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Guideline for the Collection and Utilization
of
Revenue Earned from the Protected Areas

Forest Department
Ministry of Environment and Forests
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Need for allocation of earned revenue

Recognizing the importance and urgency of partnership with local stakeholders in the conservation of biodiversity of the Protected Areas (PA), the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MOEF) has already constituted Co-Management Councils (CM-Councils) and Co-management Committees (CMCs), notified in Bangladesh Gazette dated - August 10, 2006 (Annex - 1).

The CM-Councils and CMCs is forum of all local stakeholders to assist the Forest Department in the effective protection, management and conservation of biodiversity of Protected Areas (PAs). This collaborative management is based on the principles of partnership, joint responsibility, accountability and revenue sharing between the government and the local people. Under the leadership of the CMCs, communities have been sharing responsibility of protection of PAs.

To compensate for their support, to encourage participation not limited to only protection and to adequately fund such and similar collaborative activities, the Government has decided to share revenue earned from PAs as fee for use of eco-tourism infrastructures and facilities from visitors. The Government believes, the CMC will judiciously utilize the shared revenue to promote socio-economic well being of the local stakeholders engaged in protection, conservation, restoration and management related activities of PAs.

1.2 Purpose of this Guideline

The primary purpose of this Guideline is to lay out simple, effective and faster framework/procedures to share earned revenue with the CMCs for the following aspects:

- a) Collection of revenue from the PAs
- b) Deposit of revenue to the Government treasury
- c) Disbursement of revenue as grant, and
- d) Audit of the utilization of the grant

1.3 Review of the Guideline

This Guideline has been developed based on current information and understanding. It will be reviewed after 2 years taking into considerations the issues emerged through experience to accommodate if necessary.

1.4 Definitions

Whenever the following capitalized terms are used in the Guidelines, whether in the singular or the plural, abbreviated or non-abbreviated, in the future or past, they shall have the meanings ascribed to each of them below, unless the context otherwise requires:

“Protected Area” or “PA” - Forest Department, under the Wildlife Act (Preservation) (Amendment) 1974, declares an areas as National Park, Wildlife Sanctuary or Game Reserve in order to protect, conserve and manage country’s representative ecosystems, critical habitat of national or international importance, or areas rich with bio-diversity. These three categories are collectively known as Protected Areas (PAs).

“Co-Management Council” or “CM-Council” – As per Bangladesh Gazette Notification dated August 10, 2006 - the Co-management Council is an advisory forum of maximum 55 members, convening twice a year, providing overall guidance and direction for management of PAs to the Divisional Forest Officer and the Co-management Committee. The UNO is the Chairman of the Council while the ACF/Range Officer in-charge of the respective PA is the Member Secretary.

“Co-Management Committee” or “Committee” or “CMC”– As per Bangladesh Gazette Notification dated August 10, 2006 - the Co-management Committee is the executive body (of 15-19 members) of the Co-management Council and the members of the Committee are elected by their respective group in the Council. The UNO is the Adviser (*ex-officio*) of the Committee. The CMC has a Member Secretary, a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and a Treasurer. The tenure of office of the members of the Committee is for two years.

“Member Secretary” – means the Assistant Conservator of Forest (ACF) or Range Officer (RO) of Forest Department in charge of the Protected Area (PA) in question as

chief executive looking after the overall works under the guidance of the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the CMC.

“Chairman” or “Vice Chairman” – means the person assigned the duties and role of Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the CMC through election among the members of the CMC.

“Treasurer” – means the person assigned the duties and role of the treasurer of the CMC through election among the members of the CMC.

“Accountant-cum-Administrative Officer” – means an officer appointed by the CMC to maintain financial and other records of the Committee.

“CMC Fund” or “Fund”- The Council and the Committee shall have a fund to be known as CMC Fund and a bank account in the name of CMC. The Treasurer and the Member Secretary shall be jointly responsible for bank account operation. In the absence of the Treasurer, the Vice Chairman shall operate the bank account jointly with Member Secretary. The objective of this fund is to assist the Forest Department in the protection, management, conservation and restoration of biodiversity of PAs, in the development of ecotourism infrastructure and services and socio-economic development of the poor stakeholders and/or any activity that benefits adjacent communities. The sources of fund can range from own generated fund to Public or Private organization, national or international NGOs or donor agencies in the form of Grant or Donation.

“Fee” or “Rate of Fee” – it is the charge for entering, services, facilities or installations rendered at the PAs, approved by the Ministry of Finance. Details of the fees are given in Annex – 2.

“Grant-in-Aid” or “Grant” - it is the 50% of the gross revenue collected by the members of the CMC from the Protected Areas (PAs) and allocated to CMCs as Grants-in-aid by the Government through the Forest Department’s revenue budget.

2.0 Guideline for collection & Utilization of Revenue

2.1 Fee Collection

The following procedures shall be observed in order to collect fees and subsequent management:

1. The Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF) will issue a circular to this effect and authorize/instruct Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) to initiate fee collection process;
2. The respective DFOs will issue a memo to respective Chairman /Member Secretary of the CMCs to take initiative for the collection, recording and subsequent deposit of fees into government treasury;
3. The three fold money receipt to be treated as entry ticket is to be printed from BG Press and is to be stored in the DFO offices as per prevailing Government rules and regulations.
4. The respective DFOs are to maintain the records of store of entry tickets.
5. The DFOs is to submit stock of the entry tickets at the time of new requisition.
6. The respective DFOs will distribute to CMCs as per their requirements. Regular cross-check will be done by both the DFO and CMC office for entry ticket stock and used up.
7. The CMC Member Secretary shall receive Receipt Books from DFO under requisition and shall arrange for collection of fee with these receipts by CMC nominated/engaged counter clerk and gateman within his/her supervision;
8. The counterfoil will be left with the ticket counter clerk of the threefold money receipt (or ticket). The visitor will get twofold receipt, one of which shall be received by the gateman at the point of entering the PA compound/picnic site/shooting site/parking lot;
9. The Counter Clerk shall prepare a scroll in duplicate on daily basis and submit the used receipt book(s) for verification and certification of scroll by Accountant-cum-Administrative Officer. The Accountant-cum-Administrative Officer shall deposit the money to the Range Officer of the CMC on every other day and get the duplicate scroll signed by the Range Officer;

10. The Accountant-cum-Administrative Officer shall give entry in the cash book maintained at the CMC office *as daily collection* upon receipt of concerned ACF/Range Officer. The CMC Cash book shall be signed by the Accountant-cum-Administrative Officer on daily basis and countersigned by the Range Officer once in every month after monthly closing.

2.4 Revenue Deposit

- 2.4.1 The amount of fee collected by the CMC shall be treated as Government Revenue through the Forest Department. The Range Officer shall arrange for the money to be deposited in the Government Treasury at the nearest branch of Bangladesh Bank or Sonali Bank as CMC receipts under Chalan and make arrangement for appropriate recording in the office of DFO under prevailing procedures.
- 2.4.2 The CMC Accountant-cum-Administrative Officer shall prepare a monthly statement of receipts from fees and place it before the CMC for reconciliation with the records of the DFO.

3.0 Disbursement

3.1 Budgeting

- 3.1.1 For budgetary allocation of the very first and second time, the proposed budget will be estimated based on last three year's average visitation number and the approved fee rate. From the third year or any subsequent year, the CMC will prepare budget based on 50% of revenue collected on two years back.
- 3.1.2 The Divisional Forest Office will receive budget from CMC and will include the same into his revenue budget as grants (Code 5900, sub-code – 5949 Grants-in-aid) and follow existing procedure of Forest Department for budget submission.

3.2 Allocation

- 3.2.1 The Ministry of Finance as per exiting rules will allocate budget for Forest Department including the Grants for CMC.
- 3.2.2 The Divisional Forest Officer under the general rules and norms will get grants for CMC from the CCF Office.

- 3.2.3 The DFO will be the budget holder and disburse the money to Co-management Committee with a copy to the Conservator of Forests.
- 3.2.4 The order sanctioning a grant (by the DFO) should specify clearly the name and address of the CMC for which it is given and the conditions to fulfill the activities mentioned in the budget submitted by the CMC.
- 3.2.5 The DFO will sanction the grant in whole or installments upon submissions of previous progress report including Statement of Expenditure (SOE).
- 3.2.6 The Co-management Committee shall receive the budgeted fund in its *bank account* from the respective DFO.

3.2 CMC Bank Account

The CMC shall maintain a bank account. The bank account shall be jointly operated by the ACF/Range Officer (as *ex-officio* Member Secretary of CMC) with either the Treasurer, or in his/her absence, the Vice Chairman of the respective CMC. The Accountant-cum-Administrative Officer shall maintain the records of CMC expenditure and necessary books of accounts for all monthly/quarterly/annual submission of claims and annual submission of *financial statements* for audit.

4 Audit

The grant provided to CMC by the Forest Department shall be audited as per the general rules of the CMC for its CMC fund. Forest Department's audit will be done as per the prevailing rules. The CMC will provide audit document to DFO.

5. Conclusion

This guideline outlines the framework to be followed for collection of revenue from the PAs under management of CMC, submission into government treasury and subsequent disbursement through Forest Department as grant. The objective of this grant is to ensure more active participation of the local stakeholders for the conservation of biodiversity of the PAs for our future generations.