

Forest Policy

Government of Chhattisgarh

Forest and Culture Department

Mantralaya, Raipur

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Raipur, the 22nd October 2001

Subject :- Chhattisgarh State Forest Policy, 2001

1. PREAMBLE

1.1 The GOI vide resolution no. 3-1/1986/F.P. dated the 7th December 1988, enunciated a National Forest Policy that provided a national perspective on forest management problems and specified actions required for tackling them.

1.2 The new state of Chhattisgarh came into being on 1st November 2000. There is a necessity to review the situation and to evolve for the future, a new strategy of forest conservation, which encompasses the special characteristics of the state as well as provides it a new direction. Since forest is a concurrent subject under the constitution of the country, the state's forest policy has to remain in tune with the current National Forest Policy.

1.3 The state of Chhattisgarh, lying between 17° 46' N to 24° 6' N latitude and 80° 15' E to 84° 51' E longitude, has about 44 percent of its geographical area (135,224 sq. km) under forests and provides catchment to at least four main river systems, i.e., Mahanadi, Godavari, Narmada and Ganges. Major rivers of the state are Mahanadi, Indravati, Hasdeo, Sheonath, Arpa and Ibb. The climate of the state is generally sub humid with an annual rainfall ranging from 1200 to 1500 mm.

1.4 Over the years, the forests in the state have suffered serious depletion. This can be attributed to relentless pressures arising from ever-increasing demand for fuelwood, fodder and timber; inadequacy of protection measures; diversion of forest lands to non-forest uses without ensuring compensatory afforestation and essential environmental safe-guards; and the tendency to look upon forests as a revenue earning resource.

1.5 The forests of the state fall under two major forest types, i.e., Tropical Moist deciduous forest and the Tropical Dry deciduous forest. Sal (*Shorea robusta*) and Teak (*Tectona grandis*) are the two major tree species in the state. Other notable overwood species are Bija (*Pterocarpus marsupium*), Saja (*Terminalia tomentosa*), Dhawra (*Anogeissus latifolia*), Mahua (*Madhuca indica*), Tendu (*Diospyros melanoxylon*) etc. Amla (*Embilica officinalis*), Karra (*Cleistanthus collinus*) and bamboo (*Dendrocalamus strictus*) constitute a significant chunk of middle canopy of the state's forests.

1.6 Biogeographically, the state falls in Deccan bio-region comprising representative fauna of central India like the tiger (*Panthera tigris*), leopard (*Panthera pardus*), gaur (*Bos gaurus*), sambhar (*Cervus unicolor*), chital (*Axis axis*), nilgai (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*) and wild boar (*Sus scrofa*). The state is a proud possessor of rare wildlife like the wild buffalo (*Bubalus bubalis*) and hill myna (*Gracula religiosa*) which have been declared as the state animal and bird respectively.

1.7 The state is richly endowed with mineral resources like the coal, iron, bauxite, limestone, corundum, diamond, gold, tin, etc which fall mainly within the forests of the state.

1.8 The population of the state is predominantly tribal, who have significant economic and cultural dependence on the forests of the state. There is a large population of non

tribal landless and economically backward communities in the state who derive livelihood security from the forests of the state

2. BASIC OBJECTIVES

2.1 The basic objectives that should govern the State Forest Policy are the following:

- Unlocking of the vast array of forest resources on sustainable basis for enhanced well-being of local people by converting these open access resources (OAR) into community controlled, prioritized, protected and managed resources.
- A shift in accent from major to minor forest produces, from crown to multi tier forestry and from flagship species to smaller denizens of the forests.
- Maintenance of environmental stability through preservation and where necessary, restoration of ecological balance that has been adversely disturbed by serious depletion of forests in the state.
- Conserving the Bio- cultural heritage of the state by preserving the biologically rich natural forests that provide the essential cultural milieu to the tribals of the state.
- Checking the denudation of forests and soil erosion in the catchment area of the rivers, and reservoirs for soil and water conservation; mitigating the floods and droughts; recharging of water bodies, aquifers and for the retardation of siltation of the reservoirs.
- Increasing the forest / tree cover in forest deficient districts through afforestation and agro forestry/ farm forestry programmes, especially on all denuded, degraded and unproductive lands.
- Meeting the requirements of fuel wood, fodder, minor forest produce and small timber of the rural and tribal population with due regard to the carrying capacity of the forests.
- The derivation of direct economic benefit from the forests of the state shall be subordinated to the requirements of the environmental stability and maintenance of ecological balance in the state.
- Creating appropriate policy and legal framework for the achievement of these objectives.

3. ESSENTIALS OF FOREST MANAGEMENT

3.1 Existing forests and forest lands should be fully protected and their productivity increased. It is necessary to promote efficient methods of timber harvest and utilisation to maximize economic returns from the forests.

3.2 The network of national parks, sanctuaries, biosphere reserves and other protected areas should be strengthened and extended adequately for the conservation of total bio cultural diversity in the state.

3.3 Targeting on broad range of goods and services in terms of physical, material, human, social, cultural and environmental assets in conjunction with appropriate entitlement regime, People's Protected Area (PPA) envisions a proactive and people's friendly framework to ensure long term protection and maintenance of biological diversity and providing at the same time a sustainable flow of natural products and services to meet local community needs. Therefore, a network of PPAs should be established as poor people's pool of assets for strengthening livelihood security of forest dwellers.

3.4 Provision of sufficient fodder, fuel and small timber to local people, especially in areas adjoining forests, is necessary to prevent further depletion of forests beyond their sustainable capacity. As fuel wood continues to be the predominant source of domestic energy in rural areas, the programme of afforestation should be intensified with special emphasis on augmenting fuel wood production to meet the requirements of the people. Furthermore, to reduce the pressure on forests due to increasing demand for fuelwood,

its substitution by alternative sources of energy should be promoted.

3.5 Minor Forest Produce (MFP) including medicinal plants provide sustenance to the tribal population and to other communities residing in and around the forests. Such produce should be protected, improved and their non-destructive harvesting methods enhanced with due regard to providing employment and income generation opportunities to the dependent people. MFP is the major source of livelihood of tribals and other forest based rural communities. Therefore, rather than exporting MFP in raw form, efforts should be made, as far as possible, to promote processing and value addition of the same, at the local level.

3.6 Supply of timber and poles to urban centers from non-forest sources is necessary to reduce pressure on natural forests. Therefore, state government should encourage agro-forestry, farm forestry and on-farm cultivation of timber trees.

3.7 Establishment of appropriate instruments including policy and legislative measures to protect the rich bio-cultural heritage of the state in view of increasing threats of bio piracy and infringement of IPR (Intellectual Property Rights) from within and outside the state.

3.8 All forest areas in the state should be managed in accordance with a duly approved management/working plan.

4. STRATEGY

The objectives and essentials of forest management for the state should be achieved through a well-defined strategy as under:

4.1 Area under forests

The national goal is to have a minimum of one-third of the total land area of the country under forest or tree cover. Though the state has the rare distinction of having more than one third of its geographical area under forest, there are few districts, where the forest area is less than the norm, and where there is a need to expand the forest cover in addition to preserving the existing forest cover.

There is a necessity to preserve the existing tree cover on hill slopes and landscapes providing catchment to rivers originating or flowing through the state.

4.2 Management of state forests

4.2.1 No forest should be permitted to be worked without a duly approved working/management plan, which should be in a prescribed format and in keeping with the National Forest Policy / State Forest Policy and the principles of sustainable forest management. The effects of forest management on forests should be periodically measured with the help of set criteria and indicators (C&I). The state should issue necessary guidelines to put in place a monitoring mechanism to ensure regular compliance of management/working plan prescriptions.

4.2.2. In order to meet the growing needs of people for the essential goods and services that the forests provide, it is necessary to enhance the forest cover in forest deficient districts and to increase the productivity of the existing forests through appropriate scientific and technical inputs.

4.2.3. No exotic species should be introduced, through public or private sources, unless long-term scientific trials undertaken by specialists in ecology, forestry, sociology and agriculture have established that they are suitable and have no adverse impact on indigenous vegetation, ecology and bio cultural environment of the state.

4.2.4. Joint forest management (JFM) practices should form the basis of forest

management in the state. Necessary provisions should be made for the adequate participation at all levels of decision making by the landless, marginal farmers and women in all JFM bodies like the VFC (Village Forest Committee), FPC (Forest Protection Committee) and EDC (Eco Development Committee).

The abundant potential of people living in rural and forest areas should be tapped for sound participatory forest management. Efforts should be made to facilitate assistance from financial institutions to the forest dwellers engaged in forest based economic activity for furthering participatory forest management in the state.

4.2.5. For sustainable forest development, livelihood security and bio- cultural diversity conservation, People's Protected Areas (PPAs) should be established. This paradigm shift of adaptive management can reconcile the dichotomy of threat perception arising out of conservation-development orthodoxy by taking into account the human sensitivities like their socio-cultural norms, beliefs and systems borne out of history, culture and traditions

4.3 Rights and Concessions

Forests of the state recognize traditional rights and concessions of entry into forests and use of the produce there of, by the people living in and around the forest areas. Such rights and concessions, popularly called 'Nistar', have sometimes legal as well as customary basis and the state is obliged to provide for them. In due course of time such rights and concessions with the exception of cultural rights, may no longer be required with an improvement in the standard of living of the majority of people in the state.

4.3.1. The provision of Nistar, should always remain related to the carrying capacity of the forests. The capacity itself should be optimized by increased investment in sylvicultural research and socio-economic development of the area. Stall feeding of cattle should be encouraged. The requirements of the community, which cannot be met from the existing forests, should be met from plantations under social forestry/agro forestry/ farm forestry in areas outside the natural forests.

4.3.2. The holders of customary rights and concessions in forest areas should be motivated to identify themselves with the protection and development of forests from which they derive these benefits. The rights and concessions from forests should primarily be for the bonafide use of the communities living within a radius of five kilometer from the existing natural forests. It is visualized that the JFM practices will motivate people to keep their customary rights and concessions on forests within the carrying capacity of the forests.

4.3.3. The socio-economic and cultural life of tribals and other communities living within and near forests revolves around the forests. Their domestic requirements of fuel wood, fodder, minor forest produce and construction timber should be the first charge on the forests of the area. The rights and concessions enjoyed by them should be protected, with due regard to the demands of the conservation of biological diversity in the area.

4.4 Management of Sal and Bamboo Forests:

Sal and Bamboo forests in the state constitute an important component of the forest ecosystem of the state. The state has large chunks of ecotone forests between Sal and Miscellaneous forests requiring special management practices. Such forests are not only ecologically sensitive, but also provide bamboo and other basic needs that constitute the essential elements of the livelihood security of the poor and tribal people of the state. Therefore, special treatment of ecotone sal forests and the restoration of the degraded bamboo forests as well as the maintenance of good bamboo forests should be the state's priority.

4.5 Conservation of Minor Forest Products (MFP)

Non timber forest produce called the Minor forest products or MFP like Tendu leaves, Sal seed, Imli, Chironji, Kullu and Dhawra gum, Kosa cocoon, Honey etc., form an essential element of the means of livelihood of the tribals and the landless, marginal farmers and other rural poor communities of the state. It is often suggested that it is the MFP and not the so called major forest produce like timber that is the mainstay of the rural poor. MFP like the Tendu patta (leaf) and sal seed also add sizeable revenue to the state exchequer, which is now distributed among the gatherers.

4.5.1 The state should take appropriate measures through the Chattisgarh State MFP (Trade and Development) Cooperative Federation Ltd for sustainable utilization and long term conservation of all MFP found within the forests of the state.

4.5.2 The state should take necessary steps for endowing the ownership rights of MFP on local communities as per the provisions of the Panchayat Upbandh (anusuchit chetron ka vistaar) Adhiniyam 1996.

4.6 Conservation of Medicinal Plants

Forests have been the source of invaluable medicinal plants since the time man realized their preventive and curative properties and started using them for human health cover. In view of the richness of medicinal and herbal plants in the state, a mechanism should be developed for in situ and ex situ conservation, domestication and non-destructive harvesting with the active support from local people including traditional healers and vaidyas. The socio-cultural, spiritual and medicinal arena of the rural populace particularly the tribal should form the backbone of community based conservation and utilisation of medicinal and herbal plants.

4.7 Protection of Forests

Forests being an open access resource (OAR) are vulnerable to various kinds of pressures like theft, fire, illegal grazing and encroachment. Theft of forest resources like timber, and animal parts and products is considered as high return and low risk offence. Uncontrolled forest fire result in significant loss of biodiversity, loss of forest regeneration, burning of biomass and destruction of micro organisms necessary for essential forest ecological processes. Unregulated grazing by livestock inside forests is a major cause of forest degradation and decrease in its regeneration. Encroachment on forest lands for agricultural diversion has been a major cause of forest loss. Therefore there is a need to strengthen forest protection measures.

4.7.1 Protection mechanisms should be strengthened by involving local people through village level committees. These committees should be empowered and provided special incentives to prevent the forest offences.

A 'Forest Crime Bureau' with an adequate legal and statistical base should be established for a systematic tackling of crimes and criminals in the forest areas.

4.7.2 Steps should be taken for the establishment of special courts at the district level for quick disposal of forest offence cases.

4.7.3 Grazing regulation in forests should be made more effective through community participation. Grazing by livestock inside the forests should not exceed the carrying capacity of the forest.

4.7.4 Fire in forests should be strictly controlled. Improved and modern techniques for forest fire prevention and control as well as tools like GIS (Geographical Information system) and remote sensing should be utilized for fire control.

4.8 Diversion of Forest Lands for Non-forest Purposes

4.8.1 Forest land or land with tree cover should not be treated merely as a

resource readily available to be utilized for various projects and programmes, but as a state asset which requires to be properly safeguarded for providing sustained benefits to the entire community. Diversion of forest land for any non-forest purpose should be subjected to the most careful examination by specialists from the standpoint of ecological, environmental and social costs and benefits. Projects, which involve diversion, should provide in their investment budgets, funds not only for prior regeneration/compensatory afforestation, but also for the development of social infrastructure in the area.

4.8.2 Beneficiaries who are allowed mining and quarrying in forest land and in land covered by trees should be required to adopt cluster approach in mining and to repair and re-vegetate the area, after having used it, in accordance with the Government of India guidelines and established forestry practices. Rehabilitation of the mined areas should be done to ensure ecological restoration of the affected site.

4.9 Bio- cultural diversity Conservation

4.9.1 The State is extremely rich in its bio cultural diversity. This diversity should be preserved through action as under:

- Intensification of surveys and inventorization of bio- cultural resources in different parts of the state. The survey should include information on the distribution pattern of various species \ population \ communities and the status of ethnobiologically important groups.
- Conservation of biodiversity through the establishment of a representative network of protected areas including Biosphere Reserves, National Parks, Sanctuaries, Gene conservation centers, and People's Protected Area. Such areas should cover sites of exceptional taxonomic and ecological value in terms of flora and fauna with adequate emphasis on the lower vertebrate, invertebrate and micro flora, which are important for the maintenance of healthy ecosystems. Tribals and the rural people displaced if any, due to creation of such national parks \ biosphere reserves \ or gene conservation centers should be fully and properly rehabilitated on such sites and in such manner that their standard of living after the rehabilitation is markedly improved.
- Legal and administrative measures should be taken for the protection of state's bio cultural diversity against bio piracy and for sustainable use of plant and animal genetic resources. Intellectual property rights (IPR) of the people of the state specially the tribals should be zealously guarded. Domesticated species \ varieties of plants and animals should be conserved as an integral part of the state's rich genetic diversity.
- Crucial corridors between national parks, sanctuaries, forests and other protected areas should be identified and notified for linking them to maintain genetic continuity of flora and fauna. Such areas should be managed with prescriptions favoring wildlife requirements like the retention of snags, natural gaps, grassy areas, special lithic habitats, caves, cliffs, den sites and water bodies etc.
- Modern techniques of ex situ conservation like 'tissue culture' and biotechnology should be promoted for the preservation of endangered and threatened species of wild flora and fauna.
- Monoculture and planting of exotic floral species should be avoided unless sufficient experimentation on strict scientific lines has established their usefulness. Exotic faunal species should not be introduced into the forests of the state.
- Tribals and other indigenous people of the state, residing in and around forest areas, with rich cultural traditions and practices, should be encouraged to maintain their unique relationship with the forests for mutual

benefit. Unique geographical and cultural landscapes existing in protected areas should be managed keeping in view the conservation of bio-cultural diversity of the state.

4.9.2 Forest management should take special care of the needs of bio-cultural diversity conservation of the state and the forest management/working plans should include specific prescriptions for this purpose. Wild life management plans should be prepared for each protected area of the state. Biotic pressures on protected areas should be managed through eco developmental activities with the active involvement of the local communities.

4.10 Afforestation, Social Forestry & Farm Forestry:

4.10.1 A need-based and timebound programme of afforestation and tree planting, with particular emphasis on fuelwood and fodder development, in all the forest deficient districts of the state is an urgent necessity to meet the growing needs of the forest dependent sections of the society specially the landless and those identified as BPL(Below Poverty Line).

4.10.2 Planting of trees along side of roads, railway lines, rivers, streams and canals, and on other unutilized lands under the state, corporate, institutional or private ownership should be encouraged. Green belts should be raised in urban/industrial /mined out areas. Such a program will also help to improve the microclimate of the concerned area.

4.10.3 The village and community lands not required for other productive uses, should be taken up for the development of tree crops and fodder resources. Technical assistance and other inputs necessary for initiating such programs should be provided by the State Government, public sector undertakings and the agricultural universities.

The revenue generated through such programs should belong to the panchayat where the lands are vested in them. In all other cases, such revenue should be shared with the local communities. The vesting, in individuals, particularly from the weaker sections (such as landless labor, small and marginal farmers, scheduled castes, tribals, women and BPL) of ownership rights over trees, should be considered, subject to appropriate regulations. Beneficiaries should be entitled to usufruct from the trees and in turn be responsible for their safety and maintenance.

4.10.4 The state Land Revenue Code (LRC) and the forest laws should be suitably modified along with the simplification of felling, transit and trading rules, wherever necessary, to facilitate and motivate individuals and institutions to undertake tree-farming and the growing of tree crops on their own land.

4.10.5 The management plan/working prescriptions should be strictly followed for raising plantations inside the government forest areas.

4.10.6 Irrigated and high input plantation of tree crops should be encouraged for meeting the timber demand of the state. The State Forest Development Corporation, FDC should play a pivotal role in this endeavor.

4.11 Production of Biomass

For the vast majority of the people in the state, the foremost need is for fuelwood, timber, fodder and fiber. The issue of enhanced production and sustainable resource utilization should therefore be prioritized in favour of and with due regard to the requirements of the rural people.

4.11.1 The management/working plan prescriptions should guide the production of biomass including timber from the forests of the state. Necessary steps to

promote efficient conversion and utilization of timber should be promoted for the maximization of resource use.

4.11.2 Promotion of alternative sources of domestic energy should be taken up on a priority basis to reduce pressures on forests for the supply of fuelwood.

4.12 Forest based Industries

In consonance with the National Forest Policy 1988, forest based industries should be encouraged to produce their own raw material through private forestry and to use alternative raw material.

4.12.1 No forest based enterprise, except that at the village or cottage level, should be allowed in future without a proper ecological, cultural and social impact assessment. The fuel, fodder and timber requirements of the local population should not be sacrificed for raw material supplies to such enterprises.

4.12.2 Direct relationship between forest based industry and farmers should be encouraged to meet the raw material requirements of the industry. This industry-farmer collaboration should in no way be allowed to result in diversion of prime agricultural lands and displacement of small and marginal farmers.

4.12.3 The bio- mass resources of the state should not be subsidized to the industry, which should be encouraged, to the extent possible, to use alternative non-forest raw material.

4.12.4 Allotment of land to the industry should be subject to land ceiling and other land laws of the state. Such industry should not in any way be allowed to adversely affect the socio-cultural traditions of the tribals and other communities living in the state.

4.12.5 Appropriate institutional and technological systems should be developed to enable rural artisans to sustain their biomass-based crafts and enterprise.

4.13 Tribal People and Forests

Having regard to the symbiotic relationship between tribal and forests, a primary task of all agencies responsible for forest management, including the forest department, the Forest Development Corporation and the Minor Forest Produce Federation should be to associate the tribals closely in the protection, regeneration and development of forests as well as to provide gainful employment to people living in and around the forests on following lines.

Having regard to the symbiotic relationship between tribal and forests, a primary task of all agencies responsible for forest management, including the forest department, the Forest Development Corporation and the Minor Forest Produce Federation should be to associate the tribals closely in the protection, regeneration and development of forests as well as to provide gainful employment to people living in and around the forests on following lines.

- Protection, regeneration and non-destructive harvesting of forest villages of minor forest produce in collaboration with the local people specially tribals, and provision of institutional arrangements for the marketing of such produce.
- Conversion of forest villages into revenue villages;
- Community based schemes for improving the economic status of the tribals;
- Undertaking integrated area development programmes to meet the needs-

size: 10.0pt; mso-fareast-font-family: Times New Roman; color: black; mso-ansi-language: EN-US; mso-fareast-language: EN-US; mso-bidi-language: AR-SA">Forest Extension

Forest conservation programme cannot succeed without the willing support and co-operation of the people. It is essential, to inculcate in the people a direct interest in forests, their development and conservation, and to make them conscious of the value of trees, biodiversity and nature in general. This can be achieved through the involvement of educational institutions, right from the primary stage.

Farmers and other interested groups should be provided opportunities through different institutions to learn and adopt agri-sylvicultural techniques to ensure optimum utilization of their land and water resources. Suitable programs should be propagated through mass media using audio-visual aids and the extension machinery already existing with the universities and the government departments.

4.14.1 Promotion of nature-tourism

Nature tourism or eco tourism that utilizes the forest scenic spots as well as the opportunities provided by the protected areas for wildlife viewing should be seen as a forest extension activity. This activity should also be promoted as a revenue generating mechanism that can benefit the rural communities through their active involvement in promotion of eco tourism.

4.15 Forestry Education

Forestry should be recognised both as a scientific discipline as well as a profession. Universities and institutions dedicated to the development of forestry education should impart academic education and promote post-graduate research and professional excellence, keeping in view the manpower requirements of the state. Academic and professional qualifications in forestry should be kept in view for the recruitment of the State Forest Service personnel.

4.16 Forestry Research

An increasing recognition of the importance of forests for environmental stability, as a source of energy, and as a provider of essential requirements and employment to rural poor, calls for scientific forestry research, by adequate strengthening of the research base as well as by setting new priorities for action. The state should promote, aid and coordinate research projects, to be undertaken by research organizations like the ICFRE (Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education), and universities, in a transparent and competitive manner. Some broad priority areas of research and development needing special attention in the state are:

the research base as well as by setting new priorities for action. The state should promote, aid and coordinate research projects, to be undertaken by research organizations like the ICFRE (Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education), and universities, in a transparent and competitive manner. Some broad priority areas of research and development needing special attention in the state are:

Government should aim at enhancing the professional competence status of foresters. It should attract and retain qualified and motivated personnel, and provide conducive working atmosphere, in view of the arduous nature of duties they have to perform, often in remote and inhospitable places.

Capacity building of local people specially the members of VFC (Village Forest Committee), FPC (Forest Protection Committee) and EDC (Eco Development Committee) should form an integral part of the human resource development (HRD) strategy of the state.

- Evolving innovative multi tier silvicultural systems with integrated ecosystem approach.
- Increasing the productivity of non-wood forest produce per unit of area per unit time by the application of modern scientific, silvicultural and technological methods.
- Revegetation of barren/marginal/waste/mined lands and watershed areas.
- Effective conservation and management of existing natural forest resources.
- Social forestry, farm forestry and agro-forestry.
- Establishment of modern nurseries in all districts by the department as well as by private individuals.
- Emerging areas like the joint forest management and appropriate silvicultural practices; efficient utilization of forest resources; women and tribal empowerment; role of forestry in poverty alleviation; social and livelihood analysis of forest dependent communities; forest policy; cultivation and marketing of medicinal plants; conservation of threatened and endangered species of wild flora and fauna; forest management at landscape level; conservation of bio-cultural values of forests; etc.

4.17.1 The government should ensure sustained availability of trained manpower at every level of the forest department's hierarchy. There should be regular recruitment of forest staff.

4.17.2 Specialized and orientation courses for in-service foresters should be conducted on a regular basis. Management Development programs incorporating the latest developments in forestry and related disciplines, should be promoted.

4.18 Application of Information Technology into Forestry.

4.18.1 Development of a comprehensive forest database

Priority needs to be accorded to developing a comprehensive database regarding the forest resources in the state and to update it on a regular basis. A Forest Information Centre (FIC) should be set up and well provided for in terms of man power as well as computation hardware and software resources.

4.18.2 Use of Geographical Information System (GIS) and Global Positioning System (GPS) in forest management.

Geographical Information System (GIS) and Global Positioning System (GPS) technology has important applications in forestry. A full-fledged GIS center for rapid adoption of these technologies into the planning, implementation and monitoring of forestry plans and schemes should be established.

4.18. 3 Promotion of Electronic Governance in Forestry.

Electronic governance, which is the application of information technology to the process of governance, has assumed importance in all walks of life. Forest administration should be encouraged to maximize the use of e- technology in all its operations specially that which pertains to public dealing.

4.19 Legal Support and Infrastructure Development

Appropriate and adequate legislative and infrastructure support would be necessary for an effective implementation of this policy.

4.20 Financial Support for Forestry

The objectives of the state policy cannot be achieved without the adequate investment of financial resources on a scale which is appropriate to the need. The state should endeavour to arrange financial resources for the implementation of forestry programs flowing from this policy document.

4.21 Epilogue

It is envisaged that this policy should usher in forest management programs in Chattisgarh, that will respect the thresholds of environmental stability, promote conservation of bio- cultural heritage, and fulfil basic requirements of forest based and forest adjacent tribal and analogous communities.

By order and in the name of the
Government of Chhattisgarh

(Ram Prakash)
SSpecial Secretary