Minutes of 2nd Multi-Disciplinary Committee (MDC) Meeting of Luhri HEP (210 MW), SJVN

MDC Meeting: 2nd
Date: September 30, 2026 (1100 hrs)
Venue: Conference Hall, Rampur HPS, Bayal
Attendance: Attached
Approvals/Consents for Minutes: Emails

The meeting commenced with a welcome address by LHEP, extending greetings to the Chairperson along with dignitaries/members. Further, providing an overview of the purpose of the MDC, constituted by the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) in January 2025, in accordance with the conditions stipulated under the Environmental Clearance (EC) granted to the Project. Representatives from SJVN made a detailed presentation covering:

- Project overview and physical progress along with a documentary on Project
- Implementation status of Environmental Management Plan (EMP)
- Community development initiatives under Corporate Environment Responsibility.
- R&R / Issues
- Status of Compliance with the decisions taken during the 1st MDC Meeting (MoM)

The details of agenda points along with decisions/action plans, due dates and responsibility centers is as under:

Agenda Point	Deliberations	Decisions/Actions Planned	Due Date	Responsibilities
1.	**DURING MEETING**			
	A. Project Progress & Clearances The Project Proponent (PP) presented the project progress. The Chairperson questioned the slow progress of the project despite receiving Forest Clearance (FC) in 2019 and Environmental Clearance (EC) in 2020. LHEP apprised the committee about the challenges	No action required.	-	-

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	faced by the project, which includes collapse of diversion tunnel and major flood that did siltation in the dam area. The Chairperson also sought clarity on whether the CA, CAT plan, and other related plans are conditions of the EC or FC, as the current discussion pertains to EC conditions.	The matter was deliberated and it was apprised that MDC is created to "*oversee the implementation of various environmental safeguards proposed in the EIA/ EMP report during construction of the project. Moreover, the CA, CAT Plan are one of the components of the EIA/ EMP.*"	-	-
	B. Catchment Area Treatment Plan The documentary on CAT Plan works carried out by Rampur Division was run/showcased. The MDC members also opined that all the tasks undertaken in CAT plan shall be well documented in year wise manner with geo-tagged photographs and their financial implications.	Explore creating similar CAT work videos/documentary for Anni division as well. CF Rampur assured that such documentation shall be carried out. The Chairperson advised against plantation works in pasture areas to avoid conflicts with local pastoral communities.	Update by next MDC	● CF (Rampur) ● DCF (Rampur) ● DFO (Anni)
	C. Third-Party Monitoring of CAT Himachal Pradesh Forest Department (HPFD) apprised the Committee that Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) activities are presently being	Funds under M&E budget head to be utilized; tendering process to be done by	31.03.2027	● CF (Rampur) ● HOP (LHEP)

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	undertaken internally in accordance with the prescribed norms. The Chairperson observed that independent third-party evaluation is a requirement under the CAT Plan and emphasized the need to ensure compliance with the same. The Chairperson further suggested that suitable independent agencies may be engaged through a competitive bidding process to ensure greater transparency, objectivity and effectiveness in the M&E process.	the project, funds to be released by State Forest Department. Prior to above, a joint committee of Forest & SJVN Officials should be constituted to finalise the TOR as well as the modalities to go ahead in the matter to hire the Third Party auditing agency.	31.12.2026	
	D. Fisheries Management Plan The Chairperson desired to know the rationale of using Project funds for developing fisheries assets in Sunni instead of Project area. The HP Fisheries Deptt. clarified that plan partially covers the support to affected local youth by developing trout fishponds.	Ensure the Fisheries Management Plan aligns with the environmental and livelihood objectives of the Project area.	31.12.2026	• HP Fisheries Department
	E. Environmental Monitoring, Health & Safety The committee was appraised of the availability of air quality monitoring stations (specifically SPM and RSPM levels) and e-flow monitoring stations at the site. The committee also desired to know the status/compliance of septic camps in labour camps.	i. The project to carryout monitoring of Project sites and maintain database. ii. Details of septic tanks and permissions from SPCB to be provided.	31.12.2026 31.12.2026	• HOP (LHEP)

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	Early warning systems linked to NJHPS, RHPS, and the e-aabhas portal were discussed.	iii. The project to share the Ecological Survey Report by M/s Terracon with the State Forest Department.	31.12.2026	
	F. Achievements of Rehabilitation and Resettlement of PAFs and PAPs. PP made a presentation to the committee on R&R provisions/ measures taken for the project. There are 18 displaced families at the project. Further, a total amount of Rs. 70.25 crores has been spent on R&R measures for the project.	No action required.	-	-
2.	**COMPLIANCE/ STATUS OF 1ST MDC (MoM)**			
	A. Catchment Area Treatment Plan It was apprised to the Committee that an amount of ₹20.63 crores has been utilized against the total allocation of ₹56.68 crores under the approved plan. However, certain key components—such as Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E), Eco-Battalion deployment, and Payment for Environmental Services (PES)—have shown no progress since the inception of the plan. The absence of an operational Eco-Battalion in the region and the non-utilization of PES funds were noted as matters of concern.	**1st MDC decision:** i. It was decided to merge the Eco-Battalion head (₹56.68 lakh) and the Payment for Environmental Services (PES) head (₹5.66 crore) into the Joint Forest Management (JFM) head. Further, it was proposed that Mahila Mandals/ Yuvak Mandals may be engaged under the recently launched Rajiv Gandhi Van Samvardhan Yojana (RGVSY) to	Update by next MDC	• PCCF (HOFF) • DFO (Rampur) • DFO (Anni)

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	In view of the above issues, and with the objective of ensuring effective utilization of funds and fulfillment of the plan's intended outcomes, the Committee discussed and adopted specific decisions, as detailed in the corresponding column.	implement activities previously covered under these two heads. This is justified on two grounds that 1) Eco- battalions are not available in the region and it will be costly (both in terms of finance and time - to form them at this juncture) and 2) the intended purpose of afforestation with community involvement (as is the intent of the CAT plan document) will be well-served by dovetailing the two heads with JFM and utilizing the funds under the banner of RGVSY (Contributions of SJVNL under RGVSY will also be highlighted in spirit of decision under "Agenda Point 1 at E" of the Minutes). In addition, the concerned Divisions of Anni and Rampur can also work out a scheme of utilizing the PES head for forest fire mitigation with community support (by instituting transparent monetary incentives for communities who aid forest fire mitigation). ii. The Himalayan Forest Research Institute (ICFRE) may be formally engaged to undertake Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of the Catchment Area Treatment (CAT) Plan, ensuring		

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		professional oversight and scientific validation of the implementation. iii. The Committee recommended that the department may explore the option of hiring retired Revenue staff (one Kanungo and two patwaris – each for Anni and Rampur divisions) to strengthen Forest Protection efforts under the plan i.e. for survey and demarcation to construct the boundary pillars as envisaged under the plan. iv. To expedite utilization of the Research, Training, and Capacity Building budget, it was advised to organize additional exposure tours and training programs within India for relevant staff, focusing on best practices in environmental management and forest conservation. HFRI shall help the concerned Divisions to plan these tours. v. Further, representative of MoEF&CC suggested that geo-tagged photographs of all physical activities taken under CAT plan should be taken and inventory of the same shall be maintained.		

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		2nd MDC decision: i. As progress was not forthcoming from the decisions as taken during the first MDC, reviewing the situation, it was decided to explore utilising the Eco-Battalion head (₹56.68 lakh) by involving those Eco Battalion forces situated at nearest distance from Rampur and Anni. If that may not be feasible then the concerned DFOs shall seek reappropriation of these funds under a suitable head. ii. As for the Payment for Environmental Services (PES) head (₹5.66 crore) the concerned DFOs shall submit an APO for approval to the competent authority. iii. Decision on M&E taken and addressed separately as per agenda point 1(C) above. iv. To expedite utilization of the Research, Training, and Capacity Building budget, it was advised to organize additional exposure tours and training programs within India for		

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		relevant staff. Eligible and deserving staff members may also be recommended for professional training courses to augment their skills.		
	B. Biodiversity Management Plan The Project Proponent (PP) informed the Committee that the EIA/EMP Report includes a detailed biodiversity conservation plan with a budgetary provision of ₹105 lakhs. Subsequently, following the issuance of the Environmental Clearance (EC), the requirement for a dedicated Wildlife Conservation Plan (WCP) for Schedule-I species was introduced and stipulated as a condition of the EC. In compliance, the Wildlife Conservation Plan was customized in FY 2021, incorporating specific measures for Schedule-I species and considering the inputs of the concerned Divisional Forest Officers (DFOs). However, limited progress occurred due to observations raised by the Chief Wildlife Warden's (CWLW) Office, which led to repeated revisions. Eventually, the plan was reviewed and submitted for approval in FY 2024. However, the draft was turned down citing the MoEF&CC's revised notification, which mandates that the Wildlife	**1st MDC decision:** The Committee deliberated on the matter, and the Chairperson assured that the Biodiversity Management Plan—incorporating measures for Schedule-I species—would be finalized at the earliest, without mandating adherence to the 2% of Project cost provision. **2nd MDC decision:** Committee was apprised about the Approval of Plan by CWLW in April 2026. However, no demand for funds raised till date. Chairperson assured that demand for funds will be raised soon and requested Project to coordinate with the Wildlife Wing.	31.12.2026	• CWLW (Wildlife Wing-Forest) • HOP (LHEP)

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	Management Plan should amount to 2% of the total project cost. It was emphasized that this 2% norm primarily applies to projects located within Protected Areas (PAs) or Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs). The retrospective application of this guideline to the current project—which was granted EC in FY 2019 and is located far from any notified PA or ESZ—was considered disproportionate to the project's contextual requirements.			
	C. Muck Disposal at Shingapur The Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), Kotgarh, apprised the Committee that an incident of unauthorized muck disposal along the Satluj River had been reported. An investigation conducted by the Senior Judge-cum-Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate (ACJM), District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), could not conclusively determine the agency/individual responsible for the muck dumping. However, considering the present condition of the site and in the interest of public welfare and environmental protection, the Head of Project, LHEP, was directed to undertake afforestation and fencing works at the identified location, as per the directive issued in the report dated 08 January 2024. It was noted that the site is yet to	**1st MDC decisions:** The Committee directed LHEP to comply the ACJM directions on a priority basis. Prior to execution, the Committee instructed LHEP, Director (HFRI), and DFO (Kotgarh) to have a detailed restoration plan prepared through the Himalayan Forest Research Institute (HFRI), Shimla. It was further noted that there are no CAT Plan provisions available under the LHEP with DFO (Kotgarh) for funding the preparation of the restoration plan. Therefore, the funds may be sourced under the "Research, Training & Capacity Building" head of the CAT Plan of LHEP,		• DFO (Kotgarh) • Director (HFRI) • HOP (LHEP)

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	be restored in compliance with the ACJM's directions.	currently earmarked to DCF (Rampur) and DCF (Anni). **2nd MDC decisions:** The Project Proponent (PP) apprised the Committee that the Restoration Plan had been prepared by the Himalayan Forest Research Institute (HFRI), and the expenditure towards its preparation was borne by DFO (Rampur). The Plan has subsequently been returned to DFO (Kotgarh) for reviewing the proposed Eco-Park component and furnishing the supporting documents/references considered while preparing the estimate. The Chairperson desired DFO (Kotgarh) to expedite the revision of the Restoration Plan through HFRI, excluding the proposed Eco-Park component, and submit the revised Plan at the earliest.	31.12.2026	
	D. Energy/Fuel Consumption The Committee observed that the expenditure reported under the heads of Labour Welfare, Energy Conservation Measures, and Waste Management Plan appeared significantly low in comparison to the allocated budget of ₹235 lakhs. In particular, the low expenditure on energy usage raised concerns that labourers	**1st MDC decision:** The Committee instructed LHEP to review and update the expenditure records to accurately reflect the costs incurred on the free supply of fuel provided to labourers. **2nd MDC decision:** Committee shown the update on free fuel supplied for the said purpose.	31.12.2026	-

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	might be sourcing fuelwood from nearby forest areas. In response, LHEP assured the Committee that a system of free fuel supply to labourers is already in place. It was noted that the expenditure incurred on providing fuel in labour messes may not have been fully captured or accounted for under the specified cost heads.	**Agenda Point dropped.**		
	E. Acknowledgement to Project/SJVN for funding on CAT or CA plan or Other LHEP apprised the Committee that Project Affected Area residents have been raising concerns regarding the implementation of the said plans, particularly due to a lack of clarity on how, when, and where the allocated funds have been utilized. To address this issue initially, it was suggested that the works executed by the Forest Department may prominently acknowledge LHEP on the display boards installed at the respective work sites. This would help enhance transparency and improve public perception of the Project's contributions.	**1st MDC decision:** The Committee instructed both LHEP and the Forest Department to jointly address the concerns raised by the local community. LHEP was further directed to provide a suitable format for display boards, ensuring that necessary acknowledgments and details are appropriately incorporated by the Forest Department at work sites. Moreover, Project/Forest Dept. may explore the option of designing display board through students by organizing competition. **2nd MDC Decision:** The Committee was presented with photographs of the project sites, including the display boards installed at the respective locations,	-	-

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		highlighting the works undertaken with Project funds. **Agenda Point dropped.**		
	F. Labourer's Pulmonary tests LHEP apprised the Committee that periodic blood tests and physical health check-ups are being conducted by M/s LHPC, the EPC contractor for the Project, as part of the occupational health monitoring program.	**1st MDC decision:** The Committee instructed LHEP to carry out peak flow rate assessments using a standard peak flow meter. The average peak flow rate should be determined from multiple readings recorded during the test. It was further advised that results obtained during the pre-placement medical examination may be used as a baseline reference for the same individual, at the same altitude, during subsequent evaluations. Additionally, the Committee recommended respiratory system check-ups as part of routine health assessments. **2nd MDC decision:** Committee was shown X-rays and PS of physical check undertaken by some labourer. Chairperson desired that Pulmonary tests may also be done through a common camp.	31.12.2026	• HOP (LHEP)
	G. Monitoring of mitigation measures (EMP)	**1st MDC decision:** The Committee instructed LHEP to adopt a project	-	-

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	The Committee members emphasized the need for establishing a structured monitoring mechanism, wherein a comprehensive inventory of activities planned under various Environmental Management Plan (EMP) heads—along with their implementation status—is maintained. Such a mechanism would serve as an effective tool for the Multi-Disciplinary Committee (MDC) to systematically review and supervise the progress of environmental safeguard measures.	monitoring tool, such as PERT (Program Evaluation and Review Technique), to systematically track and evaluate the progress of activities under various EMP heads. The implementation of such a tool will aid in effective planning, supervision, and timely execution of environmental mitigation measures. **2nd MDC decision:** The PERT was appraised by the Committee. **Agenda Point dropped.**		
	H. Engagement of Agencies in the Next MDC The Committee emphasized the need to engage agencies with expertise in ecological studies and environmental monitoring. It was suggested that such agencies may be invited to participate in the next MDC meeting to provide independent insights and scientific assessment of the Project's environmental performance.	**1st MDC decision:** The Committee decided and instructed LHEP to engage relevant agencies undertaking ecological studies; monitoring environmental parameters; and executing EMP at the Project. Their involvement is expected to provide greater clarity on various environmental aspects of the Project. The Committee further advised that these agencies may be invited to participate in future MDC meetings through videoconferencing, where physical presence is not feasible. **2nd MDC decision:** M/s Terracon for Ecological Studies joined the meeting.	-	-

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		Agenda Point dropped.		
	I. Expedite EMP expenditure The Committee also acknowledged that certain Environmental Management Plan (EMP) components require greater and more focused attention. The relatively low financial expenditure under several EMP heads over the past five years was seen as indicative of limited progress in key environmental areas. In response, LHEP apprised the Committee that the majority of the EMP components are part of the contractual obligations assigned to M/s LHPC, the EPC contractor for the Project, and their implementation is being routed accordingly.	**1st MDC decision:** The Committee instructed LHEP to make sincere and focused efforts to ensure tangible progress under the various EMP heads. Further, representative of MoEF&CC suggested that geo-tagged photographs of all physical activities taken under EMP should be taken and inventory of the same shall be maintained. **2nd MDC decision:** The Committee was shown geo-tagged photographs of the various works undertaken by Project and assured to maintain the database. Further, gave update on the EMP expenditures. **Agenda Point dropped.**	-	-

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3.	**SUGGESTIONS BY CHAIRPERSON** To ensure fair evaluation of the CAT plan, the Chairperson desired that Third-Party Monitoring be awarded through transparent, competitive bidding rather than direct deputation to institutes like HFRI. Furthermore, the Chairperson advised against plantation works in pasture areas to avoid conflicts with local pastoral communities. In response, the Co-Chairperson / Head of Project (LHEP) assured the Committee of the Project's commitment to the recommendations and timely implementation of the discussed actions.			
Meeting ended with thanks to Chairperson and all members of MDC.				

(**Member Secretary)**
Multi-Disciplinary Committee,
LHEP-I, SJVN