

✓ Gadgil's Report Sept 1983

PBF. GADGIL'S REPORT

Professor Madhav Gadgil

27th September 1983

Shri Ramaiah, IFS
Deputy Conservator of Forests
SIRSI, Dist. Uttara Kannada.

Dear Shri Ramaiah,

Sub: Felling of trees at Kalase in Hulekal, Range.

This refers to our discussions and personal visit to coupe nos. XI-7P-XI o p (23) at Kalase on 22nd September 1983. This coupe totalling an area of 151.75 hectares was earmarked for selection-cum-improvement felling for the year 1983-84. A total of 590 trees above the girth limit of 2 M was earmarked for felling. All rosewood and sandal trees were excluded from felling. The India plywood Mills had extracted a total of 125 trees belonging to 8 species in the season 1982-83. Thus, a total of 615 trees over 161.75 hectares i.e., 4,053 per hectares will be extracted over the two years. An additional 5 percent of the trees are permitted to be damaged. This brings the total of trees expected to be removed at 4.25 trees per hectares i.e., within the limit of 5 trees per hectare. It may be noted that information on trees damaged during the IPM extraction has not so far been made available to me.

The representatives of the Lakshminarasimha Yuvak Mandali, Salkani maintained that (1) there was excessive concentration of trees marked for felling in easily accessible areas of the coupe (2) there was excessive damage to trees during the course of felling. We undertook a personal field visit to the area accompanied by Shri Gopal, RFO Hulekal, Bhairumbe and several representatives of the Yuvak Mandali. In a one hectare plot that we sampled, we

found that

1. 11 trees had been marked for cutting.
2. Out of these 11, 8 had been felled.
3. In the process of felling these 8 trees, as many as 5 trees had been damaged.

We also noted that in another part of the coupe one tree belonging to Terminalia paniculata number 461 of about 12 M height had been felled in such a fashion as to damage 4 other well grown trees. Of these 2 were rosewood trees which are completely protected. The tree was felled uphill against regulations. Further there was much space on the downhill side to fell this tree without damaging any other tree. There was thus an evident prima facie case of deliberate damage of other trees in the course of felling.

We thus agree that both the contentions of the Yuvak Mandali, namely excessive damage in the course of felling and excessive concentration of trees marked for felling were in fact true. The Yuvak Mandali should be complimented for having brought this to the notice of authorities. It is obviously in broader interests to seek their continued co-operation in ensuring proper protection of forests.

I therefore strongly recommend the following:

- 1) The Yuvak Mandali at Salkani, as well as other local agencies who show an interest, should be involved in the process of forest conservation at all stages.
- 2) Whenever a forest coupe is taken up for felling, information on the number of trees to be felled, the contractor chosen for felling etc., should be made widely available to such interested local organisations.

- 3) Help of these local organisations should be sought in supervising the process of marking the trees for felling as well as their actual felling and transport out of the forest area and to the depot.
- 4) The higher officials of the department could undertake periodic visits to such sites in company with the local people with an interest in conservation.
- 5) Serious consideration should be given to the utilisation of dead and fallen wood for fuelwood depots in place of felling live trees.
6. These local organisations should be actively encouraged to involve themselves in afforestation efforts.

I understand that the contractor has also agreed to full supervision by the Yuvak Mandali, Salakani for all further fellings.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,

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MADHAV GADGIL

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