

## **Minutes of the 21<sup>ST</sup> Meeting of East Kolkata Wetlands Management Authority (EKWMA)**

The following Members of EKWMA attended above meeting held in the Conference Hall in 13<sup>th</sup> floor of Nabanna, Howrah on 30<sup>th</sup> December, 2013 at 2pm:

- 1) Sanjay Mitra, IAS, Chief Secretary, West Bengal & Chairman, EKWMA.
- 2) Trilochan Singh, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary, Environment Department & Member Secretary, EKWMA.
- 3) Dr Subesh Kumar Das, IAS Additional Chief Secretary, Forest Department and Additional Chief Secretary, Fisheries Department.
- 4) Debashis Sen, IAS, Principal Secretary, Urban Development Department.
- 5) Saurav Kumar Das, IAS, Principal Secretary, Panchayat and Rural Development Department.
- 6) B.P. Gopalika, IAS, Principal Secretary, Municipal Affairs Department.
- 7) S.K. Gupta, IAS, Chief Executive Officer, Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority.
- 8) Khaleel Ahmed, IAS, Commissioner, Kolkata Municipal Corporation.
- 9) Dr Binay Kumar Dutta, Chairman, West Bengal Pollution Control Board.
- 10) Dr Subrat Mukherjee, IFS, Member Secretary, West Bengal Pollution Control Board and Director, Institute of Environmental Studies and Wetland Management.
- 11) Sanjay Bansal, IAS, District Magistrate, North 24 Parganas.
- 12) Santanu Basu, IAS, District Magistrate, South 24 Parganas.
- 13) Swami Prananda, Joint Director, Ramakrishna Mission Lokashiksha Parishad, Narendrapur.
- 14) Smt Bonani Kakkar, People United for Better Living in Calcutta.

The following non-member officials also attended the meeting:

- 1) Alapan Bandyopadhyay, IAS, Chairman, Nabadiganta Industrial Township Authority (NDITA) as special invitee under Rule 7(4) of the East Kolkata Wetlands (Conservation & Management) Rules, 2006.
- 2) Dr K Talukder, IFS, Senior Environment Officer & Chief Technical Officer, EKWMA.
- 3) Anirudha Paul, EKWMA.
- 4) Nandini Basu, EKWMA.
- 5) Tarak Nath Das, EKWMA.

The Chairman, EKWMA welcomed the newly nominated representatives of NGOs into EKWMA. Thereafter discussion of the agenda was undertaken and following decisions were taken.

- 1) Annual accounts of EKWMA for 2012-13 prepared and audited by chartered accountants was presented before the EKWMA for approval. Office of the Accountant General (Economic & Revenue Sector Audit) had audited said accounts but requested that EKWMA approve the said accounts before the audit report is issued. EKWMA approved the said accounts.
- 2) During the past year additional audit had been conducted on the accounts of EKWMA. These were as follows:
  - i. Separate Audit Report (SAR) of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India on the Accounts of the EKWMA for the year 2011-12 (duly laid before the West Bengal Legislative Assembly on 27.7.2013) (accounts approved by EKWMA in 28.12.2012 meeting). Copy of SAR was placed before EKWMA.
  - ii. Inspection Report (IR) audit conducted on the accounts of EKWMA for 1.4.2011 to 31.3.2012.
  - iii. Internal Audit conducted by the Finance Department, Government of West Bengal.

EKWMA was informed by the CTO that replies have been submitted based on available records. However some serious issues have been thrown up mainly regarding utilization of funds and booking of expenditure on the grants received. In order to avoid unnecessary audit complications in future, CTO proposed that EKWMA henceforth should not directly undertake such works for which there is no in-house expertise nor engage contractors to undertake the same. EKWMA endorsed this view.

- 3) Keeping in mind the mainly regulatory function of the Authority, CTO proposed that the balance funds from the MoEF project (Rs 80,98,383) should be released to the Fisheries Department,

Government of West Bengal (for excavation/ re-excavation of bheries) which was approved by EKWMA. (Action: CTO EKWMA)

- 4) Disposal of pending applications to EKWMA: 774 cases of application to EKWMA for various reasons between 2007 and 2011 are still pending unaddressed. These cannot be granted because the Wetlands Rules, 2010 prohibits construction of permanent structures within the Ramsar notified wetlands and moreover these are not in compliance with the judgment of the 1992 PUBLIC case. It was decided that these may not be considered. (Action: CTO EKWMA)
- 5) MD State Fisheries Development Corporation Limited vide letter No.Dev-605/89/pt-II/199 dated 24.4.2013 had requested permission for works of masonry culverts for the Goltala Fisheries Project being undertaken by SFDC. The concerned bheris belong to the Fisheries Department and no conversion in land use is proposed. EKWMA agreed to dispose of the case along with a copy of the joint site inspection report being made available to Smt B. Kakkar. (Action: CTO EKWMA)
- 6) Chief Engineer (Projects), West Bengal State Electricity Transmission Company Limited had requested permission for right of way through the EKW area involving installation of towers in Beonta and Tardaha Kapashati mouzas. Joint field inspection revealed that six towers would be involved, no conversion of land was proposed and none of the towers fell in waterbodies. Therefore CTO recommended the case and EKWMA approved the proposal. (Action: CTO EKWMA)
- 7) Violation cases / court cases pertaining to EKWMA: A meeting chaired by the Chief Secretary, West Bengal and Chairman, EKWMA was held on 17.5.13 between EKWMA, Home Department and the DM 24 Parganas South to discuss pending FIR/GDEs for violations of the Acts / Rules governing the EKW. It was decided to have joint inspections of complaints with the police and EKWMA staff followed by legal action. Summary of FIRs lodged police station-wise was circulated among the Members present.
- 8) Reasoned Order in terms of Order dated 2.8.2013 passed by Hon'ble High Court, Calcutta in M.A.T.1122 of 2013 and C.A.N.7606 of 2013 Splendour Commercial Pvt. Ltd. & Anr. Vs EKWMA & Ors was issued by CTO after giving a hearing. Said reasoned order issued vide No.CTO/EN/242/349/13 dated 12.9.13 was endorsed by the EKWMA.
- 9) Publication of Report of EKWMA 2006 – 2013: During 2013-2014 a combined Report on activities of the EKWMA since inception (2006-2013) is being published and printed through a government printing press (Silpabarta Printing Press Limited). EKWMA noted the matter.
- 10) Change of address of EKWMA office: The Department of Environment has notified the change of address of EKWMA vide Notification No.EN/2498/EKW-06/2010 dated 9.10.2013 to be at Poura Bhavan, 4<sup>th</sup> floor, Bidhannagar, Kolkata 700106. EKWMA noted the issue.
- 11) Manpower issues of EKWMA: Finance Department vide U.O No.1778 Gr P(2) dated 27.6.2013 has agreed to creation of 22 posts subject to Cabinet approval. Cabinet note is under process. (Action: CTO EKWMA)
- 12) The case of construction of a bye-pass road in Bidhannagar South Police Station by the Nabadiganta Industrial Township Authority (NDITA) was considered and EKWMA decided to approve the proposal. CTO agreed to issue the permission letter on the same day. (Action: CTO EKWMA)
- 13) Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) management in Beonta mouza: During meeting of State Executive Committee of State Ganga River Conservation Authority of 4.4.13 examination of the Beonta site within EKW area for MSW disposal was requested since Dhapa site was almost saturated. Principal Secretary, UD on 26.12.13 forwarded the case report to EKWMA. EKWMA decided to form an expert committee with Principal Secretary, UD, Smt B Kakkar and Chairman, NDITA to examine the case and make recommendations to EKWMA for consideration. (Action: Principal Secretary, UD)

The meeting ended with vote of thanks.

Sd/-

(Sanjay Mitra)

Chief Secretary, West Bengal & Chairman, EKWMA