CHAPTER XIX

MANAGEMENT AND WORKING OF THE RESERVED AND PROTECTED FORESTS—CONTROL OF MANAGEMENT—WORKING PLANS

General

The Conservator of Forests In-charge of Working Plans will control the work of the Working Plan Officers and shall be responsible for the detailed preparation of a plan.

(2) For administrative purposes the Working Plan Officer and his staff will be under the direct orders of the Conservator. The Working Plan Officers shall be considered as part of the Divisional Staff of the division in which they are serving, and their accounts shall pass through and be incorporated in the Divisional accounts in the ordinary way.

The pay and allowances of the staff belonging to the Working Plan Circle and or shall be paid in the territorial divisions where they are employed.

The expenditure incurred by Working Plan Officers in connection with Working Plans shall be charged in the accounts of the territorial divisions concerned, except in the case of 1" maps. The Working Plan Conservator will arrange for the preparation, printing and payment of these 1" maps in consultation with the Territorial Conservator and with the sanction of the Chief Conservator of Forests.

When the provisional programme has been drawn up the Working Plan Conservator will prepare detailed budget estimates in consultation with the Territorial Conservators and draw up a list of personnel required for the preparation of the plan. When the budget estimates are scrutinized and accepted and incorporated by the Chief Conservator of Forests in the Departmental Budget he will take necessary steps for the posting of the Working Plan Officers and their staff, well in time for the field work to proceed.
(3) The Working Plan Officer should keep the Divisional Forest Officer in touch with the general trend of his working plan proposals so that the latter may be at all times in a position to criticise the provisions of the plan.

(4) The order of urgency of the preparation of new plans or revision of old plans will be considered periodically by the chief Conservator, in consultation with the Conservators and will prepare a provisional programme of the working plans to be undertaken during the ensuing two years. As soon as the provisional programme is settled, the Territorial Conservator will direct the Divisional Forest Officers concerned to take steps to see that all maps are brought up-to-date. It shall be the duty of the Divisional Forest Officer to have ready for the Working Plan Officers 6 complete sets of 1" or 2" or 4" maps (or any other longer available scale), fully corrected and brought up-to-date. Two sets shall be cut and mounted and the other four sets un-cut and un-mounted. These maps should be sent to the Working Plan Conservator before the Working Plan Officer starts his field work.

The services of the local Forest Guards and Range Assistants shall be made available to the working Plan Officers to help them in their field work.

The services of a Forest Guard or Range Assistant with good local knowledge should as far as possible be placed at the disposal of the Silviculturist when on tour and the Beat Guard should usually be detailed to attend his camps to arrange for rased, labour etc.

**Revenue Officer's Examination of Working Plan**

The policy of Government in respect of the State Forest is that they should be managed in quasi-commercial lines and in the interest of revenue, the commercial activities of the Forest Department under the powers delegated to the Chief Conservator should be restricted as little as possible. Government, however, recognizes that certain privileges and concessions which do not amount to rights-of-user have been enjoyed in the forests by the neighbouring population and desires that these privileges and concession should continue to be enjoyed as freely as possible.
They must, however, be defined and delimitated, and should not be allowed to increase except in unusual circumstances.

The most satisfactory method of giving effect to this declared policy is to embody its principles in the provisions and prescriptions of working plans, and for this purpose, the District Officer should be consulted in matters relating to population during the preparation or revision of each working plan.

The District Officer shall always be consulted before framing prescriptions which are likely to affect the people, particularly in respect of grazing and supply of forest produce to meet the bona fide day to day requirements of the local agricultural population.

The Working Plan Officer will prepare a memorandum for the information of the Collector with special reference to the prescriptions of the plan likely to affect the local population and submit it for approval to the Conservator. The latter will forward a copy of the memorandum to the Collector, the Commissioners, and the Chief Conservator of Forests. An informal conference consisting of the Working Plan Officer, the Collector and the Divisional Forest Officer and the Conservator should be held to discuss the relevant prescriptions of the draft plan. Changes proposed by the Collector and accepted by the Working Plan Officer will be submitted by the latter through the Working Plan Conservator for approval to the Chief Conservator and will be embodied at once in the plan. Points on which the Collector and the Working Plan Officer do not agree will be brought by the latter to the notice of the Chief Conservator through the Territorial Conservator. If the chief Conservator agrees with the Collector, he will issue orders accordingly to the Working Plan Officer. If he does not, he will ask the Collector to refer the matter to the Commissioner. If the Chief Conservator and the Commissioner disagree, the matter shall be referred to Government for orders. In order to minimise differences of opinion, the Working Plan Officer will keep the Collector informed of the likely change during the formulation of the Working Plan.

The procedure which regulates the respective duties of the Working Plan Officers is as follows:—
The Working Plan Officer will carry out the main work of preparation on the lines laid down in the Code of Working Plan Procedure. The Working Plan Conservator will, however, prepare the preliminary report with all details.

The Working Plan Officer will see that the sequence of fellings and subsequent closure is so arranged that as little inconvenience as possible is caused to the villagers who depend on the forest for the daily grazing of their agricultural cattle;

Before proposing any division of the forest into grazing units and where forests are suffering from over-grazing, he will suggest such limitation or redistribution of grazing as is necessary.

The greatest care is necessary where grazing demand is heavy and the grazing unit clearly cannot support the number of cattle which are desired to graze. A standard incidence of grazing cannot be prescribed as the severity of grazing varies with topography, species of grass and density of the forests; but it may generally be said that where more than 3 acres per head of cattle is available there is no serious danger of over-grazing. In cases where restriction of grazing is considered necessary, the Working Plan Officer should make exclusions in the following order:

(a) cattle from outside the State during famines and droughts;

(b) cattle which can graze as conveniently or almost as conveniently in other undergrazed units;

(c) cattle from villages grazing irregularly or recently only:

(d) cattle from distant villages;

(e) commercial cattle;

(f) village cattle not privileged.

The case of small isolated blocks in the middle of densely populated tracts requires special consideration. Such blocks are usually of great economic importance to the locality. There is generally a heavy demand for fuel, building material and grass
as well as for grazing. Such forest have, as a rule, been subject to heavy exploitation and excessive grazing in the past and are frequently degraded. In cases where such degradation has reached a stage beyond hope of repair, little can be done; but when there is hope of reclaiming the forests or of resisting denudation and degradation, the measures proposed by the Working Plan Officer must be carefully considered and restriction, clearly necessary, must be imposed in the true interests of the people themselves.

Five copies of the final draft of the Working Plan should be prepared. One copy to the Divisional Forest Officer, one copy to the Territorial Conservator, one copy to the Chief Conservator, one copy to be submitted officially to the Government through the following channel:——

(i) Collector
(ii) Conservator
(iii) Commissioner
(iv) Chief Conservator

Each of the above officers will note on the draft as he thinks fit and send a copy of his remarks to each of the other officers.

The fifth copy (Master Copy) will be retained for sending to the Press for final printing in due course.

When the orders of Government are issued on the draft, a copy of the orders shall be sent to each of the above mentioned officers.

A flying set of Control Forms together with the Deviation Statement in duplicate shall be submitted duly filled in each year by the Divisional Forest Officers by the prescribed date, to the working Plan Conservator through the Territorial Conservator concerned. The forms are checked by the working Plan Conservator and one copy of the Deviation Statement is then forwarded to the Chief Conservator of Forests with recommendations for sanction. On receipt of this sanction the duplicate copy of the Deviation Statement is sent to the Divisional Forest Officer concerned for filing with the divisional set of forms and the original is retained
in the working Plan Circle along with the flying set. The flying sets are sent to the Divisional Forest Officers on the fixed dates for annual entry.

In the month of July each year, the Silviculturist will prepare a programme of research work for the following working season. This programme should be based on selected items of a programme which it is expected to deal within the coming year. The Chief Conservator will from time to time pass such orders as may be necessary on both the quinquennial and annual programme.

The Silviculturist is empowered to lay out and demarcate experimental and other plots up to five acres in area in any Government Forest. Such plots and the forest around them to a distance of about 50 feet from plot boundaries will not be touched by the divisional staff except for such maintenance as may be desired by the Silviculturist. All work in such plots except the sale of felled forest produce will be carried out by the Silviculturist, but the divisional staff will cooperate in the matter of labour supply, tools, etc. Usually timber felled in such plots will be handed over to the Divisional Officer for disposal but the Silviculturist may retain any required for experimental or other purposes. When plots are formerly abandoned the Silviculturist will give official intimation to the Divisional Forest Officer.

Whenever experiments on a large scale are contemplated, the Silviculturist should invariably consult the Territorial Conservator and the Divisional Officer before starting operation.

Divisional Forest Officers will undertake the protection and maintenance of silvicultural plots and will be responsible for the submission of the annual maintenance returns.

Financial

Provision to cover the pay and allowances of the Silviculturist and the expenditure under his control will be made by the Chief Conservator in his budget. The Silviculturist may request the Divisional Forest Officer to incur expenditure on his behalf through the local Range Officers. All expenditure incurred by Divisional Forest Officers at the request of the Silviculturist will be directly accounted for in the Divisional Account, but charged to the Silviculturist's budget.
The Silviculturist and his staff are permitted to tour in any forest of the State, but will always endeavour to give the divisional officers as much advance notice as possible of their tour. The Divisional Forest Officer and the Silviculturist should meet as frequently as possible to discuss Silvicultural problems.