Translator	2	1	1	(To be diverted to Ministry)
10.	Draftsman	2	1	1	
11.	Accountant	1	1	1	
12.	Assistant	7	6	6	
13.	UDC	5	2	2	
14.	LDC	7	7	6	
15.	Staff Car Driver	4	4	1	
16.	Despatch Rider	1	1	1	
17.	Pvt. Secretary	8	5	2	

18.	Steno Gr, 'C'	12	1	3	
19.	Steno Gr. 'D'	2	7(+ 3D/W) (+3 Adhoc)	4	
20.	Gestetnor Operator	1	1	1	
21.	Daftry	3	3	3	
22.	Jamadar	1	1	1	
23.	Peons	14	16 (+ 2D/W)	9	
24.	Safaiwala	3	3	1	
25.	Farash	2	1 (+1D/W)	1	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>52</b>	

**Annex V****Sanctioned and Assessed Strength in Ministry Proper**

S.No.	Category	Sanctioned Strength	Assessed Strength
	Group 'A'		
1.	Secretary	1	1
2.	I.G.F.	1	1
3.	Additional Secretary	1	1
4.	Additional IGF	2	2
5.	Joint Secretary	5	5
6.	Advisor	5	5
7.	Director (PT)	1	1
8.	Director/Deputy Secretary	7	5
9.	Director (AOW)	1	--
10.	DIGs/Director (AW)	6	5
11.	Additional Director (WL)	2	2
12.	AIGs	7	8
13.	Dy. Director (PT)	1	1
14.	Dy. Director (WL)	1	2
15.	Dy. Director (State)	1	1
16.	Scientist (SG)		1
17.	Scientist (SF)		17
18.	Scientist (SE)	63	14
19.	Scientist (SD)		11
20.	Scientist (SC)		7
21.	Dy. Director (OL)	1	1
22.	Senior Analyst	1	1
23.	Under Secretary	10	9

24.	Joint Director (Legal)	1	-
25.	Joint Director (O&M)	-	1
26.	Principal (PS)	2	2
27.	Helicopter (Pilot)	1	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>105</b>
	Group 'B'		
1.	Desk Officer	5	9
2.	Section Officer	27	28
3.	Junior Analyst	1	1
4.	Protocol Officer	1	1
5.	Accounts Officer	1	1
6.	PS (Sr.PA)	23	20
7.	TO(F)	3	3
8.	RO(Env.)	3	3
9.	RO(WL)	2	1
10.	Assistant Dir(OL)/Assistant Editor	2	2
11.	Sr. Hindi Translator	2	2
12.	Protocol Assistant	1	1
13.	Accountant	5	4
14.	Assistant	58	37 +4 (LR)
15.	Steno Grade 'C'	30	37+4 (LR)
16.	Legal Assistant	1	-
17.	RA(WS)	1	2
18.	Accounts Assistant	1	1
19.	Desk Attache	2	1
20.	RAs	20	17+2 (LR)
21	RI	9	3

22.	Sr. Library Information Assistant	-	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>175 +10 (LR)</b>
	Group 'C'		
1.	Jr. Hindi Translator	3	3
2.	Technical Assistant (WL)	3	3
3.	Jr. Tech. Assistant	3	1
4.	Caretaker	1	1
5.	UDC	41	29
6.	Steno Grade 'D'	57	33 + 3 (LR)
7.	Cateloguer (LIA)	1	1
8.	Data Entry Operator (Gr.A)	5	3
9.	Data Entry Operator (Gr.B)	-	1
10.	LDC	72	73+10 (LR) on UDC & LDC
11.	Reprographer	1	1
12.	Staff Car Driver	19	19
13.	Telex Operator	1	1
14.	Telephone Operator	2	2
15.	Despatch Rider	1	2
16.	Sr. Gestetner Operator	1	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>174+13 (LR)</b>
	Group 'D'		
1.	Jr. Gestetner Operator	1	1
2.	Record Sorter	1	1
3.	Jr. Library Attendent	1	2
4.	Daftry	23	28+(LR)
5.	Jamadar	7	15+1(LR)

6.	Farash	7	7	+8LR-19
7.	Safaiwala	24	24	
8.	Peon	95	75	
9.	Chowkidar	10	3	
10.	Mali	-	1	+1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>+11 (LR)</b>

Summary

Group	Sanctioned Strength	Assessed Strength	Surplus
A	121	105	16
B	198	185	13
C	211	187	24
D	169	169	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>699</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>54</b>