Minutes of the meeting of the State level Expert Appraisal Committee (SEAC) held in the Office of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Head of Forest Force, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar on 19th-21st March, 2016

The following members of the Committee were present:

1. Prof. S.K. Barik, Chairman
2. Prof. C.L. Sharma, Member
3. Dr. Hui Tag, Member
4. Shri N. Tam, Secretary, SEAC

The names of the Invitees and the representatives of the project proponents are at **Annexure I.**

The Secretary welcomed the Chairman, all the Committee members and the representatives of the project proponents to the 1st meeting of the reconstituted SEAC, Arunachal Pradesh and 7th meeting of the SEAC, Arunachal Pradesh (since beginning). He informed that Dr. P.K. Samal, Member, SEAC has sent his apology for not being able to attend the meeting due to his pre-occupations. After this, he handed over the proceedings to Prof. S.K. Barik, Chairman of SEAC.

Prof. S.K. Barik welcomed all the participants and mentioned that considering the ecological sensitivity of Eastern Himalaya in Arunachal Pradesh, the proponents must undertake detailed and thorough scientific study on seismicity, e-flow, forests and biodiversity. The proponents must avoid forest and biodiversity loss and give adequate emphasis on environmental conservation. He invited the proponents of Phanchung HE Project to present their case for Environmental Clearance as per Agenda Item 1.

1. **Agenda 1: Appraisal of Phanchung HEP (45 MW)**
   Er. M.S. Gusain, President M/S CESC Ltd. of whichthe proposing company Pachi Hydro Power Project limited is a subsidiary, stated that the EIA/EMP report being presented in this meeting is as per the ToR approved by the SEAC. He also confirmed that all other pre-requirements for appraisal of the project/ considering EIA/EMP such as public hearing have been completed, and applications for processing Forest Clearance and Land acquisitionhave been made to Government of Arunachal Pradesh. He also mentioned that the two other requirements of Special Studies viz., Biodiversity Assessment Study by Delhi University as per ToR point 5 (O), and Social Impact Assessment Study as per requirement of Section 4 (1) of Arunachal Pradesh State Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy, 2008 (SRRP) and The Rights to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 (RFCT – LARR Act, 2013) have been completed and the reports have been given to the Committee members. After this, he presented a brief background of the proposing company and requested Er. N.D. Arora, of Pachi Hydro Power Project Limitedto present the details of the location and design of the project, and Er. Ravinder P.S. Bhatia, Director, RS Envirolink Technologies Pvt. Ltd. and the Consultant to the project to present the detailed EIA/EMP Report. Following this, the

project design and EIA/EMP reports were presented. The presentation covered the following:

- The Phanchung HEP is a run-of-river scheme across the Pachi River, in East Kameng District near Seppa town. At the barrage site, the river drains a catchment of 318 sq. km.
- The project is proposed to be developed by Pachi Hydropower Projects Ltd., a subsidiary of M/s CESC Ltd. Kolkata on Build-Own-Operate-Transfer (BOOT) basis.
- There is no displacement of family/houses due to the proposed project. In total, 44 Project affected families (PAFs) from 5 villages have been identified who will be affected by acquisition of land for the project activities, and who have rights over community land to be acquired for the project. R&R Plan has been prepared keeping in view the provisions of RFCT_LARR, National and State Policy to ensure that adequate benefits are given to the PAFs in terms of compensation and infrastructure development in the area so that quality of life is improved substantially.
- The 20% e-flow during lean season as proposed was as per the ToR.
- The plant diversity in the project area was moderate (Shannon's diversity index around 2), and only one threatened plant species i.e. *Cyathea spinulosa* was reported.
- The tree density in the project component areas ranged between 408-492 trees/ha.
- At least 9 threatened mammalian species were reported from the project area including its catchment area.

The EMP report recommended measures in respect of the following:

A. Construction Phase :
   1. Local Manpower Absorption
   2. Erosion and Landslides
   3. Biodiversity
   4. Revegetation and Afforestation
   5. Water Quality
   6. Air Quality
   7. Public Health
   8. Health Delivery System
   9. Fish Management
   10. Restoration of Muck Disposal Sites, Construction areas.

B. Operation Phase:
   1. Monitoring of Water Quality and Quantity

2. Monitoring of Fish Management and Production.
3. Monitoring of Aquatic weeds and management.
4. Monitoring of Catchment Areas.
5. Monitoring of Emergency response
6. Monitoring of Disaster Vulnerability and Management
7. Monitoring of Health Delivery System.
8. Monitoring of Education and Public Awareness.
9. Monitoring and Management of Waste Disposal system.
10. Monitoring of Demography and Local culture.

Following the presentation, the members asked for clarification on the following points:

1. In order to ensure adequate e-flow in the downstream portion of the river, particularly the portion between the diversion point and the powerhouse site, the proponent will maintain the e-flow of a minimum of 20% of the average lean flow of the 90% dependable year. However, given very low water volume in the river during lean season, the members enquired if the e-flow can be enhanced. The proponents stated that if more than 20% volume is allowed, the project will be unviable. However, they argued that adequate lateral flow is available round the year for the said portion, thereby the actual e-flow during lean season will be more than 2 cum/sec. The committee accepted their argument and asked to submit the empirical data on lateral flow based on area-proportion method.
2. The committee expressed its concern on proposed 3 hours peaking during lean season. Since peaking process alters the river dynamics to a great extent and affects significantly the downstream ecosystems, the proponent agreed to do away with the peaking.
3. The Committee found the Biodiversity survey report and the portion of EIA report dealing with biodiversity/community composition as satisfactory. However, it needs to be corrected in certain places for the correct names of plants and animals with complete scientific names including the species names and authorities. The proponent agreed to correct the same immediately.
4. The members opined that the EMP must identify and include the development of corridors within the project area connecting the patches of undisturbed forest patches within the project area with those in the catchment. The proponent agreed to complete the exercise and submit the same within a week.
5. The detailed conservation plan for the identified threatened species including the budget must be included in the EMP. For their conservation, local institutions such as Rajiv Gandhi University, and North-Eastern Regional Institute of science and Technology must be involved. The proponent agreed to include the same in the EMP and submit within a week.
6. The concern expressed by several villagers on influx of migrant workers during the public hearing was discussed by the Committee members. The proponent argued that the influx from outside the state will be at minimum given the conditions laid down in the Arunachal Pradesh State Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy, 2008 (SRRP), which will be followed strictly. They stated that it will not exceed 200 persons including the family members of the migrants.