



REPORT NO.

378

**PARLIAMENT OF INDIA
RAJYA SABHA**

**DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE
ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND
CLIMATE CHANGE**

THREE HUNDRED SEVENTY EIGHTH REPORT

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (2023-2024) OF THE MINISTRY
OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(DEMAND No. 28)**

*(Presented to the Rajya Sabha on 15th March, 2023)
(Laid on the Table of Lok Sabha on 20th March, 2023)*



**Rajya Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi
March, 2023/ Phalguna, 1944 (Saka)**

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COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

(2022-23)

(Constituted w.e.f. 13th September, 2023)

1. **Shri Jairam Ramesh - Chairman**

RAJYA SABHA

2. Shri Anil Baluni
3. Shri Niranjan Bishi
4. Shrimati Seema Dwivedi
5. Ms. Indu Bala Goswami
6. Shri Joginipally Santosh Kumar
7. Shri Jose K. Mani
8. Shri Parimal Nathwani
9. Shri Nabam Rebia
10. Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav

LOK SABHA

11. Shrimati Sajda Ahmed
12. Shri Guharam Ajgalley
13. Shri Jashwantsinh Sumanbhai Bhabhor
14. Dr. Dhal Singh Bisen
15. Shri Sudarshan Bhagat
16. Shri Sunny Deol
17. Shri Anantkumar Hegde
18. Shrimati Jyotsna Charandas Mahant
19. Dr. Swami Sakshiji Maharaj
20. Shri Asaduddin Owaisi
21. Shri Kotha Prabhakar Reddy
22. Dr. Jayanta Kumar Roy
23. Shri Mahesh Sahoo
24. Dr. M.P. Abdussamad Samadani
25. Shri Francisco Cosme Sardinha
26. Shri Anurag Sharma
27. Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh
28. Dr. Ramapati Ram Tripathi
29. Shri Mansukhbhai Dhanjibhai Vasava
30. Shri Ram Shiromani Verma
31. *Vacant

SECRETARIAT

Shri Pradeep Chaturvedi, Joint Secretary
Shri Narendra Kumar, Additional Director
Shri Sammer Kapoor, Deputy Secretary
Shri Deepak Bhorla, Under Secretary
Shri Thangzasiyam Paite, Committee Officer
Shri Rama Nand, Committee Officer
Shri Ankit Chansoria, Assistant Committee Officer

* Shri S. Jagathrakshakan ceased to be the Member of the Committee w.e.f. 8th December, 2022

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment, Forests and Climate Change, having been authorised by the Committee, present this 'Three Hundred Seventy Eighth Report' on Demands for Grants (2023-2024) of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

2. The Committee considered the Demands for Grants (2023-24) pertaining to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in its meeting held on the 21st February, 2023. It held detailed discussion with the Secretary and other officers of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

3. The Committee expresses its thanks to the officers of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for providing the material and information, to enable it to examine the Demands for Grants of the Ministry for the year 2023-24.

4. The Committee considered and adopted the Report in its meeting held on the 14th March, 2023.

(JAIRAM RAMESH)

NEW DELHI;
14th March, 2023
Phalguna 23, 1944 (Saka)

Chairman,
Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science
and Technology, Environment, Forests and Climate Change,
Rajya Sabha.

ACRONYMS

AMRUT	Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation
ATR	Action Taken Report
BS	Bharat Stage
CAP	City Action Plan
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
EC	Environmental Clearance
C&D	Construction and Demolition
CESL	Convergence Energy Services Limited
CNA	Central Nodal Agency
CNG	Compressed Natural Gas
CPCB	Central Pollution Control Board
CPGRAMS	Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System
CS	Central Sector Schemes
CSS	Centrally Sponsored Schemes
DISHA	District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee
EAC	Expert Appraisal Committee
EAP	Externally Aided Project
EFC	Expenditure Finance Committee
ENCORE	Enhancing Coastal and Ocean Resource Efficiency
EPC	Environment Protection Charges
EPR	Extended Producer Responsibility
ERS	Emergency Response System
FAME	Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles
FC	Finance Commission
IRO	Integrated Regional Office
LPG	Liquefied Petroleum Gas
MCF	Million-Plus Cities Challenge Fund
MoEF&CC	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NACs	Non-Attainment Cities
NAMP	National Air Quality Monitoring Programme
NCAP	National Clean Air Programme
NCT	National Capital Territory

NGT	National Green Tribunal
PCCs	Pollution Control Committees
PFMS	Public Financial Management System
PGRS	Public Grievances and Response System
PNG	Piped Natural Gas
PP	Project Proponent
RWAs	Resident Welfare Associations
SACON	Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History
SATAT	Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transportation
SBM	Swachh Bharat Mission
SCN	Show Cause Notice
SNA	Single Nodal Agency
SPCBs	State Pollution Control Boards
TPPs	Thermal Power Plants
UAs	Urban Agglomerations
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UTs	Union Territories

REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change is the nodal agency in the administrative structure of the Central Government for planning, promoting, co-ordinating and overseeing environmental, ecological, forestry and wildlife policies and programmes. Its main activities include:

- conservation and survey of natural resources including flora, fauna, forests, wildlife, aquatic bodies and water resources and eco-systems
- prevention and control of pollution and management of hazardous substances
- protection of the environment and forests, including their biodiversity, mitigation and adaptation to climate change through measures that include afforestation, regeneration of degraded areas, and adoption of cleaner technologies
- promoting sustainable development and better environmental governance while protecting human, plants and animals life, health and welfare
- Facilitate activities related to India's commitments and obligations with three Rio Conventions i.e. UNFCCC, UNCCD and CBD related reporting process
- Facilitate activities related to Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm Conventions and enable India to meet its commitments as per Montreal Protocol under the Vienna Convention.

1.2 The main tools used to discharge its mandate include, *inter alia*, conducting surveys; collecting, compiling and disseminating data and information; undertaking scientific research, extension services and analyses; carrying out impact assessment of developmental projects and programmes; regulating use of natural resources; undertaking regeneration programmes; extending technical, scientific, financial and administrative support to organisations and institutions in the subject fields; imparting education, training, building capacity and generating awareness among stakeholders and the public at large; and promoting international cooperation through bilateral, regional and multilateral initiatives in environment and ecology.

1.3 The institutional set up of the Ministry includes a number of Directorates and Divisions assembled around the main thematic sectors of environment and ecology, forestry and wildlife, afforestation and eco-development. The Ministry has 19 Regional Offices; ten Attached/Subordinate Offices (such as the Botanical, Zoological and Forests Surveys of India, Directorate of Forestry Education, Indira Gandhi National Forestry Academy, National Green Tribunal, Wildlife Crime Control Bureau etc.); Boards and Statutory Bodies (Commission for Air Quality Management, Central Pollution Control Board) and Authorities (such as the National Biodiversity Authority, National Tiger Conservation Authority, Central Zoo Authority) and Autonomous Institutions (such as the Indian Council for Forestry Research and Education, Wildlife Institute of India etc.).

1.4 Consequent upon the decision to do away with the practice of classifying expenditure as 'Plan' and 'Non-Plan' the focus of budgeting and expenditure classification has shifted to revenue and capital expenditure from financial year 2017-18. The revised structure of budgetary support for Schemes/Non-Schemes is as follows:

A. Schemes:

I. Central Sector Schemes:

1. Environmental Knowledge and Capacity Building

2. Environment Protection, Management and Sustainable Development
3. National Coastal Management Programme
4. Decision Support System for Environmental Policy, Planning and Outcome Evaluation
5. Control of Pollution

II. Centrally Sponsored Schemes:

1. National Mission for a Green India
2. Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats
3. Conservation of Natural Resources and Ecosystems

B. Non-Schemes:

- I. **Establishment Expenditure** – Secretariat, Attached/Subordinate offices
- II. **Other Central Expenditure** – Autonomous Bodies, Statutory & Regulatory Bodies and Other Bodies

2. OVERALL BUDGETARY DETAILS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2022-23 (BE, RE & ACTUAL EXPENDITURE) AND ALLOCATION FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2023-24.

2.1 The following table shows the overall budgetary details of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for the year 2022-23 (BE, RE & actual expenditure) and allocation made for the year 2023-24:-

(Rs. in crore)

S.No.	Head	B.E.2022-23	R.E. 2022-23	Actual Expenditure (upto January 2023)	B.E. 2023-24
-NON SCHEME-					
1.	Secretariat	168.74	170.6	130.47	355.44
Attached Offices/Subordinate Offices					
2.	Regional Offices	50	46.1	36.94	47
3.	National Afforestation and Eco-Development Board	8.3	7	4.59	7.5
4.	Forest Survey of India	34	41.5	30.61	43
5.	Indira Gandhi National Forest Academy	48.5	45	35.87	52
6.	State Forest Service and Rangers College	33.5	30	22.69	38
7.	Wildlife Crime Control Bureau	12.5	12.5	8.55	13.5
8.	Botanical Survey of India	85	87	66.69	136
9.	Zoological Survey of India	87.75	92	78.91	104
10.	National Museum of Natural History	22	21	11.94	20
11.	National Green Tribunal (NGT)	106	63.26	44.9	60
National Zoological Park					
12.	Gross Budgetary Support	34.5	33	21.89	37
13.	Less: Gate Receipts	-5	-8	-8	-10
National Authority					
14.	Gross Budgetary Support	250	243.82	132.14	463.25
15.	Less: Amount met from National Compensatory Afforestation Fund	-250	-243.82	-132.14	-463.25
Other Central Expenditure					
Assistance to Autonomous Bodies					
16.	GB Pant Himalayan Institute of Environment and Development	22	24	19.19	25
17.	Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education	210	227.64	227.64	230
18.	Indian Institute of Forest Management	25	25	25	17.5
19.	Indian Plywood Industries Research and Training Institute	7.45	7.45	7.45	--
20.	Wildlife Institute of India	23	24	23	36.5
	Total Autonomous Bodies	287.45	308.09	302.28	309
Statutory and Regulatory Bodies					
21.	Central Pollution Control Board	100	100	73	105
22.	Central Zoo Authority	10	9	7.13	10
23.	National Biodiversity Authority	17.5	15.5	13.19	16.4

S.No.	Head	B.E.2022-23	R.E. 2022-23	Actual Expenditure (upto January 2023)	B.E. 2023-24
24.	National Tiger Conservation Authority	10	10	7.63	11
25.	Commission for Air Quality Management	17	16	10.6	17
	Total Statutory and Regulatory Bodies	154.5	150.5	111.55	159.4
26.	Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON)	9	9	7	--
	-SCHEME-				
	Central Sector Schemes				
27.	Forestry Training and Capacity Building	8.62	6.57	5.6	--
28.	Eco-Task Force	70	80	70	--
29.	Environmental knowledge and capacity Building	--	--	--	92.86
30.	National Coastal Mission	195	4	2.3	12.5
31.	Hazardous Substances Management	4.5	4	2.54	--
32.	Climate Change Action Plan	30	25	6.8	--
33.	National Adaptation Fund	60	34	9.2	--
34.	National Mission on Himalayan Studies	48	30	19.1	--
35.	Environmental Education, Awareness and Training	58.7	12.2	7.7	--
36.	Environmental Information Systems	23.5	22	14.34	--
37.	R&D for Conservation and Development	4.75	2.5	1.4	--
38.	Environment Education, Awareness, Research and Skill Development	--	--	--	87.4
39.	Control of Pollution	460	600	416.6	756
	Total Central Sector Schemes	963.07	820.27	555.58	948.76
	Centrally Sponsored Schemes				
	National Mission for a Green India				
40.	Green India Mission-National Afforestation Programme	317.5	188	97.92	169
41.	Forest Fire Prevention and Management	44.19	26.18	19.34	51
42.	Transfer to sovereign fund		188		169
	Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats				
43.	Project Tiger	300	188	57.96	0
44.	Project Elephant	35	32	8.75	0
45.	Project Tiger & Elephant				331.8
46.	Development of Wildlife Habitats	175	85	50.19	160
47.	Conservation of Natural Resources and Ecosystems				
48.	Biodiversity Conservation	8.5	5	0.04	7
49.	Conservation of Aquatic Ecosystems	50	25	3.07	40
50.	Grand Total (Net)	3030	2478	1707.73	3079.4

Table 1

2.2 The Committee observes from Table 1, that the B.E. allocation to the Ministry for the year 2022-23 was Rs. 3,030 crore which was reduced substantially by almost 19 percent to Rs. 2,478 crore in R.E. 2022-23. The Committee also observes that the B.E. 2023-24 allocation of the Department (Rs. 3,079.40 crore), though higher than the R.E. 2022-23 allocation, is similar to the B.E. 2022-23 allocation.

2.3 The Committee further observes that there has been a drastic reduction under the National Coastal Mission from Rs. 195 crore in B.E. 2022-23 to only Rs. 4 crore in R.E. 2022-23. Further an amount of Rs. 12.5 crore has been allocated under this head in B.E. 2023-24. As regards the head 'Control of Pollution', the Committee observes that a budget of Rs. 460 crore was initially allocated during B.E. 2022-23 which was revised upwards to Rs. 600 crore in R.E. 2022-23. The allocation under the head 'Control of Pollution' is Rs. 756 crore in B.E. 2023-24.

2.4 The following chart shows a comparison of B.E. R.E. and Actual expenditure for the years 2021-22 and 2022-23 along with the proposed allocation demanded and actually allocated for the year 2023-24:-

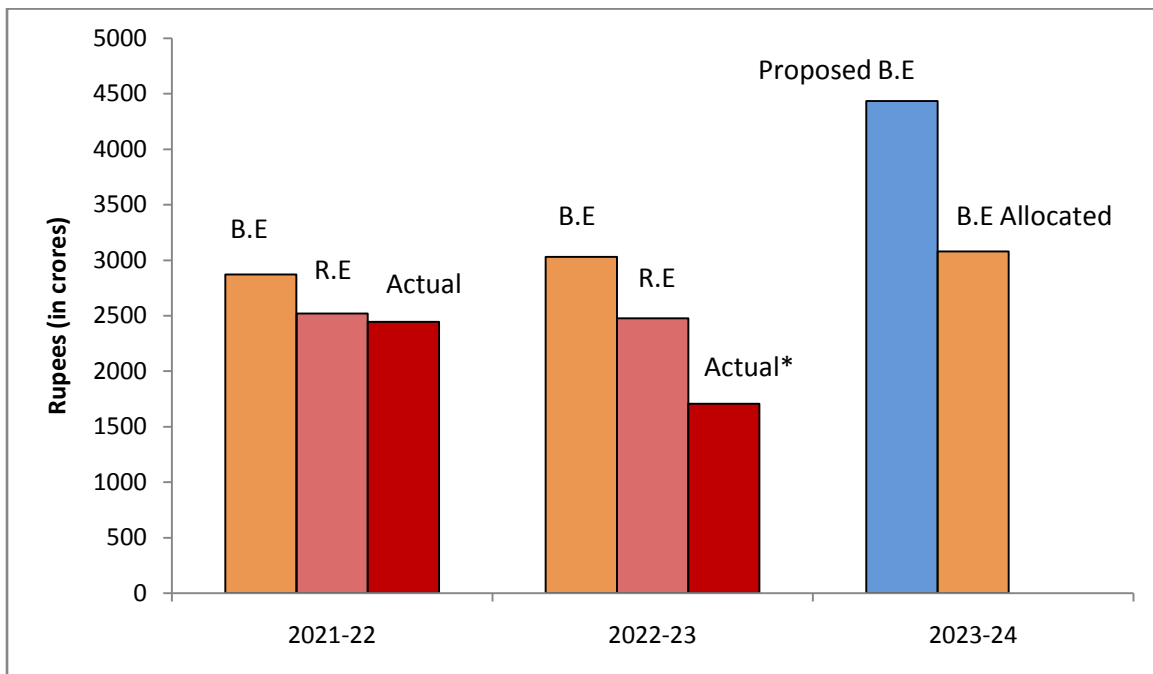


Chart 1

* figures upto January 2023

2.5 On perusal of Chart 1, the Committee observes that the B.E. and R.E. allocation across the years 2021-22 and 2022-23 have remained almost the same. Also, the B.E. 2023-24 allocation is similar to that of B.E. 2022-23. Although the allocation proposed by the Department was Rs. 4434.75 crore but only Rs. 3079 crore got allocated the Department in B.E. 2023-24.

2.6 The Committee further observes that the Actual utilisation of the Ministry in 2022-23 is Rs. 1707 crore (till January 2022-23) against a R.E. allocation of Rs. 2478 crore. This amounts to about 69 percent budget utilisation which falls short of the 75 percent expenditure target set for 3rd Quarter by the Ministry of Finance.

2.7 The following chart shows a comparison between the B.E. 2022-23 and R.E. 2022-23 allocations to the Ministry across its Scheme and Non-Scheme components:-

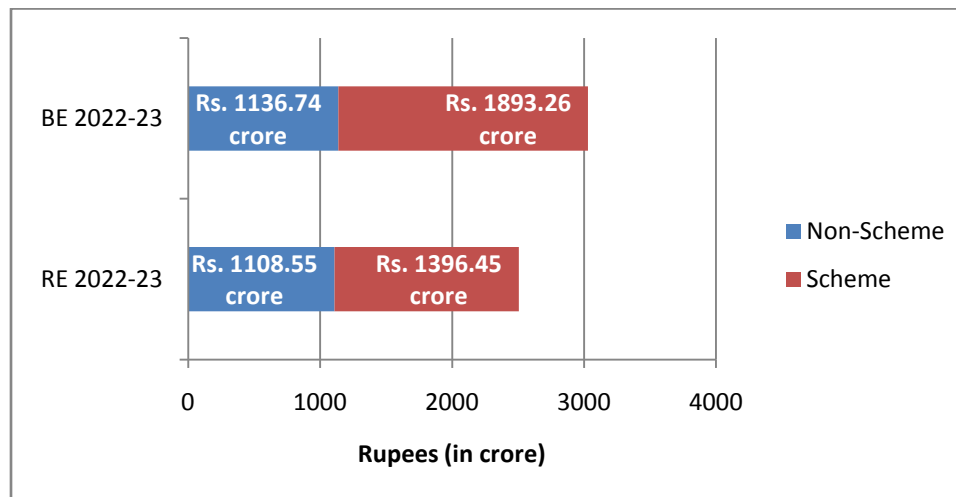


Chart 2

2.8 The Committee observes from Chart 2 that while the allocation under the Non-Scheme component in B.E. 2022-23 and R.E. 2022-23 remained almost the same, the allocation under the Scheme component was revised downwards in the R.E. stage. The allocation under the scheme component was Rs. 1893.26 crore during B.E. 2022-23 which was reduced to Rs. 1396.45 crore during R.E. 2022-23.

2.9 The Committee enquired the Ministry about the reasons for this drastic reduction at the R.E. stage and the impact thereof on the planned initiatives of the Ministry. The Ministry, through a written reply informed that the procedure for release of funds under Central Sector Schemes (CS) and Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) and monitoring procedure for utilization of the funds has been revised. For each Central Sector Schemes (CS), the concerned Ministry will designate an Autonomous Body as the Central Nodal Agency (CNA) to implement the scheme. Every State Government will designate a Single Nodal Agency (SNA) for implementing each CSS. The SNA will open a Single Nodal Account for each CSS at the State level in a Scheduled Commercial Bank authorized to conduct government business by the State Government.

2.10 The Department further stated that the on-boarding of state government onto the revised PFMS regime to comply with above mentioned new instruction took considerable time. Ministry made best efforts to sensitize the state governments to quickly adopt new financial flow procedure. The efficiency of expenditure has picked up and it is expected that the financial flow would be more efficient in 2023-24.

2.11 The Committee is dismayed to note that financial utilization suffered because of a technicality in the manner of disbursement of funds. While the change may have been brought with an intention of reducing parking of funds and loss on interest accrued, the approach should have been one with least collateral damage. The Committee recommends the Ministry to thoroughly review the status of States/Accounts on boarded and the pending disbursements be cleared as soon as possible, so that any projects which could not be initiated/completed due to unavailability of funds may be started/finished.

2.12 Chart 3 depicts a comparison of budgetary allocation for 2023-24 proposed by the Ministry and what was actually allocated.

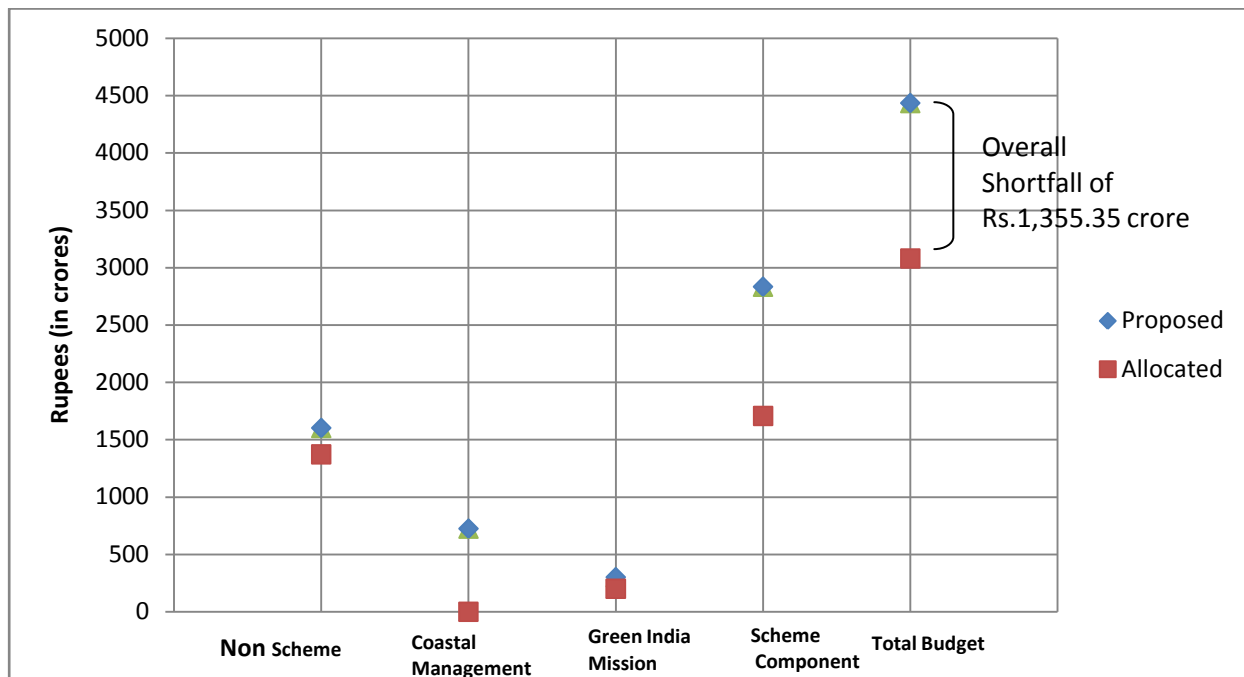


Chart 3

2.13 The Committee observes from Chart 3 that the Ministry sought an allocation of Rs. 4,434.75 crore in B.E. 2022-23 whereas the Ministry received an allocation of Rs. 3079.40 crore. This amounts to a shortfall of Rs. 1,355.35 crore. It can also be observed that the major reduction in allocation is in the Scheme component – a reduction of about 1100 crore. Further, the Committee notes that the reduction under the National Coastal Management Programme is drastic – from a proposed allocation of Rs. 723 crore to only Rs. 12.50 crore.

2.14 The Committee enquired from the Ministry, the impact of the shortfall of funds and any additional budgetary support-over and above the B.E. 2023-24 allocations-that may be needed by the Ministry to ensure smooth execution of its initiatives. The Committee also asked the Ministry, the reasons for such drastic reduction in funds under the National Coastal Management Programme and was informed that the demand of Rs. 723.60 crore was made under the assumption of approval of EAP-ENCORE – a project sponsored by World Bank. But the World Bank later withdrew the offer due to their administrative reason.

2.15 The Committee is perturbed to observe that a reduction of almost 30 percent has been made in the proposed budgetary allocations requested by the Ministry. This may hamper the activities and initiatives of the Ministry across the entire gamut of Environmental protection and ecology management, forest & wildlife conservation as well as assistance to States and UTs. This may also lead to restricted implementation of many initiatives of the Ministry pertaining to Climate Change, Pollution abatement and coastal development.

2.16 The Committee is constrained to highlight the unpreparedness of the Ministry which is manifested in the fact that the Ministry depended on financial resources under the National Coastal Mission, from an outside agency. A setback in terms of administrative procedures from the agency has left the implementation of the initiatives of the Ministry in the loom. If resources are not made available timely, then the vast coastline of the country, the population dependent on it as well as the fragile coastal ecosystem shall face the brunt. The Committee, therefore strongly recommends the Ministry to initiate a strategy and raise the deficit funds, either through the Ministry of Finance or by reaching out to other such agencies.

2.17 The Committee further enquired about the minimum additional budgetary support in addition to the B.E. 2023-24 that may be helpful to the Ministry in allaying any such adverse scenarios. The Ministry gave the following information, as depicted in Chart 4 below:-

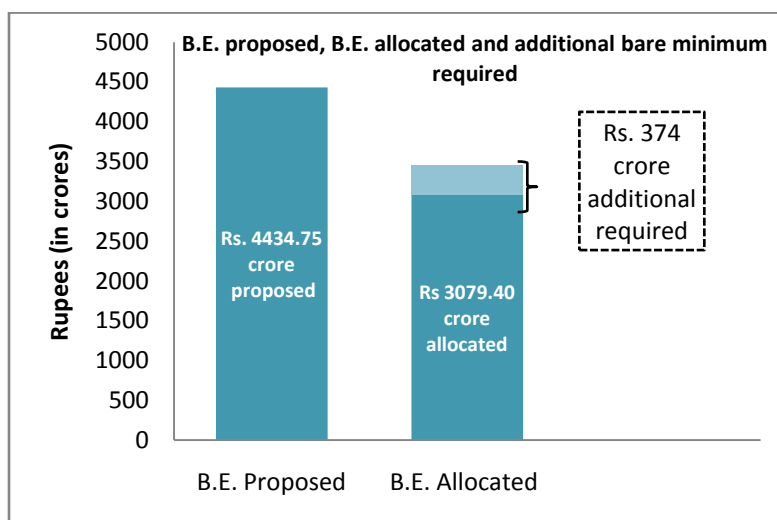


Chart 4

2.18 The Committee observes that an additional budget of Rs. 374 crore in addition to the B.E. 2023-24 allocations is required by the Ministry. Chart 5 gives details of minimum additional budget required by the Ministry across its various budgetary heads:-

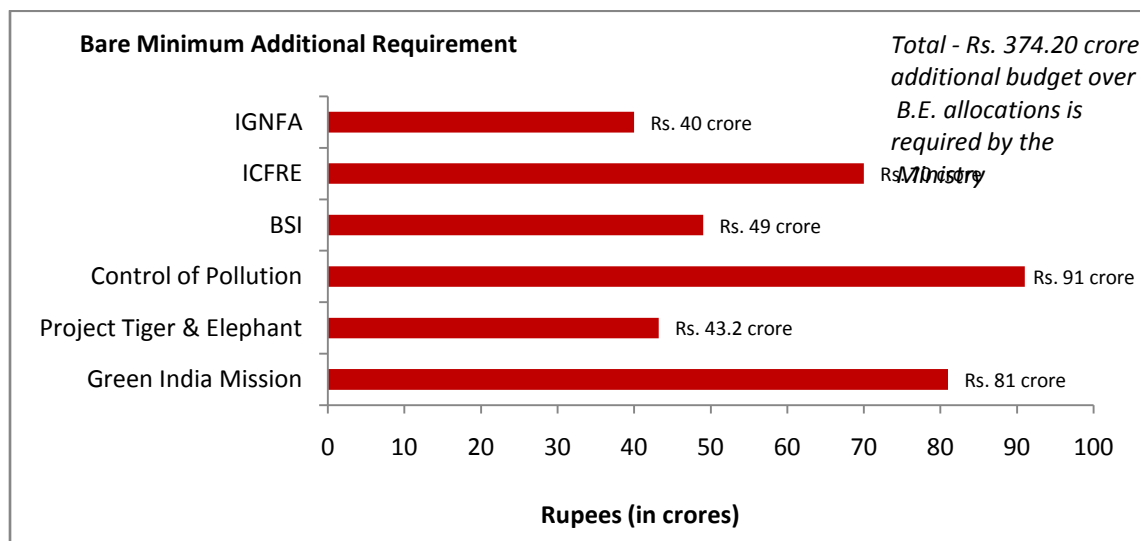


Chart 5

2.19 On perusal of Chart 5, the Committee observes that ‘Green India Mission’ and ‘Control of Pollution’ which are key components of the Ministry’s initiatives towards Environment Protection and management of ecology, require additional budgetary support of Rs. 81 crore and Rs. 91 crore respectively. Like wise, under Project Tiger & Elephant, an additional allocation of Rs. 43.2 crore is required. In addition, the Ministry is need of additional budgetary allocations to its institutions and autonomous bodies engaged in Forestry research, survey and in-situ conservation.

2.20 The Committee underlines the requirement of an additional budgetary allocation of Rs. 374 crore over and above the B.E. 2023-24 quoted by the Ministry and recommends that the

Ministry be given the additional allocation for them to continue with their set goals and objectives and ensure a timely and effective completion.

2.21 The Committee also recommends that the Ministry should reach out to the Ministry of Finance for additional funds at the R.E./ Supplementary stage and also look for raising the same either through internal revenue or through reallocating funds from heads which have excess allocation, if any.

2.22 The Ministry, in response to a question by the Committee on Sector wise allocation in B.E. 2023-24, gave the following information:

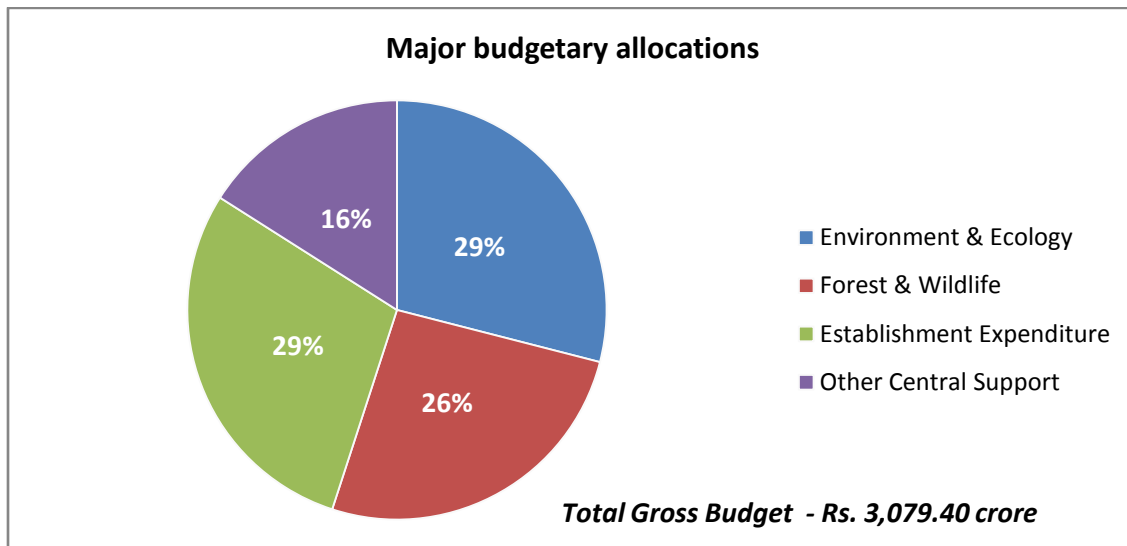


Chart 6

2.23 A perusal of Chart 6 reveals that under two major thrust areas of the Ministry, i.e. 'Environment & Ecology' and 'Establishment Expenditure' and under Establishment expenditure, the Budgetary allocation for B.E. 2023-24 is almost similar.

2.24 The Committee observes (from Table 1) that the allocation under the sub-head Secretariat has been increased by about 108 percent to Rs. 355 crore in B.E. 2023-24 vis-à-vis R.E. 2022-23 which was Rs. 170.6 crore. When asked for the reasons of this substantial increase, the Department submitted that the Central Central Sector umbrella Schemes of "Environmental protection, Management and Sustainable Development" of the Ministry has been shifted from Scheme and is now to be operated as a non-scheme. Hence schemes namely Hazardous Substances Management, Climate Change Action Plan, National Adaptation Fund and National Mission on Himalayan Studies schemes will be operated as a Non-Scheme in FY 2023-24 as per Minutes of the EFC meeting held on 23.11.2022 chaired by Finance Secretary. The Department also submitted that this is the reason why there has been no allocation against these heads in B.E. 2023-24.

2.25 The Committee was also informed that a substantial increase in the capital expenditure under sub-head botanical survey of India during R.E. 2022-23 was Rs. 7 crore only which was increased by about 640 percent to Rs. 51.92 crore in B.E. 2023-24. The reason for this increase is due to the fact that a world class Botanical Garden is being set up in an area of 164 acre under the aegis of Botanical Survey of India at Sector 38 A, Noida.

2.26 The following Charts depict the trend in allocations across some of the budget heads of the Ministry.

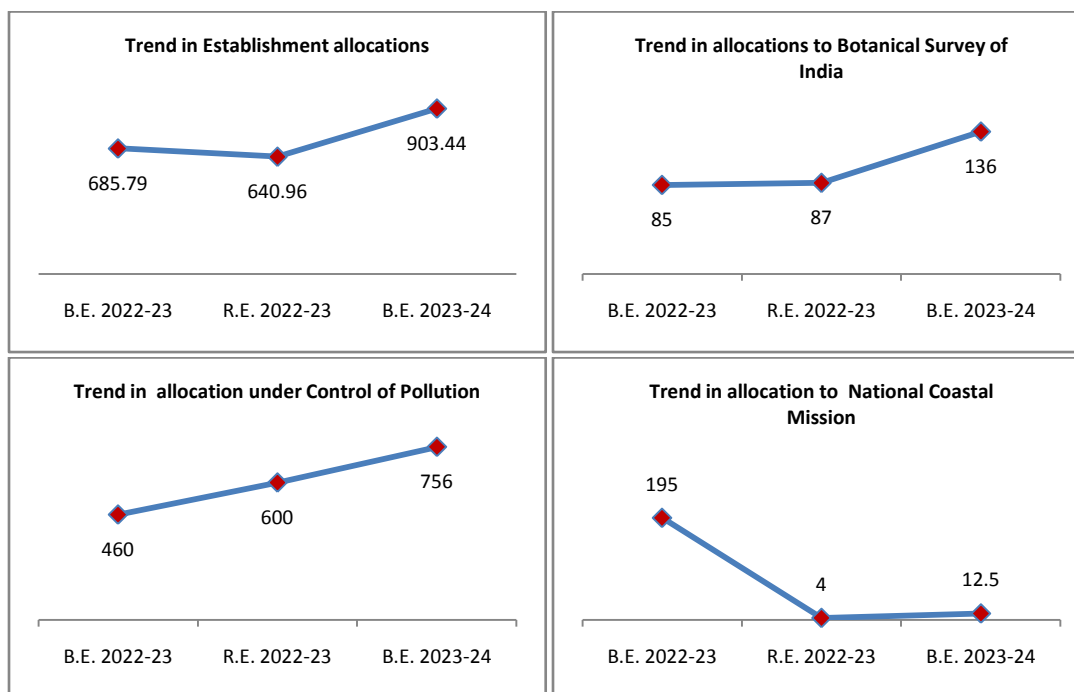


Chart 7

2.27 The Committee observes an increasing trend in the budgetary allocation to Botanical Survey of India and Control of Pollution. Further, after showing a minor decline during R.E. 2022-23, the establishment expenditure has shown an increase in allocation in B.E. 2023-24. This is on account of the fact that a few initiatives under the Scheme component have now been shifted to non-scheme component.

2.28. The Committee notes the increasing trend in allocation under Control of Pollution. Whereas the allocation under this head in B.E. 2022-23 was increased by about 43 percent during R.E. 2022-23, it got further increased by about 26 percent during B.E. 2023-24. As against an allocation of Rs 195 crore in National Coastal Mission during B.E. 2022-23 only Rs. 12.5 crore has been allocated in B.E. 2023-24. This has put all planned efforts of the Ministry under this initiative in jeopardy.

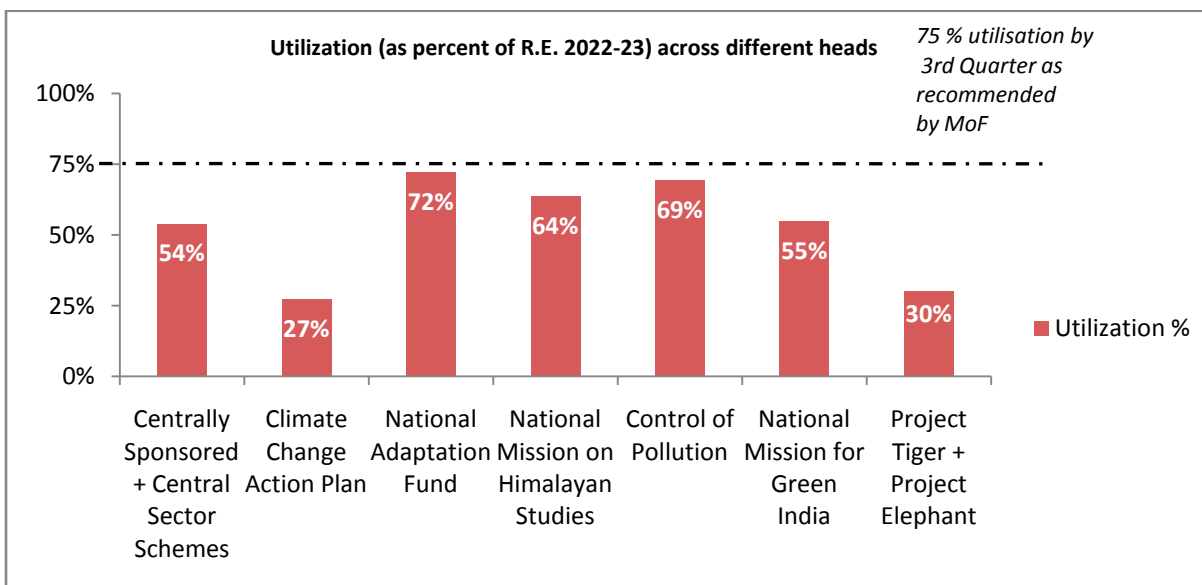


Chart 8

2.29 Chart 8 provides a clear picture of the status of utilisation of funds, till January 2023 (as percent of R.E. 2022-23). The overall budgetary utilisation of the Ministry is around 69 percent, which is satisfactory. But a detailed examination reveals that across centrally sponsored and central sector schemes combined, the utilisation is only 54 percent (as percent of the R.E. allocation under these two heads). The combined R.E. 2022-23 allocation was Rs. 1,369 crore out of which the utilisation till January 2023 has been only Rs. 792 crore. The Committee is astonished to observe that across crucial initiatives like Climate Change Action Plan and National Mission for Green India, the utilisation has been grossly suboptimal at 27 percent and 55 percent respectively. Further, the Ministry has been able to utilise only 30 percent of the funds allocated to it under Project Tiger and Project Elephant combined.

2.30 The Committee expresses its deep anguish and disappointment towards the abysmally low utilisation of funds. While the reason, as stated by the Ministry, pertains to a procedural change in disbursement of funds, the Committee views this suboptimal utilisation as an opportunity lost. The Committee therefore recommends the Ministry to take strong, firm and quick actions to ensure that the funds under these heads are utilised to their fullest and that any shortfall in physical targets be compensated in the ensuing financial year.

3. CONTROL OF POLLUTION

Environmental Pollution remains one of the most burning issues impacting lives of Billions of citizens. With the increasing population load, industrialisation and growth of economic activity to cater to the needs of the ever growing population, the environmental ecosystem has been damaged to a great extent. Air and water quality, not just in large cities but also in smaller towns, has deteriorated drastically impacting hundreds of millions of lives. Recognizing the fact that the ill effects of environmental pollution touches everyone's lives, the Committee desired to know about the measures taken by the Ministry towards control and abatement of pollution. The Ministry informed that it had proposed a total financial outlay of Rs. 847.5 crore for the year 2023-24 in the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) Note of the scheme. However, total budget of Rs. 756 crore has been allocated under the BE 2023-24.

3.2 The Ministry gave the following information regarding expenditure and allocations under the head 'Control of Pollution' for the years 2020-21 to 2023-24:

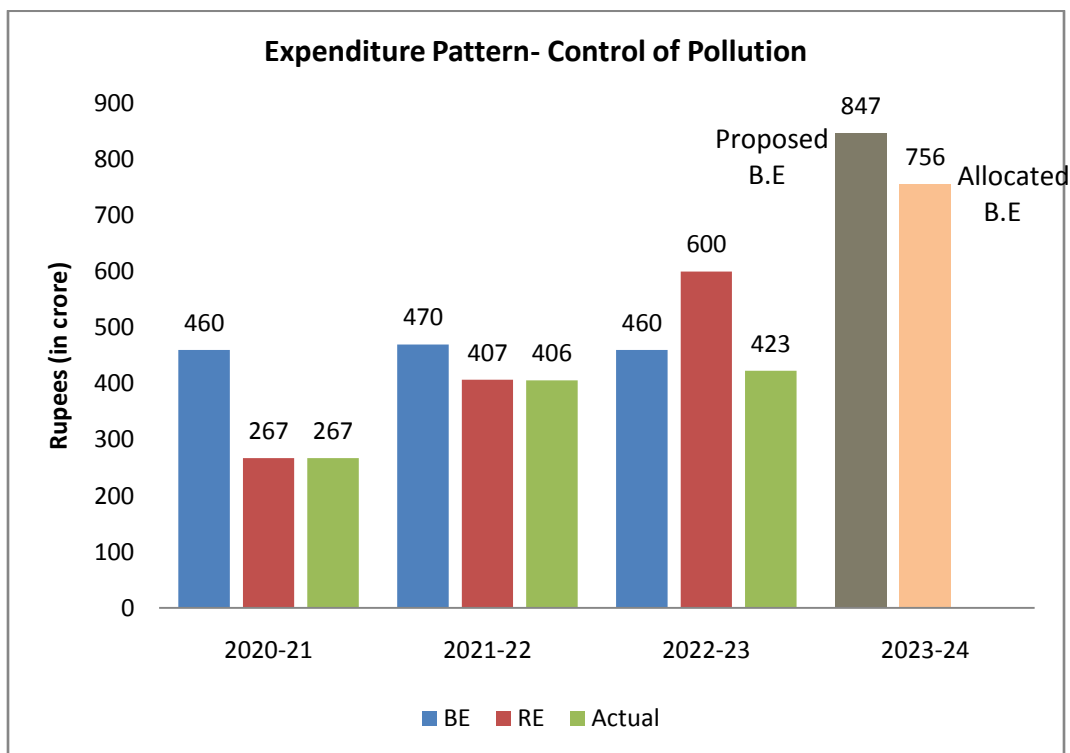


Chart 9

3.3 The Committee observes from Chart 9 that there is a general upward trend in B.E. allocation under the 'Control of Pollution'. Whereas the actual expenditure in 2020-21 was Rs. 267 crore, the B.E. allocation in 2023-24 is Rs. 756 crore. This is an increase of almost 200 percent. The Committee is encouraged to see and appreciates that the actions of the Ministry are being backed by a higher budgetary allocation year-on year. The Committee also notes the physical achievements of the Ministry during 2021-22 and 2022-23 which have been taken towards strengthening of State Pollution Control Boards, NAMP stations assisted, initiatives taken for monitoring of pollution etc.

3.4 The following are the sub-components of the Scheme 'Control of Pollution':

1) Assistance for abatement of pollution

To provide funding to strengthen the weaker State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs), Pollution Control Committees (PCCs) and to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) for enforcing statutory

provisions for the abatement of pollution, “Assistance for abatement of pollution to weaker SPCBs/PCCs and to CPCB” has been incorporated as subcomponent of ongoing central sector scheme “Control of Pollution”

2) National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)

The National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) is a comprehensive time bound action programme launched by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) in January 2019 with an objective to improve air quality in the Non – attainment cities. The cities which are exceeding the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for 5 consecutive years are identified as Non-Attainment cities by CPCB. 124 such NACs are identified by CPCB under NCAP.

Fifteenth-FC has identified 42 cities / urban agglomerations (UA) with million plus population on the basis of severity of air quality and population exposure for objective based grants for period FY 2020-2026 under Million-Plus Cities Challenge Fund (MCF). Out of these 42 MPCs/UAs, 34 cities are included in the list of 124 NACs being targeted in NCAP. Therefore, 132 cities (NACs and MPCs/UAs) are being targeted for improving air quality from NCAP and XV-FC funding and accordingly all the 132 cities have prepared City Action plans (CAP) and approved by CPCB and is rolled out for implementation.

The City Action Plan (CAP) of these 132 cities are to be implemented by coordinated action of state government and its agencies at state and city level. The funding for implementation of CAPs is to mobilised through convergence of resources from various schemes of Central Government such as SBM (Urban), AMRUT, Smart City Mission, SATAT, FAME-II etc. and resources from State/UT Governments and its agencies such as Municipal Corporation, Urban Development authorities and Industrial development authorities etc.

The funding from NCAP/XV-FC is performance-based-supplemental grant for funding of activities of CAP for which adequate funding is not available from other sources and schemes.

3) Environmental Monitoring Programme

The Ministry provides funding to Central Pollution Control Board for monitoring of air quality, water quality and noise monitoring across the country and to support the country wide network of air, water and noise monitoring network.

3.5 The Ministry also informed that the following steps have been initiated by the Government to improve air quality:

- **Vehicular Emission**

1. Leapfrogging from BS-IV to BS-VI norms for fuel and vehicles since April, 2018 in NCT of Delhi and from 1st April, 2020 for rest of the country.
2. Network of metro rails for public transport are being enhanced and more cities are covered.
3. Development of Expressway and Highways is also reducing the fuel consumption and pollution.
4. Eastern Peripheral Expressway & Western Peripheral Expressway has been operationalized to divert non destined traffic from Delhi.
5. Ban on 10-year-old diesel vehicles and 15-year-old petrol vehicles in Delhi NCR.
6. Environment protection charges (EPC) have been imposed on diesel vehicles with engine capacity of 2000cc and above in Delhi NCR.
7. Introduction of cleaner/alternate fuels like CNG, LPG, ethanol blending in petrol.
8. Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles (FAME) -2 schemes have been rolled out.
9. Permit requirement for electric vehicles has been exempted.
10. Promotion of public transport and improvements in roads and building of more bridges to ease congestion on roads.

- **Industrial Emission**

11. Ban on use of pet coke and furnace oil in NCR, use of pet coke in processes in cement plants, lime kilns and calcium carbide manufacturing units.
12. Stringent emission norms for Coal based Thermal Power Plants (TPPs).
13. Shifting of industrial units to PNG/cleaner fuel in Delhi
14. Installation of online continuous emission monitoring devices in highly polluting industries.
15. Shifting of brick kilns in Delhi- NCR to zig-zag technology for reduction of pollution

- **Air Pollution due to dust and burning of waste**

16. Notification of 7 waste management rules covering solid waste, plastic waste, e-waste, bio-medical waste, C&D waste, hazardous waste and battery waste.
17. Setting up infrastructure such as waste processing plants.
18. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for plastic and e-waste management.
19. Ban on burning of biomass/garbage.

- **Other measures for management of air quality**

20. Public Grievances and Response System (PGRS) is developed under NCAP
21. Emergency Response System (ERS) has been prepared in NCAP cities.
22. Air quality monitoring cell has been constituted across the country in NCAP Cities.
23. Implementation of Air Quality Early Warning System for Delhi, Kanpur and Lucknow. The system provides alerts for taking timely actions.
24. Public Complaints regarding air pollution issues in Delhi NCR are taken through 'Sameer App', 'Emails' (Aircomplaints.cpcb@gov.in) and 'Social Media Networks' (Facebook and Twitter).
25. At present ambient air quality is monitored through a network of 1296 manual and real time monitoring stations in 473 towns and cities across 28 states and 7 UTs in the country which is being further strengthened under NCAP.

3.6 The following activities have been undertaken under the National Clean Air Programme during the last three years:

- i. National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) has been launched by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) in January 2019 with an aim to improve air quality in 131 cities covering 24 States by engaging all stakeholders.
- ii. 95 cities out of 131 cities have shown improvement in air quality in terms of PM10 concentrations in FY 2021-22 as compared to base levels of 2017. The improvement in PM10 concentrations in these 95 cities ranges up to 50 percent.
- iii. 41 cities out of 131 cities under NCAP are located in Indo-Gangetic plain. The cities located in Indo-Gangetic plain, on account of typical geography and meteorology, have high base line levels of PM10 concentrations. However, based on the on account of several measures taken by these cities over last few years, 29 cities have shown reduction upto 45 % in PM10 concentrations.
- iv. The action plans at City Level are primarily to be implemented through convergence of resources from schemes of Central Government such as, Swachh Bharat Mission, Smart City Mission, AMRUT, SATAT, FAME II, CESL Grand Challenge, National Biomass Mission and Nagar Van Yojana, resources of the State Government and Urban local bodies.
- v. The implementation of actions of city action plans under National level programmes being run by Central Government in the targeted cities over the period from 2021-22 to 2025-26 will result in intended reduction in PM10 concentrations. The performance based funding mechanism under NCAP and XVth FC from year 2021-22 to 2025-26 will accelerate the implementation of action plans by the State governments, Municipal Corporations and other city level agencies.

- vi. From year 2021-22, performance based grant is being released to 82 cities out 131 targeted cities under NCAP and to remaining 49 cities under XVth Finance Commission. Till date, total of Rs. 872 crores have been released under NCAP (About Rs.572 crores released from January, 2021 till date) and Rs.7910 crore have been released under XVth Finance Commission from November, 2020 till date for funding critical gaps of their city action plans for improvement of air quality.

3.7 The Committee takes a note of the financial resources available with the Ministry towards abatement and Control of Pollution as well as the steps taken by the Ministry in this regard. While some of the measures pertain to monitoring of Pollution and strengthening the infrastructure at State pollution Control Boards and other local agencies others pertain to identification of most vulnerable cities and implementation of City Action Plans.

3.8 The Committee highlights the fact that 131 cities covering 24 States have been identified as target cities under NCAP. Out of these 131 cities, 95 have shown improvement in air quality in terms of PM10. Further, 42 million plus cities have been identified on the basis of severity of air quality and population exposure and Rs. 872 crores have been released under NCAP and about Rs. 7910 crore have been released under Fifteenth Finance Commission to cities for improvement of air quality.

3.9 The Committee sought State-wise details of the funds provided under National Clean Air Programme during 2021-22 and 2022-23. The Ministry gave the following information:

Sl. No	Name of State	2021-22	2022-23	Total
1	Andhra Pradesh	11.48	16.92	28.40
2	Assam	0.00	21.20	21.20
3	Bihar	4.40	4.92	9.32
4	Chandigarh	4.61	3.44	8.05
5	Chhattisgarh	0.00	1.94	1.94
6	Delhi	11.25	22.50	33.75
7	Himachal Pradesh	0.48	2.70	3.18
8	Jammu & Kashmir	12.84	22.56	35.40
9	Karnataka	7.32	14.82	22.14
10	Madhya Pradesh	5.00	6.77	11.77
11	Maharashtra	11.90	65.83	77.73
12	Meghalaya	0.00	0.11	0.11
13	Nagaland	0.93	2.51	3.44
14	Odisha	3.64	38.52	42.16
15	Punjab	0.00	21.63	21.63
16	Rajasthan	0.00	18.26	18.26
17	Tamil Nadu	0.00	4.13	4.13
18	Telangana	0.79	1.01	1.80
19	Uttar Pradesh	16.31	130.00	146.31
20	Uttarakhand	5.67	22.30	27.97
21	West Bengal	0.00	9.17	9.17
	Total	96.62	*431.24	527.86

3.10 The Committee observes from the table above that many large states such as Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and West Bengal have been allocated funds which do not appear to be commensurate with the levels of pollution and population. Further, States with more ecologically sensitive regions such as Himachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland have also received comparatively lesser funds. The Committee is surprised to see that no funds have been allocated to Jharkhand, Rajasthan and Gujarat during this time period. The Ministry also submitted, in a written reply, that many of these 131 cities have shown improvement in concentration on PM10 levels.

3.11 While the Committee underlines the efforts taken by the Ministry towards Control of Pollution and especially Air Pollution through the National Clean Air Programme, it recommends the Ministry to revisit its monitoring framework to ensure that the data captured is not just quantitative but also qualitative. The data provided by the Ministry seems very counter intuitive from what the public experiences at large. While data on PM10 levels suggests that 95 cities out of the 131 non attainment cities have shown improvement, the public experience at large differs. It is therefore pertinent that the monitoring framework should also include a parameter on ‘public experience and social audit’. This shall enable the Ministry to capture the public aspirations in a more holistic manner and shall be helpful in more efficient implementation of NCAP and other measures to control pollution.

3.12 Further, the Ministry should engage with stakeholders, especially with the public representatives from each of these non attainment cities and establish a channel of two way communication. This 360 degree approach shall go a long way in making the fight against pollution a cumulative effort with increased public participation. Inclusion of matters relating to NCAP in the meetings of the District and State level DISHA Committees shall enable active monitoring of progress under NCAP.

3.13 The Committee also recommends that levels of PM2.5 and smaller particles may also be monitored under the National Clean Air Programme more robustly across all cities. In addition, the City Action Plans pertaining to the targeted cities are made available on public portals of the Ministry, promoted through social media, disseminated to schools, colleges, offices, RWAs, etc.

4. PROJECT TIGER AND PROJECT ELEPHANT

Chart 10 below depicts the financial outlay under the head Project Tiger + Project Elephant (combined for the years 2021-22 and 2022-23) and Project Tiger & Elephant for the year 2023-24. It is noteworthy that Project Tiger and Project Elephant were being run as two different schemes until 2022-23 and have been combined into one scheme – ‘Project Tiger and Project Elephant’ in 2023-24.

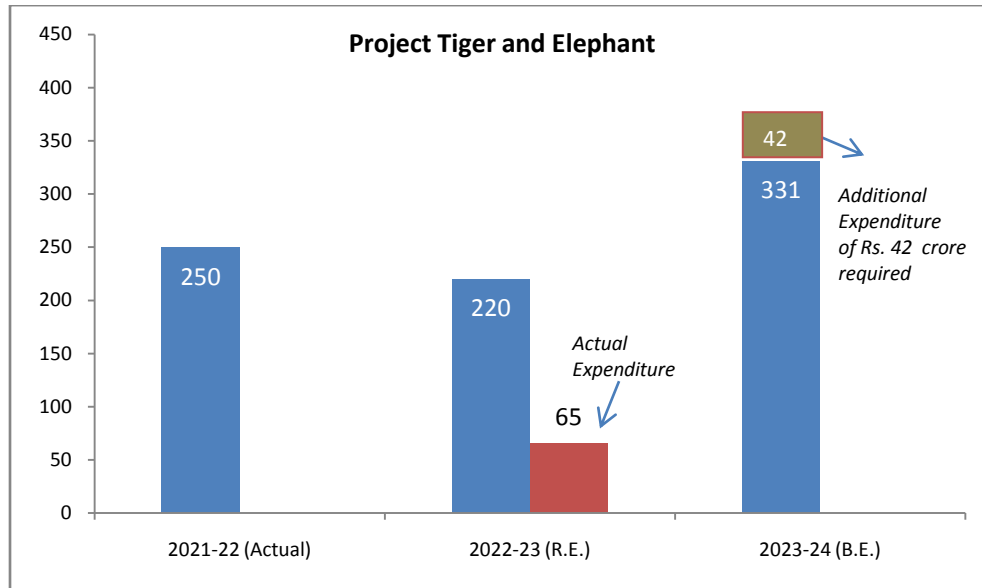


Chart 10

4.2 The Committee observes from Chart 10, that the allocation for Project Tiger and Project Elephant during F.Y. 2021-22 and 2022-23 have remained somewhat same. Further, the actual expenditure in 2022-23 (till January 2023) is a dismal 30 percent only. The Committee enquired from the Ministry the reasons for such gross underutilization and was informed that one of the most prominent reason for reduction in R.E. 2022-23 from B.E. 2022-23 (Rs. 335 crore) is due to implementation of revised procedure for release of funds under Centrally Sponsored Schemes (i.e. Single Nodal Agency) which is implemented since July-2021. Technical issues like mapping in PFMS, reconciliation of Central and corresponding State Share (funds released under different fund sharing ratios for recurring and non-recurring activities) and implementation of guidelines related to SNA issued time to time in the current F.Y., led to slow pace of expenditure in the F.Y. 2022-23.

4.3 The Committee also enquired the Ministry of the impact of reduction at R.E. stage to which the Ministry submitted that reduction at RE 2022-23 stage is adversely affecting the management of core activities like protection, development of habitat, human-tiger conflicts etc. in and around the tiger reserves. The Committee underlines that fact that reduction in allocations at R.E. stage in such crucial initiatives of forest and wildlife conservation is contrary to the basic aim of Government of India's pledge to conserve its Biodiversity.

4.4 Further, the Committee was apprised of the fact that in F.Y. 2016-17 the budget allotted was Rs. 375 crore and number of tiger reserves was 50. Now the number of tiger reserves has gone up to 53 but the B.E. 2023-24 allocation has not gone up commensurate to the increasing expenditures due to increase in area of tiger and elephant reserves, cost of manpower, etc.

4.5 The Committee notes that Project Tiger and Project Elephant are crucial to the initiatives of the Ministry relating to wildlife conservation, not just from an ecological standpoint but also for its societal and economic value. The initiatives of the Ministry, or the lack of it, have a direct

bearing not just to the project but also to the human population living in these vulnerable areas. With increasing reports of man-animal conflicts, it becomes even more important that the Ministry sharpens its focus towards these projects and also allocate more funds for meeting necessary expenditures are met. The Committee therefore recommends that the Ministry ensures that funds allocated in R.E. 2022-23 be optimally utilized. Further, the Ministry should seek additional allocation under this head so as to ensure that no conservation initiative is left because of inadequacy of funds.

5. CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES IN ECOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

Taking cognizance of the ongoing crisis in Joshimanth, Uttarakhand and reports of illegal construction activities in sensitive areas of Mussoorie, Dhanaulti without seeking clearances from the Forest Department, the Committee enquired from the Ministry about the extant practices of giving clearances to construction projects and mechanism for registration of complaints against those acting in defiance. The Ministry submitted that it has delineated a detailed procedure for comprehensive assessment of environmental and social impacts of the project in the Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006, as amended; which *inter-alia* provides for four stages of consideration process i.e., Screening, Scoping, Public Consultation and Appraisal by the Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC), for assessment of environmental and social impacts taking into account the location of the Project and also for monitoring of projects. Study of the aforesaid and other related factors in the context of specific projects forms the basis for preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment/Environmental Management Plan.

5.2 The EAC comprising domain area experts, after detailed examination and deliberations on various environmental and social aspects of the project including appraisal of the studies/information related to seismology, geological profile, study of landslide prone areas, risk analysis studies, recommend the project for grant of Environmental Clearance (EC) by suggesting suitable mitigation measures and Environment Management to minimize the environmental and social impacts associated with the project. It is only after such detailed study and analysis that environmental clearances are issued subject to compliance of necessary environmental safeguards and general and specific conditions by the Project Proponent (PP) before undertaking construction of the project.

5.3 Project specific conditions related to safety measures like installation of Early Warning Telemetric system, implementation of Emergency Preparedness Plan, Disaster Management Plan, Catchment Area Treatment plan, stabilization of muck disposal sites, rim plantation, pasture development, nursery development etc. are also prescribed in the Environmental Clearances.

5.4 Projects involving forest land require Forest Clearance under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. Whenever, a proposal for diversion of forestland is received, it is examined and due diligence is exercised to avoid the use of forestland, or to keep it barest minimum. The Ministry further submitted that issues pertaining to environmental non-compliance, violation or related negligence by the public officials are being reported to the Ministry vide complaint and Public Grievance received through the portal (<https://pgportal.gov.in/>). These complaints are processed by the Ministry as per the existing procedure.

5.5 The Ministry is in the process of developing a web based system to automate the entire process of inspection and compliance monitoring. This system is expected to reduce the time taken for monitoring, enhance coverage and transparency, reduce requirement of significant additional human resources even while ensuring comprehensive compliance of environmental conditions, thereby resulting in greater protection of the environment on a continuing basis.

5.6 On the question of number of complaints received and those disposed of, the Ministry submitted that on an average, it is receiving 15-20 complaints against individual projects on yearly basis, which are being addressed by site inspection, seeking Action Taken Report (ATR) from the project proponent, issuance of Show Cause Notice (SCN) followed by personal hearing, imposition of compensation etc. In addition, other inspection reports from Integrated Regional Office (IRO) reporting non-compliance/violation is also received.

5.7 The complaints are received in CPCB through various channels such as, emails, letters, twitter, Facebook, Sameer app and CPGRAMS. The following table represents the number of complaints received in 2021-22 and 2022-23 addressed to Office of Chairman and Member Secretary, CPCB in form of emails and letters. They were forwarded to concerned SPCBs, Divisional Heads, local agencies, public grievance cell of other Ministries or departments as applicable.

Table 2

Years	Complaint Received
2021-2022	5777
2022-2023	3500

5.8 The Committee was also apprised that the complaints forwarded by Hon'ble Ministers, Hon'ble MPs and Hon'ble MLAs or 'VIP references' are taken on top priority and are handled separately for swift response. Each complaint is resolved through concerned Division or SPCB and inspection by Regional Directorate, as needed.

5.9 As regards disposal of the complaints and other receipts of Non-compliance/violation the number of application processed by the Monitoring Cell of the Ministry for action during year 2021-22 and 2022-23 is tabulated below:

Table 3

Letters issued to IRO for seeking Monitoring Report	18	27
Letters issued to PP seeking ATR	46	74
Letters issued to IRO for verifying ATR	23	50
Letters issued to PP regarding no further action after review of compliance status	1	19
Show Cause Notice	7	28
Others	10	35

5.10 The Committee notes the detailed procedure followed by the Ministry before giving clearances to construction and infrastructure projects and would like to emphasize on the fact that the role of the Ministry is to strike a balance between development and environment protection. The Committee also believes that a one size fits all approach to environment clearance should not be followed, especially for the ecologically sensitive areas of the country such as in Joshimath, Mussoorie, Dhanaulti, etc., which require a more meticulous approach with the only aim of furthering the environmental interests rather than economic interest.

5.11 The Committee also highlights the tremendous increase of tourist activities in these areas which has put the natural resources under pressure. This has led to over-exploitation of natural resources and illegal construction of home stays, guest houses, resorts, hotels, restaurants and other encroachments. In view of the imminent threat to ecological balance caused by these activities, it is pertinent that a thorough assessment of illegal structures be undertaken in

co-ordination with local authorities and strict actions be initiated at the earliest against such illegal constructions, lest it results into a manmade crisis of huge proportions.

5.12 The Committee is constrained to observe, from table 3 that against more than 5500 complaints received in 2021-22, action could only be taken against 100 odd complaints. This does not paint a very rosy picture about the steps that the Ministry is taking towards addressing such complaints. While the idea to create an online mechanism for registration and tracking of complaints is a step in the right direction, the Committee recommends that the Ministry should take aggressive steps towards disposal of non-frivolous and serious complaints against violators of relevant laws. The Committee also recommends that the Ministry should undertake a review of all pending complaints especially pertaining to the State of Uttarakhand and device a strategy with stakeholder institutions such as CPCB, NGT, State Government and redress these at the earliest.

6. CENTRALLY SPONSORED SCHEME (CSS)- DATA REGARDING STATEWISE RELEASES (FY 2021-22)

The following tables give details of State-wise allocations across Centrally Sponsored Schemes of the Ministry for the year 2021-22 and 2022-23:

Rs. in crore (allocation in 2021-22)

S. No.	STATE	Green India Mission	Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats	National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Eco-systems	Forest Fire Prevention and Management System	Biodiversity Conservation	Project Elephant	Project Tiger	Total
1.	MAHARASHTRA	0	0	3	0	0	0	29.91	32.91
2.	TELANGANA	0	0	0	0	0	0	5.43	5.43
3.	JAMMU AND KASHMIR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	0.00
4.	PUNJAB	3.32	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	3.32
5.	KERALA	0	2.96	0	3.63	1.46	5.81	8.69	22.55
6.	RAJASTHAN	0	10.08	0	1.27	0.00	0.15	8.41	19.91
7.	ARUNACHAL PRADESH	13.43	4.20	0	0.90	0.57	1.58	8.69	29.36
8.	TRIPURA	3.75	0.00	0	0.82	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.57
9.	NAGALAND	10.65	3.42	0	0.65	0.00	2.80	0.00	17.51
10.	SIKKIM	7.77	1.83	0.40	0.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.90
11.	MEGHALAYA	0	5.31	0	0.00	1.04	1.42	0.00	7.76
12.	UTTARAKHAND	33.99	2.26	0	3.54	0.00	2.44	14.64	56.87
13.	WEST BENGAL	0	7.57	0	1.33	0.00	0.88	7.08	16.86
14.	HARYANA	9.55	1.27	0	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.00	10.87
15.	GUJARAT	0	0.00	3	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.00
16.	ODISHA	25.50	7.27	1.65	8.40	0.00	5.67	10.57	59.06
17.	TAMIL NADU	0	2.86	0	2.39	0.00	1.82	15.76	22.83
18.	MANIPUR	9.93	1.43	18.00	0.87	0.00	0.05	0.00	30.28
19.	JHARKHAND	0	0.80	0	1.36	0.00	0.87	1.95	4.97
20.	UTTAR PRADESH	0	1.69	0.37	1.12	0.00	0.46	13.05	16.68
21.	KARNATAKA	13.46	12.57	0	1.57	0.00	2.61	29.57	59.77
22.	CHHATTISGARH	11.68	2.75	0	1.41	0.00	0.25	3.56	19.64
23.	ANDHRA PRADESH	2.02	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.21	2.92	5.15
24.	ASSAM	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	1.27	14.77	16.03
25.	BIHAR	4.30	4.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.53	13.82
26.	MIZORAM	35.00	1.99	4.17	0.87	0.00	0.00	3.74	45.77
27.	HIMACHAL PRADESH	0.00	1.97	0	1.16	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.13
28.	PUDUCHERRY	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
29.	GOA	0	0.00	0	0.57	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.57
30.	MADHYA PRADESH	18.29	3.89	5.41	0.00	0.00	0.13	35.24	62.95
	TOTAL	202.62	80.10	36	33.75	3.07	28.44	219.50	603.48

Rs. in crore (2022-23 till 31st January 2023)

S. No.	STATE	Green India Mission	Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats	National Plan for Conservation of Aquatic Eco-systems	Forest Fire Prevention and Management System	Biodiversity Conservation	Project Elephant	Project Tiger	Total
1.	MAHARASHTRA	0.00	3.50	0.00	0.61	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.11
2.	TELANGANA	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3.	JAMMU AND KASHMIR	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4.	PUNJAB	2.74	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.74
5.	KERALA	0.00	2.24	0.00	1.71	0.00	0.96	2.03	6.94
6.	RAJASTHAN	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.33	0.00	0.06	1.82	2.21
7.	ARUNACHAL PRADESH	0.00	2.76	0.00	1.98	0.00	0.27	2.23	7.24
8.	TRIPURA	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.47	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.55
9.	NAGALAND	0.00	3.63	0.00	0.29	0.00	1.18	0.00	5.09
10.	SIKKIM	6.86	2.31	0.44	0.48	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.09
11.	MEGHALAYA	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.38
12.	UTTARAKHAND	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.34	0.00	0.00	2.91	4.25
13.	WEST BENGAL	0.76	2.01	1.50	0.00	0.00	0.30	2.28	6.86
14.	HARYANA	0.00	0.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.09	0.00	0.39
15.	GUJARAT	0.00	2.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.00
16.	ODISHA	8.48	6.25	0.00	3.39	0.00	1.23	4.42	23.77
17.	TAMIL NADU	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.86	5.01	5.87
18.	MANIPUR	5.45	1.81	0.00	1.07	0.00	0.00	0.00	8.32
19.	JHARKHAND	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.33	0.17	0.52
20.	UTTAR PRADESH	0.00	2.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10	4.47	7.24
21.	KARNATAKA	0.00	2.92	0.00	0.42	0.00	0.98	2.35	6.67
22.	CHHATTISGARH	0.00	1.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.83	1.87
23.	ANDHRA PRADESH	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
24.	ASSAM	0.00	1.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.84	10.77	13.31
25.	BIHAR	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.40	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.40
26.	MIZORAM	36.27	1.90	0.00	0.31	0.00	0.00	0.00	38.48
27.	HIMACHAL PRADESH	0.00	0.58	0.00	1.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.71
28.	PUDUCHERRY	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.43	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.43
29.	GOA	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
30.	MADHYA PRADESH	17.93	2.66	0.00	3.16	0.00	0.00	21.20	44.94
	TOTAL	78.49	40.29	1.94	17.91	0.00	7.26	60.51	206.40

6.3 The following pie charts show the quantum of allocations to States across different Centrally Sponsored Schemes:

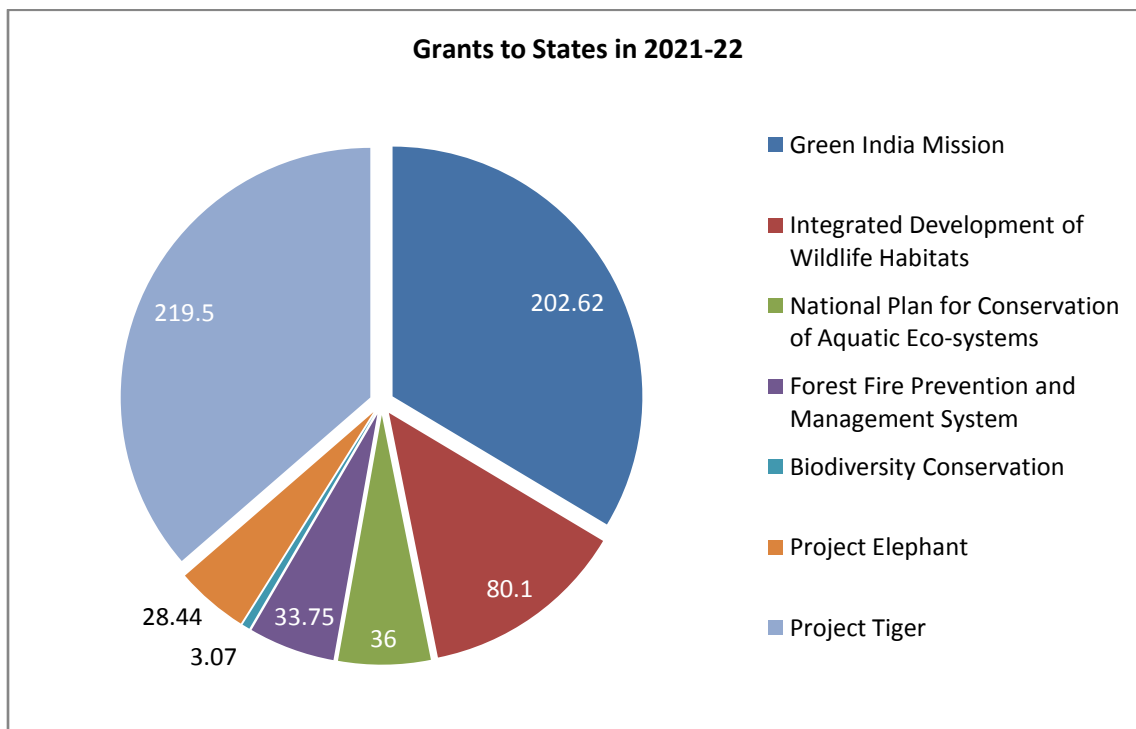


Chart 11

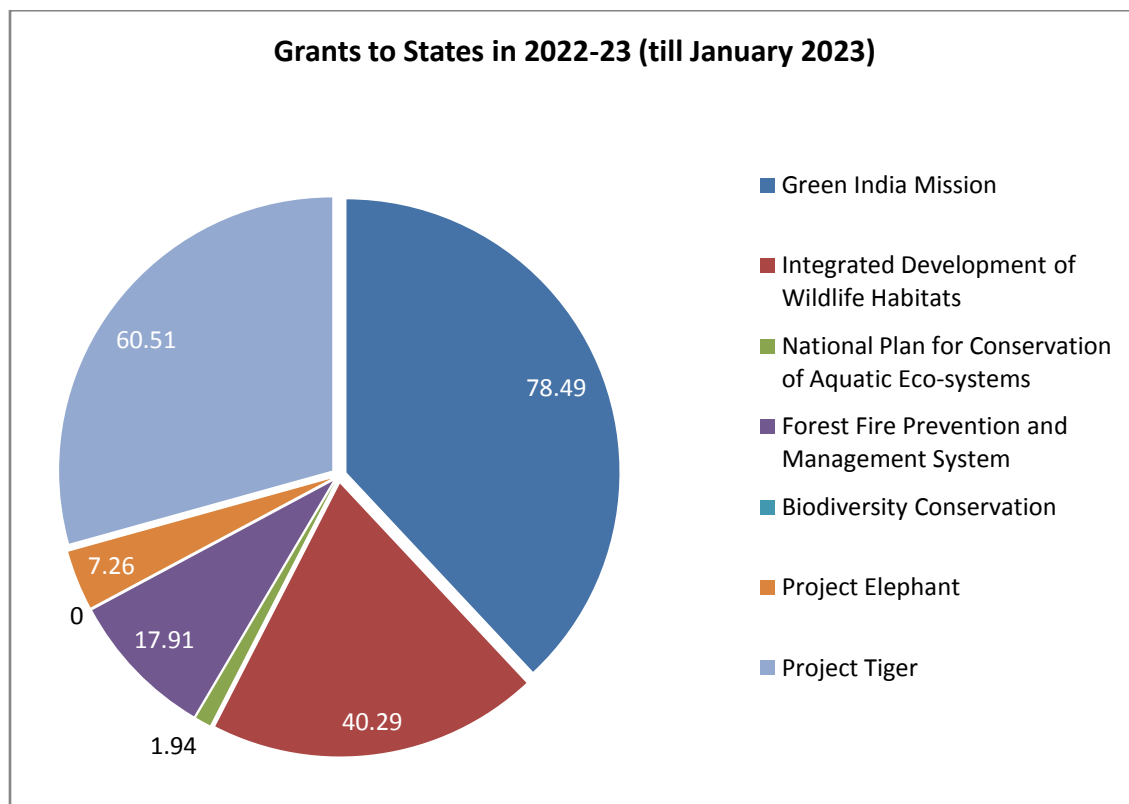


Chart 12

6.4 The Committee observes from the data given by the Ministry that a total of Rs. 603.48 crore were disbursed to States in F.Y. 2021-22 through its Centrally Sponsored Schemes viz. Green India Mission, Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats, Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats, Forest Fire Prevention and Management System, Biodiversity Conservation, Project Elephant and Project Tiger. The Committee also observes that six States namely, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Odisha, Karnataka, Mizoram and Madhya Pradesh have received more than 50 percent of the total allocations to States in the year 2021-22. Further, only Rs. 206.40 crore could be disbursed to States in the year 2022-23 (till January 2023) which is only one third of what was disbursed in the year 2021-22. Further, States like Jammu & Kashmir, Telangana, Goa have received almost negligible funds.

6.5 While the Committee is aware of the fact that these disbursements are based on the Annual Plan of Operations submitted by the States, the Committee recommends that the Ministry actively pursues the underserved States and takes periodic assessment of their requirements under these CSS. Further, the Committee recommends that a mechanism of monitoring, targets achieved and scrutiny through public participation be devised by the Ministry which involves public representatives, legislators, MLAs and Hon'ble Members of Parliament.

OVERALL BUDGETARY DETAILS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2022-23 (BE, RE & ACTUAL EXPENDITURE) AND ALLOCATION FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2023-24.

The Committee observes from Table 1, that the B.E. allocation to the Ministry for the year 2022-23 was Rs. 3,030 crore which was reduced substantially by almost 19 percent to Rs. 2,478 crore in R.E. 2022-23. The Committee also observes that the B.E. 2023-24 allocation of the Department (Rs. 3,079.40 crore), though higher than the R.E. 2022-23 allocation, is similar to the B.E. 2022-23 allocation. (Para 2.2)

The Committee further observes that there has been a drastic reduction under the National Coastal Mission from Rs. 195 crore in B.E. 2022-23 to only Rs. 4 crore in R.E. 2022-23. Further an amount of Rs. 12.5 crore has been allocated under this head in B.E. 2023-24. As regards the head 'Control of Pollution', the Committee observes that a budget of Rs. 460 crore was initially allocated during B.E. 2022-23 which was revised upwards to Rs. 600 crore in R.E. 2022-23. The allocation under the head 'Control of Pollution' is Rs. 756 crore in B.E. 2023-24. (Para 2.3)

On perusal of Chart 1, the Committee observes that the B.E. and R.E. allocation across the years 2021-22 and 2022-23 have remained almost the same. Also, the B.E. 2023-24 allocation is similar to that of B.E. 2022-23. Although the allocation proposed by the Department was Rs. 4434.75 crore but only Rs. 3079 crore got allocated the Department in B.E. 2023-24. (Para 2.5)

The Committee further observes that the Actual utilisation of the Ministry in 2022-23 is Rs. 1707 crore (till January 2022-23) against a R.E. allocation of Rs. 2478 crore. This amounts to about 69 percent budget utilisation which falls short of the 75 percent expenditure target set for 3rd Quarter by the Ministry of Finance. (Para 2.6)

The Committee observes from Chart 2 that while the allocation under the Non-Scheme component in B.E. 2022-23 and R.E. 2022-23 remained almost the same, the allocation under the Scheme component was revised downwards in the R.E. stage. The allocation under the scheme component was Rs. 1893.26 crore during B.E. 2022-23 which was reduced to Rs. 1396.45 crore during R.E. 2022-23. (Para 2.8)

The Committee is dismayed to note that financial utilization suffered because of a technicality in the manner of disbursement of funds. While the change may have been brought with an intention of reducing parking of funds and loss on interest accrued, the approach should have been one with least collateral damage. The Committee recommends the Ministry to thoroughly review the status of States/Accounts on boarded and the pending disbursements be cleared as soon as possible, so that any projects which could not be initiated/completed due to unavailability of funds may be started/finished. (Para 2.11)

The Committee observes from Chart 3 that the Ministry sought an allocation of Rs. 4,434.75 crore in B.E. 2022-23 whereas the Ministry received an allocation of Rs. 3079.40 crore. This amounts to a shortfall of Rs. 1,355.35 crore. It can also be observed that the major reduction in allocation is in the Scheme component – a reduction of about 1100 crore. Further, the Committee notes that the reduction under the National Coastal Management Programme is drastic – from a proposed allocation of Rs. 723 crore to only Rs. 12.50 crore. (Para 2.13)

The Committee is perturbed to observe that a reduction of almost 30 percent has been made in the proposed budgetary allocations requested by the Ministry. This may hamper the activities and initiatives of the Ministry across the entire gamut of Environmental protection and ecology management, forest & wildlife conservation as well as assistance to States and UTs. This may also lead to restricted implementation of many initiatives of the Ministry pertaining to Climate Change, Pollution abatement and coastal development. (Para 2.15)

The Committee is constrained to highlight the unpreparedness of the Ministry which is manifested in the fact that the Ministry depended on financial resources under the National Coastal Mission, from an outside agency. A setback in terms of administrative procedures from the agency has left the implementation of the initiatives of the Ministry in the loom. If resources are not made available timely, then the vast coastline of the country, the population dependent on it as well as the fragile coastal ecosystem shall face the brunt. The Committee, therefore strongly recommends the Ministry to initiate a strategy and raise the deficit funds, either through the Ministry of Finance or by reaching out to other such agencies. (Para 2.16)

On perusal of Chart 5, the Committee observes that 'Green India Mission' and 'Control of Pollution' which are key components of the Ministry's initiatives towards Environment Protection and management of ecology, require additional budgetary support of Rs. 81 crore and Rs. 91 crore respectively. Likewise, under Project Tiger & Elephant, an additional allocation of Rs. 43.2 crore is required. In addition, the Ministry is in need of additional budgetary allocations to its institutions and autonomous bodies engaged in Forestry research, survey and in-situ conservation. (Para 2.19)

The Committee underlines the requirement of an additional budgetary allocation of Rs. 374 crore over and above the B.E. 2023-24 quoted by the Ministry and recommends that the Ministry be given the additional allocation for them to continue with their set goals and objectives and ensure a timely and effective completion. (Para 2.20)

The Committee also recommends that the Ministry should reach out to the Ministry of Finance for additional funds at the R.E./ Supplementary stage and also look for raising the same either through internal revenue or through reallocating funds from heads which have excess allocation, if any. (Para 2.21)

Chart 8 provides a clear picture of the status of utilisation of funds, till January 2023 (as percent of R.E. 2022-23). The overall budgetary utilisation of the Ministry is around 69 percent, which is satisfactory. But a detailed examination reveals that across centrally sponsored and central sector schemes combined, the utilisation is only 54 percent (as percent of the R.E. allocation under these two heads). The combined R.E. 2022-23 allocation was Rs. 1,369 crore out of which the utilisation till January 2023 has been only Rs. 792 crore. The Committee is astonished to observe that across crucial initiatives like Climate Change Action Plan and National Mission for Green India, the utilisation has been grossly suboptimal at 27 percent and 55 percent respectively. Further, the Ministry has been able to utilise only 30 percent of the funds allocated to it under Project Tiger and Project Elephant combined. (Para 2.29)

The Committee expresses its deep anguish and disappointment towards the abysmally low utilisation of funds. While the reason, as stated by the Ministry, pertains to a procedural change in disbursement of funds, the Committee views this suboptimal utilisation as an opportunity lost. The Committee therefore recommends the Ministry to take strong, firm and quick actions to ensure that the funds under these heads are utilised to their fullest and that any shortfall in physical targets be compensated in the ensuing financial year. (Para 2.30)

CONTROL OF POLLUTION

The Committee observes from Chart 9 that there is a general upward trend in B.E. allocation under the 'Control of Pollution'. Whereas the actual expenditure in 2020-21 was Rs. 267 crore, the B.E. allocation in 2023-24 is Rs. 756 crore. This is an increase of almost 200 percent. The Committee is encouraged to see and appreciates that the actions of the Ministry are being backed by a higher budgetary allocation year-on year. The Committee also notes the physical achievements of the Ministry during 2021-22 and 2022-23 which have been taken towards strengthening of State Pollution Control Boards, NAMP stations assisted, initiatives taken for monitoring of pollution etc. (Para 3.3)

While the Committee underlines the efforts taken by the Ministry towards Control of Pollution and especially Air Pollution through the National Clean Air Programme, it recommends the Ministry to revisit its monitoring framework to ensure that the data captured is not just quantitative but also qualitative. The data provided by the Ministry seems very counter intuitive from what the public experiences at large. While data on PM10 levels suggests that 95 cities out of the 131 non attainment cities have shown improvement, the public experience at large differs. It is therefore pertinent that the monitoring framework should also include a parameter on 'public experience and social audit'. This shall enable the Ministry to capture the public aspirations in a more holistic manner and shall be helpful in more efficient implementation of NCAP and other measures to control pollution. (Para 3.10)

Further, the Ministry should engage with stakeholders, especially with the public representatives from each of these non attainment cities and establish a channel of two way communication. This 360 degree approach shall go a long way in making the fight against pollution a cumulative effort with increased public participation. Inclusion of matters relating to NCAP in the meetings of the District and State level DISHA Committees shall enable active monitoring of progress under NCAP. (Para 3.11)

The Committee also recommends that levels of PM2.5 and smaller particles may also be monitored under the National Clean Air Programme more robustly across all cities. In addition, the City Action Plans pertaining to the targeted cities are made available on public portals of the Ministry, promoted through social media, disseminated to schools, colleges, offices, RWAs, etc. (Para 3.12)

3.13 The Committee also recommends that levels of PM2.5 and smaller particles may also be monitored under the National Clean Air Programme more robustly across all cities. In addition, the City Action Plans pertaining to the targeted cities are made available on public portals of the Ministry, promoted through social media, disseminated to schools, colleges, offices, RWAs, etc. (Para 3.13)

PROJECT TIGER AND PROJECT ELEPHANT

The Committee notes that Project Tiger and Project Elephant are crucial to the initiatives of the Ministry relating to wildlife conservation, not just from an ecological standpoint but also for its societal and economic value. The initiatives of the Ministry, or the lack of it, have a direct bearing not just to the project but also to the human population living in these vulnerable areas. With increasing reports of man-animal conflicts, it becomes even more important that the Ministry sharpens its focus towards these projects and also allocate more funds for meeting necessary expenditures are met. The Committee therefore recommends that the Ministry ensures that funds allocated in R.E. 2022-23 be optimally utilized. Further, the Ministry should seek

additional allocation under this head so as to ensure that no conservation initiative is left because of inadequacy of funds. (Para 4.5)

CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES IN ECOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

The Committee notes the detailed procedure followed by the Ministry before giving clearances to construction and infrastructure projects and would like to emphasize on the fact that the role of the Ministry is to strike a balance between development and environment protection. The Committee also believes that a one size fits all approach to environment clearance should not be followed, especially for the ecologically sensitive areas of the country such as in Joshimath, Mussoorie, Dhanaulti, etc., which require a more meticulous approach with the only aim of furthering the environmental interests rather than economic interest.

(Para 5.10)

The Committee also highlights the tremendous increase of tourist activities in these areas which has put the natural resources under pressure. This has led to over-exploitation of natural resources and illegal construction of home stays, guest houses, resorts, hotels, restaurants and other encroachments. In view of the imminent threat to ecological balance caused by these activities, it is pertinent that a thorough assessment of illegal structures be undertaken in co-ordination with local authorities and strict actions be initiated at the earliest against such illegal constructions, lest it results into a manmade crisis of huge proportions.

(Para 5.11)

The Committee is constrained to observe, from table 3 that against more than 5500 complaints received in 2021-22, action could only be taken against 100 odd complaints. This does not paint a very rosy picture about the steps that the Ministry is taking towards addressing such complaints. While the idea to create an online mechanism for registration and tracking of complaints is a step in the right direction, the Committee recommends that the Ministry should take aggressive steps towards disposal of non-frivolous and serious complaints against violators of relevant laws. The Committee also recommends that the Ministry should undertake a review of all pending complaints especially pertaining to the State of Uttarakhand and device a strategy with stakeholder institutions such as CPCB, NGT, State Government and redress these at the earliest.

(Para 5.12)

CENTRALLY SPONSORED SCHEME (CSS)- DATA REGARDING STATEWISE RELEASES (FY 2021-22)

The Committee observes from the data given by the Ministry that a total of Rs. 603.48 crore were disbursed to States in F.Y. 2021-22 through its Centrally Sponsored Schemes viz. Green India Mission, Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats, Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats, Forest Fire Prevention and Management System, Biodiversity Conservation, Project Elephant and Project Tiger. The Committee also observes that six States namely, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Odisha, Karnataka, Mizoram and Madhya Pradesh have received more than 50 percent of the total allocations to States in the year 2021-22. Further, only Rs. 206.40 crore could be disbursed to States in the year 2022-23 (till January 2023) which is only one third of what was disbursed in the year 2021-22. Further, States like Jammu & Kashmir, Telangana, Goa have received almost negligible funds.

(Para 6.4)

While the Committee is aware of the fact that these disbursements are based on the Annual Plan of Operations submitted by the States, the Committee recommends that the Ministry actively pursues the underserved States and takes periodic assessment of their requirements under these CSS. Further, the Committee recommends that a mechanism of monitoring, targets achieved and scrutiny through public participation be devised by the Ministry which involves public representatives, legislators, MLAs and Hon'ble Members of Parliament.

(Para 6.5)

MINUTES

IV

FOURTH MEETING

The Committee met at 10:30 A.M. on Tuesday, the 21st February, 2023 in Committee Room 4, Block A, PHAE Building, New Delhi.

MEMBERS PRESENT

1. Shri Jairam Ramesh - **Chairman**

RAJYA SABHA

2. Shrimati Seema Dwivedi
3. Shri Parimal Nathwani
4. Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav

LOK SABHA

5. Shri Guharam Ajgalley
6. Dr. Dhal Singh Bisen
7. Shri Sudarshan Bhagat
8. Dr. Swami Sakshi Ji Maharaj
9. Dr. Jayanta Kumar Roy
10. Shri Fransico Cosme Sardinha
11. Shri Anurag Sharma
12. Dr. Ramapati Ram Tripathi
13. Shri Ram Shiromani Verma

SECRETARIAT

Shri Pradeep Chaturvedi, Joint Secretary
Shri Narendra Kumar, Additional Director
Shri Sammer Kapoor, Deputy Secretary
Shri Deepak Bhorla, Under Secretary
Shri Thangzasiem Paite, Committee Officer
Shri Rama Nand, Committee Officer

Witnesses:

Representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

- (i) Ms. Leena Nandan, Secretary
- (ii) Shri Chandra Prakash Goyal, DGF&SS
- (iii) Shri Subhash Chandra, CEO, CAMPA
- (iv) Shri Pravir Pandey, AS&FA
- (v) Shri B.K. Singh, ADGF
- (vi) Shri Satya Prakash Yadav, ADGF
- (vii) Shri Bivash Ranjan, ADG (WL)
- (viii) Ms. Richa Sharma, AS
- (ix) Shri Tanmay Kumar, AS
- (x) Shri Naresh Pal Gangwar, AS
- (xi) Shri Lalsanglur, Sr. Economic Advisor
- (xii) Shri Ramesh Kumar Pandey, IGF
- (xiii) Shri Sanjay Kumar Shukla, IGF
- (xiv) Shri R. Raghu Prasad, IGF
- (xv) Shri Sujit Kumar Bajpayee, JS
- (xvi) Shri Neelesh Kumar Shah, JS
- (xvii) Ms. Nameeta Prasad, JS
- (xviii) Shri Satyajit Mishra, JS

2. At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the Members of the Committee and apprised them about agenda of the meeting i.e. to hear the views of the representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change on the Demands for Grants 2023-24 of the respective Ministry.

3. The Chairman welcomed the representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and asked the Secretary to give a brief presentation on the Demands for Grants 2023-24 of the Ministry and apprise the Committee about the projected demand and actual allocation of the Ministry for the year 2023-24; impact of the shortfall, if any, on the current and proposed schemes/programmes/projects of the Ministry; preparedness of the Ministry for dealing with situation emanating out of reduced allocation, etc. The Chairman also asked the Secretary to highlight the major areas of concern to which the Ministry would want to draw the attention of the Committee.

4. Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change started her presentation with the mandate of the Ministry. She apprised the Committee that the Ministry was allocated `3,030 crore in B.E. 2022-23 which was reduced substantially to `2,478 crore at R.E. stage. Informing the Committee about the actual expenditure of the Ministry during the year 2022-23, upto January, 2023, she submitted that the Ministry could utilise an amount of `1,707 crore which was about 69 per cent utilisation of the budgetary allocation. Financial performance of the Ministry under its various schemes/programmes/projects was also shared with the Committee. The Committee was also informed that `3,079.00 crore has been allocated to the Ministry for the year 2023-24 against the projected demand of `4,434.75 crore. The Committee was also informed about the Ministry's major achievements during the year 2022-23 along with the blueprint prepared for implementation of major schemes and initiatives of the Ministry during the year 2023-24.

5. The Chairman and Members then raised various queries/issues/points such as utilisation of budgetary allocations under various heads; performance of Central Sector Schemes and Centrally Sponsored Schemes; utilisation of funds at grass root level; special budgetary provisions for Gir Lions; man-animal conflict; climate change; mitigation of air pollution; Green India Mission; ban on single use plastic; etc. The representatives of the Ministry, while presenting their views, responded to some of the queries/issues/points raised by the Chairman and Members of the Committee. The Chairman directed the representatives to furnish detailed written replies to queries/points/issues raised by the Committee to the Secretariat at the earliest.

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17. A verbatim record of the proceedings was kept.

18. The meeting of the Committee adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

VI
SIXTH MEETING

The Committee met at 3:30 P.M. on Tuesday, the 14th March, 2023 in Committee Room No. 67, First Floor, Parliament House, New Delhi.

MEMBERS PRESENT

1. Shri Jairam Ramesh – **Chairman**

RAJYA SABHA

2. Shri Anil Baluni
3. Shri Niranjana Bishi
4. Shrimati Seema Dwivedi
5. Shri Joginipally Santosh Kumar
6. Shri Jose K. Mani
7. Shri Parimal Nathwani
8. Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav

LOK SABHA

9. Shrimati Sajda Ahmed
10. Shri Guharam Ajgalley
11. Dr. Dhal Singh Bisen
12. Shri Sudarshan Bhagat
13. Dr. Swami Sakshiji Maharaj
14. Dr. Jayanta Kumar Roy
15. Dr. M.P. Abdussamad Samadani
16. Dr. Ramapati Ram Tripathi
17. Shri Ram Shiromani Verma

SECRETARIAT

Shri Pradeep Chaturvedi, Joint Secretary
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Shri Sammer Kapoor, Deputy Secretary
Shri Deepak Bhorla, Under Secretary
Shri Thangzasiyam Paite, Committee Officer
Shri Rama Nand, Committee Officer

2. At the outset, the Chairman welcomed the Members to the meeting of the Committee. The Committee then took up for consideration the draft 373rd, 374th, 375th, 376th, 377th, 378th, and 379th Reports of the Committee on the Demands for Grants of the Ministries/Departments of Atomic Energy; Biotechnology; Scientific and Industrial Research; Science & Technology; Space; Environment, Forest and Climate Change; and Earth Sciences, respectively and adopted the same after some deliberations.

3. The Committee decided to present/lay the above mentioned Reports in both the Houses of Parliament on the 15th March, 2023. The Committee also decided to nominate Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav and, in his absence, Shrimati Seema Dwivedi to present the reports in Rajya Sabha and Dr. Dhal Singh Bisen and, in his absence, Shri Ram Shiromani Verma to lay the reports on the Table of Lok Sabha.

*4. * * * *

5. The meeting of the Committee adjourned at 3:45 p.m.