

Minutes of the 22nd Meeting of East Kolkata Wetlands Management Authority (EKWMA)

The following Members of EKWMA attended above meeting held in the Conference Hall in 13th floor of Nabanna, Howrah on 3rd February, 2014 at 11am:

- 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.
- 4) Debashis Sen, IAS, Principal Secretary, Urban Development Department.
- 5) S.A. Baba, IAS, Principal Secretary, Fisheries Department.
- 6) S.K. Gupta, IAS, Chief Executive Officer, Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority.
- 7) Khaleel Ahmed, IAS, Commissioner, Kolkata Municipal Corporation.
- 8) Dr Binay Kumar Dutta, Chairman, West Bengal Pollution Control Board.
- 9) Dr Subrat Mukherjee, IFS, Director, Institute of Environmental Studies and Wetland Management.
- 10) D. Mukherjee, Secretary, Irrigation and Waterways Department.
- 11) Prashanta Kumar Sarkar, Member Secretary, West Bengal Pollution Control Board.
- 12) Sanjay Bansal, IAS, District Magistrate, North 24 Parganas.
- 13) Santanu Basu, IAS, District Magistrate, South 24 Parganas.
- 14) Pravrajika Atandraprana, Assistant Secretary, Sri Sarada Math & Ramakrishna Sarada Mission, Dakshineswar.
- 15) Swami Pranananda, Joint Director, Ramakrishna Mission Lokashiksha Parishad, Narendrapur.
- 16) Smt Bonani Kakkar, People United for Better Living in Calcutta.

The following non-member officials also attended the meeting:

- 1) Dr K Talukder, IFS, Senior Environment Officer & Chief Technical Officer, EKWMA.
- 2) B.C Patra, Joint Secretary, Municipal Affairs Department.
- 3) Dr S.N. Biswas, Joint Director, Fisheries.
- 4) Anirudha Paul, EKWMA.
- 5) Nandini Basu, EKWMA.
- 6) Tarak Nath Das, EKWMA.

The Chairman, EKWMA welcomed the Members. Thereafter discussion of the agenda was undertaken and following decisions were taken.

1. **World Wetlands Day 2014:** the event was celebrated on 2 February 2014 (Sunday) jointly between PUBLIC and EKWMA. Thirty one school children, four members of PUBLIC and five staff members from EKWMA met near Bantala lockgate in the morning. Salient features of the East Kolkata Wetlands (EKW) were described to the children and everyone walked around the place. It was felt that a Wetland Interpretation Centre would have benefited the children.

EKWMA discussed the issue. It was recommended that HIDCO may further plan and develop the interpretation centre currently set up at Eco Park and Fisheries Department may plan and develop an interpretation centre at Nalban Park to better focus on EKW. EKWMA may provide financial support if required.

Smt Kakkar reported on the killings of aquatic birds around the wetlands. It was decided that Sri Ujjwal Bhattacharya, IFS, PCCF Wildlife and Chief Wildlife Warden and the Wildlife Wing of the Forest Directorate will look into the matter immediately.

(Action: ACS, Forest, Principal Secretary, UD and Principal Secretary, Fisheries)

2. **Recent newspaper reports on land deals within EKW area:**

Times of India on 5.1.2014 and on 9.1.2014 reported about sale of land plots within EKW area specially in mouza Hatgachha, Tardaha Kapasati, Kheyadaha, Bhagabanpur, Kulberia, Jagatipota, Karimpur, Chowbagha, etc. Matter had been referred to the DM 24 Parganas S.

The DM stated that a number of FIRs had been lodged for violation of the rules; that registration and mutation were going on and that local panchayat bodies were giving approval for the building plans. It was also reported that some realty developers had set up offices and were selling off parcels of land within EKW.

It was decided that ACS Environment will take up the issue with Land Reforms Commissioner and both DM 24 Parganas South and North for issuing necessary administrative orders to the concerned panchayat bodies. It was further decided that the matter would be referred to the DG of Police for setting up a task force with the SPs and concerned police stations for filing of charge sheet against the FIRs and expediting investigation.

(Action: ACS Environment, Land Reforms Commissioner, DM 24 Parganas South / North)

3. Removal of illegal plastic, rubber and leather factories coming up on the wetlands adjoining Basanti Highway in district 24 Parganas South:

EKWMA was informed that a meeting was chaired by the Chief Secretary on 17.5.13 between EKWMA, Home Department and the then District Magistrate 24 Parganas South to discuss the issues relating to violations of the Acts / Rules governing the EKW. It had been decided during the meeting that “the illegal plastic and rubber factories coming up on the wetlands adjoining Basanti Highway should be removed”.

Matter was subsequently referred to Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) by the Member Secretary West Bengal Pollution Control Board (WBPCB) along with a site visit report. Municipal Commissioner stated that the matter would be taken up along with police support after 9th February after the Book Fair.

(Action: Commissioner, KMC and MS, WBPCB)

4. Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) Management in Beonta:

Urban Development Department informed that the proposal for Beonta has been dropped for the present.

5. Disposal of application for NOC to EKWMA:

During 2013 three members of same family (Partha Pratim Guha, wife Chhanda Guha and son Suhrid Guha) applied through post for NOC for housing in mouza Goalpota after FIRs had been lodged with P.S Sonarpur for illegal construction. CTO gave the mandated hearings and issued a reasoned order vide No.CTO/EN/039/373/2013-14 dated 29.1.2014. EKWMA endorsed said order.

6. Violation cases / court cases pertaining to EKWMA: Unnayan Developers Pvt. Ltd vs State of West Bengal & Ors:

Environment Department and EKWMA have submitted Memorandum of Appeal, Condonation of Delay and stay Application in the Hon’ble High Court at Calcutta in A.P.O.T. No. 281 of 2013 and G.A. No. 1742 of 2013. The matter is now pending.

In this context the EKWMA was informed that few years back some cases of ecotourism projects were received and granted permission for fencing though the projects themselves had not been approved. However during the 18th Meeting of the EKWMA on 24.2.2012 it was resolved to cancel the permission for fencing granted. The then CTO, EKWMA vide Order No.CTO/EN/2265/12 dated 26.3.2012 had accordingly cancelled the permission for fencing. In protest Unnayan Developers (P) Ltd. had gone to court and the hon’ble High Court of Calcutta vide order dated 21.9.2012 in W.P.486 of 2012 had ruled that Members of EKWMA neither participated in said meeting nor they took the decision, even though the requisite quorum had in fact been present.

Members of EKWMA unanimously decided to adopt the same resolution of canceling NOC for fencing relating to ecotourism projects given earlier to Bengal Sunny Rock Estates Housing

Development Company Ltd., Unnayan Developers (P) Ltd., Greentech Farms & Agro Private Limited, Green Concretex Developers Pvt. Ltd., Shyam Greenfield Developers Pvt. Ltd., Sankalp Vanijya Pvt. Ltd. and Kalyan Bharati Foundation. It was further observed that required quorum was present during this meeting on 3.2.2014.

7. **Miscellaneous:** Clearance for Dhapa dumpsite for World Bank funded CBIPM project by WBPCB:

The Chairman, WBPCB explained about the proposal for remediation / containment of the Dhapa MSW dumpsite for which the approval of the EKWMA was required before bid document for the remediation work was floated. There was a requirement for installation of an Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP) for the project. EKWMA agreed in principle so that the bid document could be floated, subject to site visit by the non-official Members of EKWMA along with WBPCB officials. *(Action: MS WBPCB)*

The meeting ended with vote of thanks.

Sd/-
(Sanjay Mitra)
Chief Secretary, West Bengal & Chairman, EKWMA

No.CTO/EN/051/T-II-2/008/2005 (link file 4)

dated 10th February 2014

Forwarded for kind information and necessary action to:

- 1) The Senior P.S to Chief Secretary, West Bengal & Chairman, EKWMA.
- 2) The Sr.P.S. to Additional Chief Secretary, Environment Department & Member Secretary, EKWMA.
- 3) The P.S. to Additional Chief Secretary, Forest Department.
- 4) The P.S. to Principal Secretary, Urban Development Department.
- 5) The P.S. to Principal Secretary, Fisheries Department
- 6) The P.S. to Principal Secretary, Land & Land Reforms Department.
- 7) The P.S. to Principal Secretary, Panchayat and Rural Development Department.
- 8) The P.S. to Principal Secretary, Municipal Affairs Department.
- 9) The P.S. to Secretary, Irrigation and Waterways Department.
- 10) The Chief Executive Officer, Kolkata Metropolitan Development Authority.
- 11) The Commissioner, Kolkata Municipal Corporation.
- 12) The Chairman, West Bengal Pollution Control Board.
- 13) The Member Secretary, West Bengal Pollution Control Board.
- 14) The District Magistrate, North 24 Parganas.
- 15) The District Magistrate, South 24 Parganas.
- 16) The Director, Institute of Environmental Studies and Wetland Management.
- 17) Swami Prananda, Joint Director, Ramakrishna Mission Lokashiksha Parishad, Narendrapur.
- 18) Pravrajika Atandraprana, Assistant Secretary, Sri Sarada Math & Ramakrishna Sarada Mission, Dakshineswar.
- 19) Smt Bonani Kakkar, People United for Better Living in Calcutta.

(Kana Talukder)
Chief Technical Officer, EKWMA