

Great Indian Bustard: WII plans to carry out surveys, use GPS to track GIB population

20 January 2021

New Delhi: The [Wildlife Institute of India \(WII\)](#) plans to carry out surveys in Great Indian Bustards' (GIBs) habitat states to monitor if power lines are being mitigated by [bird diverters](#).

"As asked in the [National Green Tribunal \(NGT\)](#) Order, WII will monitor whether priority power lines are being mitigated with diverters, by carrying out surveys and reporting the findings periodically," Sutirtha Dutta, scientist, WII told *ETEnergyWorld*.

A bird diverter is a device that is attached to a power line or any type of wire suspended in the air to distract and divert birds away from the line to prevent fatalities.

The NGT last month issued an Order asking the environment ministry to ensure that bird diverters were installed within four months on all existing power lines and pushing new lines underground in the GIB habitat of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Maharashtra.

It had directed WII to monitor compliance at least twice a year. The main reason for mortality of GIBs, according to the NGT, was collisions with power lines laid by wind or solar energy projects, criss-crossing their paths.

"This is a historic Order... We have been fighting for this since 2019. Sustainable development should always be the first thing to consider," Bhanu Bansal, founder, Centre for Wildlife and Environment Litigation (CWEL), which was the applicant in this case, told *ETEnergyWorld*.

GIB is a rare bird and one of the critically-endangered species, under Schedule-I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. Regarding the plan of satellite tracking of GIBs, Dutta said that the birds were already being tracked using GPS/GSM technology.

"Five GIBs were tagged in Thar and two were tagged in Kutch between 2017-20 as part of the WII's Bustard Recovery Programme funded by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change's CAMPA," he said.

CAMPA or the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority promotes afforestation and regeneration activities to compensate for forest land diverted to non-forest uses.

Dutta added that the tracking activity was generating valuable insights into the species' ecology, movement patterns, and threats that would help in refining conservation strategies.

"Keeping in mind the variations between individuals and years, this activity has to be continued in future, to generate more robust conservation inferences," he said.

According to a WII report, only 100-150 GIBs are left largely in Jaisalmer and in very small populations in Kutch, Sholapur (Maharashtra), Ballari (Karnataka), and in Kurnool (Andhra Pradesh).

Source: <https://energy.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/renewable/great-indian-bustard-wii-plans-to-carry-out-surveys-use-gps-to-track-gib-population/80360543>