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NGT directs govt, NCR planning board to resolve dispute on budget for assessment of NCZ

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New Delhi, Apr 7 () The National Green Tribunal has directed the Environment Ministry and the National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB) to resolve the dispute on budgetary support for assessment of status of Natural Conservation Zone.

A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice A K Goel said the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), being the nodal agency, had all the jurisdictions to take binding decision on the subject instead of prolonging the issue on the ground that the tribunal should decide the issue of inter-departmental coordination.

"We do not appreciate the stand of the concerned departments in bringing such issue before the Tribunal, avoiding their duties and responsibility to the detriment of public interest.

"We direct the MoEF and NCRPB to resolve the inter-se issue forthwith. The decision taken by the Secretary, MoEF in the matter will bind the NCRPB unless challenged at any appropriate forum," the bench said.

That National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) had submitted a proposal wherein it was stated that the whole exercise will take around 12 months and would have an estimated cost of Rs 1.86 crores subject to approval from MoEF.

The MoEF told the NGT that proposal was discussed at length and it was decided that since the entire exercise of mapping would facilitate better planning and management of Natural Conservation Zone (NCZ) areas which fall under the jurisdiction of NCRPB, proposal of NRSC may be forwarded to NCRPB for providing budgetary support in completing the whole exercise.

MoEF had earlier proposed before the NGT that NRSC may be asked to do land use cover mapping for assessment of status of Natural Conservation Zone.

The ministry had told the tribunal that area under NCRPB has gone change over a period of time in all the constituent states as more and more districts have been added to it.

The MoEF said that in view of the non-availability of higher resolution data in the year 1999 it is proposed that NRSC may be asked to do land use land cover mapping for the two periods i.e. 1999 and 2019. The NGT had earlier constituted a fresh committee to look into the question whether sub-regional plans for protection of NCZs were consistent with the regional plan prepared by the NCRPB.

The green panel had said the committee would comprise representatives of the MoEF, NRSC, Forest Survey of India as also Revenue secretaries and Principal Chief Conservators of Forest of Haryana, Uttar Pradesh Delhi and Rajasthan.

The tribunal was hearing a petition filed by the Legal Aid Committee NGT Bar Association against the alarming rate of depletion of NCZs in NCR. It had sought directions to check alleged diversion of the area marked as NCZ by the NCRPB in the regional plan.

The plea had alleged that states of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan had diverted the NCZ area in violation of the original plan while preparing sub-regional plans and such diversion would adversely affect the environment. PKS SA

Source: <https://www.businessinsider.in/india/news/ngt-directs-govt-ncr-planning-board-to-resolve-dispute-on-budget-for-assessment-of-ncz/articleshow/81948313.cms>