

AUDIT FINDINGS

Chapter-3 Planning

Objective I: To assess whether the Department had a proper system of planning and had an efficient system for Human Resource Management.

A well defined forest policy at the field level is essential for management and sustainable development of forests in a time-bound manner. Well defined and time-bound implementation of plans is also necessary to ensure that the field initiatives are systematic, need based and realisable. Audit scrutiny revealed the following deficiencies in the policy and planning process.

3.1 State Forest Policy

The National Forest Commission recommended (March 2006) that each State should have its own forest policy within the parameters of the National Forest Policy, 1988 for sustainable management of forests. However, the State had not framed its own forest policy even after a lapse of seven years. In reply (November 2013), the Department stated that the forest policy was framed and submitted to the State Government in February 2012 but the approval was awaited.

3.2 Preparation of Plans

Annual Work Plans (AWPs) were prepared and sent to the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), Government of India (GOI) for obtaining funds for implementation of Integrated Forest Management Scheme (IFMS) and Twelfth/Thirteenth¹ Finance Commission (TFC) Grants. An analysis of the AWP and its actual implementation at the field level revealed the following deficiencies:

- AWP were prepared at the State level without assessing the requirement/obtaining proposals from the field units.
- Funds under Thirteenth Finance Commission amounting to ₹ 8.66 crore was deducted by GOI during 2012-13 and further cuts during 2013-14 and 2014-15 are imminent due to non-preparation of Forest Management Plans as discussed in *Paragraph 5.1.1*.
- Estimates for civil works such as construction of quarters/offices, forest approach roads and water harvesting structures were prepared (on the basis of PWD SOR) and enclosed with the AWP sent to the MoEF. However, those estimates were not followed by the implementing divisions/ranges resulting in wide variations during actual execution as discussed in *Paragraph 5.7*.
- To achieve the working plan and for identifying and carrying out annual activities, the implementing divisions were required to prepare and submit Annual Plan of Operation (APO) which were to be approved by the PCCF. It was however, seen that except for Wildlife Warden, Dimapur, none of the other test checked divisions had

¹ Twelfth Finance Commission (2008-09 & 2009-10) and Thirteenth Finance Commission (2010-11, 2011-12 & 2012-13).

prepared APOs in respect of State Schemes. Thus, activities under State schemes were carried out without any planning.

3.3 Human Resource Management

The Department did not furnish information regarding sanctioned strength of the divisions, policy for deployment of staff or trainings/skill upgradation conducted despite requisition (March 2013) and several subsequent reminders. Sanctioned strength was also not available in any of the divisions test checked. It was, however seen that there were wide variations in the total number of staff deployed in the divisions test checked as shown in the table below:

Table 3.1: Men in position in five territorial divisions

SI No.	Designation	DFO, Dimapur	DFO, Mon	DFO, Mokokchung	DFO, Kohima	DFO, Peren
1.	Deputy Conservator of Forests	1	1	1	1	1
2.	Asst. Conservator of Forests	4	0	2	1	2
3.	Forest Ranger	5	3	4	1	3
4.	Dy. Forest Ranger	6	6	3	6	3
5.	Forester I	25	26	12	7	5
6.	Forester II	27	10	6	2	13
7.	Forest Guard	64	38	33	18	42
8.	Draughtsman	1	0	1	0	0
9.	Boiler Driver	0	0	1	0	0
10.	Other support staff	28	21	31	20	18
	Total	161	105²	94	56	87

(Source:-Departmental records)

It can be seen from the table above that the major variations were in the category of Forester (I & II) and Forest Guard though it was seen that the divisions at Dimapur, Mon and Mokokchung had the same number of Ranges/independent Beats (7 each), Kohima had 3 Ranges and Peren had 10 Ranges/independent Beats.

In reply (November 2013), the Department stated that a plan would be drawn up in this regard and staff deployed based on the work load and exigencies.

² Including staff of Singphan Wildlife Sanctuary under Kiphire Wildlife Division drawing pay and allowances from Mon Division.