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Tamil Nadu Govt Brings New Rules to Save Wildlife from Electrocution Within 5km of Forest Areas

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[News18.com](#)

Last Updated: JULY 06, 2023, 10:31 IST

[Chennai, India](#)



The Tamil Nadu government has made it mandatory to seek prior permission from authorities before erecting electric fences within 5km radius of forest areas to prevent death of wildlife, mainly, elephants due to

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The rule will be applicable only within 5km of a notified reserve forest area to protect wildlife, mainly elephants, that tend to stray out. (Reuters/PTI)

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In a new order, the Tamil Nadu government has made it mandatory to seek prior permission from authorities before erecting electric fences within 5km radius of forest areas to prevent death of wildlife, mainly, elephants due to electrocution. The Tamil Nadu Power Fences (Registration and Regulation) Rules 2023 would also standardise and regulate already erected power fences around farmlands.

“The order would standardise and regulate erection of power fences (including solar) within a 5 km radius of forest areas. This would go a long way in preventing electrocution of wildlife, especially elephants. This fulfils our commitment to this critical and much-needed action,” said additional chief secretary (environment, climate change and forest) Supriya Sahu.

As per the new rules, it is mandatory to seek prior permission to erect power fences, including solar fences, and register already erected fences. The rule will be applicable only within 5km of a notified reserve forest area. All companies in the business of erecting power fences are now mandated to comply with BIS standard viz., BIS-302-2-76 (India) norms.

“In order to ensure compliance of conditions, a joint team of Tamil Nadu Electricity Board and forest department will carry out field level inspections once in a fortnight and record details in a log book,” the official added.

The District Forest Officer (DFO), after inspecting the site and verifying the conformity of specifications with the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board officials, would consider an application within 45 days for approval, reduction or rejection.

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The owner of a property that already has power fences shall apply within 60 days from the date of publication of the rules to the DFO to obtain registration certificates. On receipt of permission, the owner of the property may erect the electric fence within 90 days from the date of permission and apply for registration of the power fence along with an undertaking form.

The quality of erected power fences is set to be reviewed once every three years for providing fitness certificates after joint site inspection by the team of forest and electricity department officials.

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