



**Royal Government of Bhutan
Ministry of Agriculture
Department of Forests**

**“RULES ON BIOLOGICAL CORRIDORS”
AS AN ADDENDUM TO THE FOREST AND NATURE
CONSERVATION RULES 2006**

July 2007

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ཐིམ་ཕུ།



ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
TASHICHHODZONG
THIMPHU, BHUTAN

M (1) MOA/MISCE/2007/154 *“Walking the Extra Mile”*

4 July 2007

EXECUTIVE ORDER ON

MANAGEMENT OF BIOLOGICAL CORRIDORS IN BHUTAN

The Royal Government of Bhutan has declared 9 percent of the country as biological corridors linking nine protected areas in 1999 as gift to the Earth by the people of Bhutan for the conservation of wild biodiversity.

For the effective conservation and management of these biological corridors in the country, which were declared since 8 years back, the following management protocols shall be adopted henceforth:

- The status of the biological corridors will be lower than that of the Protected Areas but above Government Reserved Forest.
- Based on the above status, the management of biological corridors in the country shall be governed by the “Rules on Biological Corridors” which is hereby issued as an addendum to the existing Forest and Nature Conservation Rules of Bhutan, 2006.
- The field level management of biological corridors in the country shall rest with the Territorial Divisions under Department of Forests.
- Management plans for the biological corridors will be prepared and implemented by the Territorial Divisions.
- A coordinator for backstopping the field staff will be based at the Headquarter of the Department of Forests.

This is issued as per the recommendations of the National Consultation Stakeholder Workshop on “Biological Corridors Management” held from 7-8 February 2007.


Lyonpo Sangay Ngedup
Minister for Agriculture

CC: Director General, Department of Forest, Thimphu.

CHAPTER I

2. Definitions

(3) “Biological Corridor” shall mean an area set aside to connect one or more protected areas, which shall be conserved and managed for the safe movement of wildlife.

CHAPTER XIII

BIOLOGICAL CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT

113. Declaration of Biological Corridors

The Ministry shall declare areas which are critical to ensure safe passage of wildlife between ‘Protected Areas’ as ‘Biological Corridors’ from time to time as deemed necessary. The areas declared as ‘Biological Corridors’ by the Government will be managed centrally by the Department.

(1) *Regulations*

The Department shall adopt regulations specifying

- (a) the procedures for designation of a Biological Corridor, and
- (b) the procedures to be undertaken following declaration of a Biological Corridor, including the preparation and implementation of a management plan for the Biological Corridor.

(2) *Designation*

If the Department determines that any area is critical for ensuring the safe passage of wildlife between one or more protected areas, the Department may initiate the process of declaring that area to be a ‘Biological Corridor’ in accordance with the regulations described above, by presenting a proposal and preliminary report to the Government. For each such area, the Ministry shall prepare such documentation as shall be necessary for conservation of the area.

114. Administration of activities in Biological Corridors

(1) *All activities*

Once an area has been declared to be a Biological Corridor, all activities within such area shall be governed by this Chapter and all Technical Regulations, notices, procedures, schedules and other documents adopted hereunder. In the event that any activity under any other chapter or any other law is proposed, the requirements and approvals under this Chapter must be met before other permissions under such other chapter or law shall be sought.



(2) *Habitat management*

Habitat management in furtherance of the conservation management plan of the Biological Corridor shall be allowed only by the Department and persons acting at the request or in the employment of the Department. For these purposes, the term “habitat management” may include culling species for sanitation and conservation purposes, as required by or in accordance with the Conservation Management Plan of the Biological Corridor.

115. Permits under other chapters

- (1) If any activity within a Biological Corridor is regulated under this Chapter, no permit given under any other Chapter or law shall be valid within a Biological Corridor, unless the activity involved also meets all requirements of this Chapter.
- (2) The Department shall adopt such procedures for coordination with other chapters of these Rules as shall be necessary to ensure compliance with this Chapter.

116. Prohibited activities within Biological Corridors

(1) *General prohibitions*

(1.1) The following activities shall be completely prohibited within Biological Corridors.

- (a) new settlements;
- (b) quarrying and mining;
- (c) littering;
- (d) leasing of land for grazing;

(1.2) The following activities shall be prohibited within any Biological Corridors, except with a written permit or authorization from the Department based on technical regulations issued from time to time;

- (a) any construction, including motor roads, transmission lines, buildings, fences, or any physical structures;
- (b) controlled burning;
- (c) commercial harvesting, except in accordance with the conservation management plans for the Biological Corridor;
- (d) grazing;
- (e) firewood collection (except dry);
- (f) taking wildlife of any kind;



- (g) collection of wild plant species;
 - (h) fishing, except in accordance with Technical Regulations relating to fishing permits and licenses, pursuant to Chapter III Rule 20;
 - (i) blasting;
 - (j) any research, except one that is specified by the management plan for the area;
 - (k) filming and commercial photography;
 - (l) visitation by foreigners/tourists.
- (2) *Grazing permits*

Grazing permits within Biological Corridors may be issued only for traditional grazing, who must, comply with all regulations under Chapter VIII of this Rule.

117. Offences under this chapter

Any person who, within a Biological Corridor conducts any activity undertaken in contravention of prohibitions listed under Rule 116 (1.1) and (1.2) shall be guilty of an offense punishable under these Rules.



CHAPTER IX
ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES

82 (10) Penalties for Biological Corridor offenses

The penalties for offenses involving impermissible activities in Biological Corridors, as provided in Chapter XIII shall be as follows:

- (a) for conducting research without valid permit from the Department (or collecting specimens for such research) in a Biological Corridor or for violation of such permission, including refusal to allow or cooperate with monitoring by the Department, a penalty of imprisonment up to three months or fine, minimum of which shall be Nu. 5,000/- and may extend up to Nu. 50,000/-, or both, plus confiscation of all research equipment and specimen used in such activities;
- (b) for taking wildlife and its products from a Biological Corridor without a permit, a penalty of imprisonment up to 5 years, or a fine, minimum of which shall be Nu.60,000/- and may extend up to Nu. 200,000/-, or both in addition to the seizure of the products;
- (c) for constructing any road, transmission line, fence, building or other structures in a Biological Corridor without written permission, a penalty of imprisonment up to 6 months, or a fine, minimum of which shall be Nu. 5,000/- and may extend up to Nu. 50,000/- or both, plus the cost of demolition of the structures so constructed, in addition to seizure of the materials and equipment used in the construction;
- (d) for illegal settlement or cultivation in a Biological Corridor a penalty of imprisonment up to 6 months or a fine, minimum of which shall be Nu. 5,000/- and may extend up to Nu. 50,000/-, or both, plus the fair market value of trees and forest produce damaged as a result of illegal settlement or cultivation in addition to the eviction of the settlers;
- (e) for illegal felling/logging in a Biological Corridor, a penalty of imprisonment up to 3 years, or fine, minimum of which shall be Nu. 5,000/- and may extend up to Nu. 50,000/-, or both, plus confiscation of the illegally felled/logged timber or any equipment, vehicle, livestock, tools or other items used or involved in commission of the offense, or the proceeds of any sale or other transaction involving such timber in addition to compensation at fair market value;
- (f) for illegal grazing within a Biological Corridor in contravention to clauses in Chapter VIII, Section 70(1), a fine, minimum of which shall be Nu.150 per animal and may extend to Nu. 500 per animal;



- (g) for collecting firewood or non-wood forest produce in a Biological Corridor, a penalty of imprisonment for up to 3 years or a fine, minimum of which shall be Nu. 3,000/- and may extend up to Nu. 50,000/-, or both, in addition to confiscation of anything illegally taken or the proceeds from the sale thereof or compensation at fair market value for anything taken illegally, damaged or destroyed and confiscation of any equipment, vehicle and tools used to committing the offense;
- (h) for illegal mining, quarrying, blasting in the Biological Corridor, a penalty of imprisonment of up to 1 year or a fine, minimum of which shall be Nu. 5,000/- and may extend up to Nu. 50,000/-, or both in addition to confiscation of anything illegally taken or the proceeds from the sale thereof or compensation at fair market value for anything taken illegally, damaged or destroyed and confiscation of any equipment, vehicle and tools used to committing the offense in addition to closure of the mines and quarries;
- (i) for any other offences for which the penalties are not specified in this Section, the penalties shall be levied as per Chapter IX, Section 84(1).

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a series of loops and a horizontal line underneath.