

Wild Life Wing

H.P. Forest Department.

A 'PROTOCOL/GUIDELINES' WITH REFERENCE TO DECLARATION OF MONKEYS AS VERMIN IN 92 TEHSILS/SUB-TEHSILS IN HIMACHAL PRADESH INCLUDING MC SHIMLA.

The Government of India, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, New Delhi vide its Notifications dated 14th Feb, 2019 and 11th July, 2019 in exercise of powers conferred by Section 62 of Wildlife Protection Act. 1972 has declared Rhesus Macaque (Macaca mulatta) listed at Sl. No. 17-A of Part-I of Schedule II to the said act to be vermin for inclusion in schedule V of the said act for a period of one year from the date of publication of the notification in the official Gazette in 92 Tehsil/Sub-Tehsil of Himachal Pradesh including MC Shimla.

In order to regulate such an exercise, the following PROTOCOL is required to be followed:-

1. Awareness:

An awareness programme will be augmented widely by DFO Publicity to make the public aware of the culling provisions and extent.

2. Establishment of Control rooms:

One Control room each in the office of the respective CCFs/CF (T) Shimla and concerned CCFs (WL) shall also be established where reports of culling of monkeys and disposal of carcasses shall be reported to monitor the culling of the monkeys. Telephone number of these control rooms shall be displayed/ published to the general public. Proper record shall be maintained to register the complaints.

3. Identification of Geographical area and population of monkeys:

As per the gazette notification the geographical area where the permission for culling has been granted will be identified and respective field functionaries up to beat level will be assigned the task of monitoring and evaluation of culling procedure. Since no monkey inhabiting the forest areas shall be culled, proper identification of the troupes, their movement and home range and troupe composition should be prepared beforehand.

4. Supervisory Role During Culling:

Culling supervisory staff should be deputed at DFO level to monitor the culling of the macaques. Following points should be considered for entire exercise;

- a) The persons undertaking culling shall themselves be responsible for ensuring safety and use of their arms/weapons and they shall themselves be responsible for any mishap arising during the process. The Department of Forest shall not be a party to any kind of litigation involved.

- b) No animal which is apparently pregnant, or old or infirm, or suckling females or their cubs/infants shall be culled in the process.

5. Carcass disposal:

A carcass disposals team at every beat level within the 92 Tehsils/ Sub-Tehsil including MC Shimla shall be constituted consisting of at least 3 daily wagers/FWs/helpers headed by concerned Forest Guard. The Forest Guard of the concerned beat shall be responsible for safe and timely disposal of carcasses within his jurisdiction. Beat wise record of dead monkeys shall also be maintained by him in a proper register date-wise/year-wise and the BO concerned shall ensure that the entire process is undertaken as per the protocol.

DFO concerned shall ensure that a specific carcass disposal area/site shall be selected at every beat level or as per field requirement and prepared locally so that proper disposal by means of burial is achieved. A pit deep enough to cover the carcasses with at least 3 feet of soil shall be prepared and after putting the carcasses in the pits, they shall be covered with salt and lime powder to check spread of infection or digging of the same by scavengers. The prescribed procedure for carcass disposal should be adhered to strictly otherwise following severities may erupt:-

- i. It will increase the chances of spreading of genetic / infectious / zoonotic diseases.
- ii. The water of the river shall be contaminated while disposing the carcass of these dead monkeys on the river shores or in a ditch which may be cause of various diseases in future.
- iii. To disrupt the communal harmony, the anti-social elements throw wild animals near to the religious places after killing them.

6. Meeting with local bodies:

The concerned Range Officers shall coordinate with the representatives of local bodies/authorities for ensuring proper and safe disposal of carcass.

7. Injury during Culling:

In the event of any injury to monkey it shall be rescued jointly by the person undertaking the culling and the Forest Department. The said person shall inform the local staff immediately and accordingly the injured animal shall be taken to the nearest veterinary unit/animal rescue center and given proper veterinary treatment and shall be released back to the area from where it was rescued.

8. Monitoring:

The information generated shall be sent to PCCF (WL) on fortnightly basis by CCFs/CFs concerned pertaining to their respective areas.

Strict adherence to the protocol shall be followed and action taken should be properly documented.

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PCCF.WL & CWLW.