



DAKSHINBANGA MATSYAJIBI FORUM (DMF)

Trade Union Regn. No.20474/92.

Affiliated to National Platform for Small Scale Fish Workers (NPSSF)

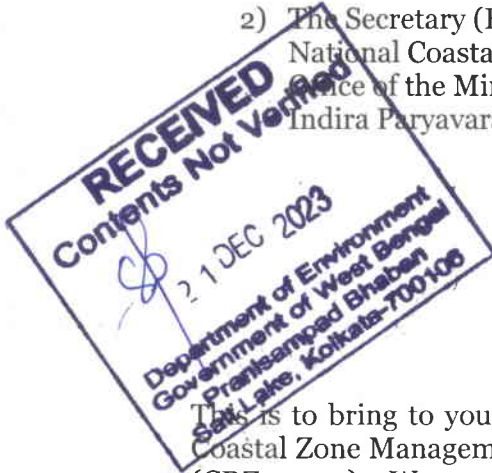


Memo No- DMF/President-29/23

To

Dated: 21.12.2023

- 1) The Secretary,
Department of Environment &
Member Secretary, West Bengal State Coastal Zone Management Authority
DD-24, Sector-I, Salt Lake City, Kolkata 700064
- 2) The Secretary (EF&CC),
National Coastal Zone Management Authority,
Office of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change,
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan Jorbagh Road, New Delhi – 110 003



Sub: Concerns regarding the lacunae in the Draft Coastal Zone Management Plan 2019 for Purba Medinipur and the approved Coastal Zone Management Plan 2011 for West Bengal.

This is to bring to your urgent attention our concerns about the draft West Bengal Coastal Zone Management Plan (WBCZMP) under the Coastal Regulation Zone 2019 (CRZ 2019). We are Dakshin Banga Matsyajibi Forum (DMF), the largest representative body for small-scale fishworkers in West Bengal.

Subsequent to the enactment of the CRZ Notification 2019, a letter, namely Memo No PMMF/A/203(1)/22 dated 26 August 2022, sent by our branch organization, the Purba Medinipur Mastsyajibi Forum, to the Purba Medinipur District Magistrate with objections about the conduct of a public hearing on the draft WB CZMP for Purba Medinipur district. The notice for the meeting was in English and it was not published in local and/or major daily newspapers. Additionally, the documents sought to be commented on were not translated into Bengali. Even more worrying is the process by which the maps were prepared, as there was no prior announcement regarding the CZMP mapping exercise and the latter's immense public and environmental importance and no effort to involve the Panchayat or the khotis (local community-managed fish landing centres) in this effort. All of the above is in complete violation of the provisions of the 2011 and 2019 CRZ Notifications, the Guidelines by the National Center for Sustainable Coastal Zone Management, and the Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change, and the Environment Protection Act, 1986 and also in violation of the principles of natural justice. The aforesaid require that the public hearing notices should be widely publicized in the local newspapers, that the documents should be translated into the local language, and the concerned communities should be involved in the process of creating the maps and plans.

The above concerns were raised vide the aforementioned letter, Memo No. PMMF/A/203(1/22) dated 26 August 2022, to the district administration and a copy of the same letter was sent to the Secretary, Department of Environment, Govt. of West Bengal and Member Secretary, West Bengal Coastal Zone Management Authority by post. On the direction of the West Bengal Environment Department, the

district administration invited us for a second hearing on 6th September 2022. We raised our concerns at this meeting. These included our strong objections to the manner in which the public hearing in 2017 and 2022 had been conducted, concerns regarding preparation and substance of the approved and draft coastal management maps and plans, and concerns about the demarcation of the tidal line. We were assured by the governmental authorities that our concerns had been noted and the omissions we had pointed out would be corrected and reflected in the maps and plans prepared by the government.

We further reiterated our concerns vide a letter having Memo No. PMMF/A/204/2022 dated 6 September 2022, by a letter having Memo No. PMMF/A/208(4)/22 dated 26 September 2022, and by a letter having Memo No. DMF/President-19/23 dated 10 January 2023. We restated our objections and concerns and asked for a copy of the minutes of the meeting held that day. We have not received any further communication or information from the authorities and independently discovered that draft CZMP maps have been uploaded on the website of the West Bengal Environment Department. We present a detailed summary of the timeline around the preparation of the draft CZMP in Annexure 1.

We have the following serious concerns with the conduct and the substance of the draft 2019 WBCZMP especially in light of previous violations in the preparation of the 2011 WB CZMP:

1. The detailed objections raised against the draft 2011 WB CZMP in public hearings in 2017 and against the draft 2019 CZMP in public hearings in 2022 have not been corrected in either the 2011 or the draft 2019 WB CZMP.
2. Only the CRZ Maps in 1:25000 scale have been uploaded and released as part of the Draft CZMP under the CRZ Notification 2019. There is no written plan included in the CZMP.
3. There are no cadastral maps depicting the land-use by the coastal fishing community. Furthermore, the only CRZ Maps made available for public comments also do not depict the common features on the coast used by the fishing community.
4. There are no local level disaster plans, micro-level fishing village plan, either separately or as part of the approved 2011 WB CZMP.
5. The 2011 and 2019 Draft CZMP lacks important details relating to fishing livelihoods and infrastructure which have to mandatorily be included as per the CRZ Notification 2019. Elements that have been omitted include fish hatcheries, fish breeding centers, fish drying spaces, boat landing centres, etc.
6. The public hearings for the CZMP Maps under both the 2011 and the 2019 CRZ Notification have not been conducted correctly. In particular, translated maps were not made available in 2017 and 2022 and even when the maps were shared, block officials restricted access to them.
7. Inadequate notice of the meeting was given in both 2017 and 2022, resulting in the inability of key stakeholders such as fishworkers in being able to attend and fully participate in the meetings. In 2022, the public hearing on 22nd August 2022 was unadvertised anywhere except on the website of the environment department.
8. Even with respect to the public hearings that were held, it is unclear if any of the suggestions received in the public hearings have been acted upon, as the approved maps still remain largely incomplete. Moreover, minutes of the meetings conducted have not been shared.
9. From the approved WB Coastal Zone Management Plan as per the 2011 CRZ Notification, no provisions have been made for the development and/or

- support of the fishing and coastal communities and their traditional fish landing centers.
10. The government has been repeatedly informed of the inadequacies and incomplete nature of the CZMP maps under the 2011 and 2019 Notifications through letters dated [22nd February 2021, and 6th September 2022] annexed to this letter. However, no action has been taken by the government.
 11. Section 5 of the CRZ Notification 2019 also mandates the agencies involved in the preparation of the CZMP to do so in consultation with the concerned stakeholders. [The only such hearing conducted had just one participant and it is clear that this is in violation of the government's statutory obligation under Section 5.
 12. Despite repeated reiterations during the public hearing, the draft maps approved under the CRZ Notification 2019 are incomplete and do not follow the Guidelines for Preparation of Coastal Zone Management Plan issued in Annexure IV of the CRZ Notification, 2019. Details of violation of guidelines are listed in Annexure 2 below.

The significance of good coastal planning is all the more important now as we are entering climate-change-induced uncertainty and danger. Coastal areas are prone to direct damage from sea level rise, storm surges and other natural disasters like cyclones, tsunamis etc. While science recommends the exercise of caution, present coastal planning in India throws caution to the winds and opens up the coast for uncontrolled and risky development without keeping the interests of small-scale coastal communities in mind.

In the interests of full legal compliance and small-scale fisher welfare we therefore demand that:

1. The approved CZMPs prepared under the CRZ Notification 2011 are immediately rolled back and the missing elements incorporated to ensure all guidelines in the CRZ Notification 2019 are followed in both letter and spirit;
2. The draft maps prepared under CRZ Notification 2019 must be translated, and widely publicized. Moreover, due public hearings must be conducted after publishing the all-incorporated draft maps;
3. The procedural and substantive errors made in preparing the draft CZMP for Purba Medinipur district should not be repeated while preparing the CZMPs for South 24 Parganas and North 24 Parganas;
4. Both CRZ maps must be released in order to ensure compliance with the requirements of the CRZ Notification 2019 and its Guidelines. This refers to the 1:25000 scale map and the cadastral map depicting land-use and common features used by the fishing communities;
5. Consultations must be immediately held with the local coastal and fishing communities in order to map existing violations of the coastal legal regime and the government must take expedited action against such violations;
6. The state should prepare village-level disaster management plan and fishing village level micro-plan and integrate the same within the state-level coastal zone management plan. The written plan must be prepared in order to acknowledge and protect coastal biodiversity and fisher interests;
7. Nayachar Island should be included in CRZ 1A in recognition of its intrinsic features and fragility;
8. The effects of erosion and deposition must be shown in the CZMP maps and plans;
9. The ground truthing of the land use & land cover must be done in conjunction with the fisher community;

10. We would also like to reiterate demands made both in writing and at the meeting held on 6th September 2022 since these appear to have been wholly unaddressed in the draft CZMP map. These demands include demarcating the fish landing centres/khota areas on the maps, and recognizing and identifying fishing villages and areas vulnerable to tidal impacts. All these measures are necessary for bringing the draft CZMP in alignment with the CRZ Notification 2019 and its Guidelines.

Thanking you,

Debasish Sanyal

President
Dakshinbanga Matsyajibi Forum
20/4, Sil Lane, Kolkata-700015

Annexure 1

Timeline of Present Approval:

1. Enactment of the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification, 2011: 6th January 2011
2. Notice for Public Hearing on draft CZMP, West Bengal: 2nd December, 2017
3. Letter objecting to the procedure for conduct of the hearing: 4th December, 2017
4. Public hearing on draft WB CZMP: 5th December, 2017
5. Enactment of CRZ Notification 2019: 18th January, 2019
6. Approval of WB CZMP under CRZ Notification, 2011: 22nd June, 2020
7. Notification of public hearing on draft CZMP for Purba Medinipur: Unclear. The meeting was not widely publicized and fisher unions and fishworkers only got to know that the meeting had happened after the fact. Notification was also missing from the local language newspapers like *Dainik Chetana and Tirabhum*.
8. Public Hearings in Purba Medinipur: 22nd August 2022
9. Letter of objection to the procedure around conduct of public hearings: 26th August 2022
10. Second hearing on the draft CZMP: 6th September 2022
11. Letter with written submissions about the conduct of the CZMP exercise: 6th September 2022
12. Letter reiterating objections around the preparation of the CZMP and setting out the concerns of the coastal fisherfolk regarding their need for identification in coastal areas: 26th September, 2022
13. Letter noting that the government's lack of response regarding the concerns raised and the non-fulfillment of promises made by the government authorities at the 6th September 2022 public hearing: 10th January, 2023
14. Uploading of the Drafts – end-May/June 2023: The exact date the draft CZMP was released is unclear. The fisher community was not notified as to the release of the draft and it was only discovered after searching through the government website. Moreover, the seal and stamp (with date) are missing from the uploaded draft.

Annexure 2

Present Concerns with 2019 DraftWB CZMP Map

Guideline Number (As per AnnexureIV of the CRZ Notification)	Guideline	Details of Violation
4(i)	<p>(i) Local level CZM Maps are for the use of local bodies and other agencies to facilitate implementation of the Coastal Zone Management Plans.</p> <p>(ii) Cadastral (village) maps in 1:3960 or the nearest scale, as available with revenue authorities shall be used as the base maps.</p> <p>(iii) HTL, LTL, other CRZ regulatory lines and the Hazard line shall be demarcated in the cadastral maps and classifications shall be transferred into local level CZM maps.</p>	<p>No local level CZM maps have been prepared. The website only contains 1:25000 scale maps which cannot serve as maps for the use of local bodies for determination of CRZ. Hence, guideline violated.</p>
5(i)	<p>The CZM Maps shall clearly demarcate the land use plan of the area and map out the Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESAs) or the CRZ-IA areas as per mapping made available by NCSCM to coastal State or Union territories. All such ESAs shall be appropriately demarcated with colour codes</p>	<p>No land use plans of any areas have been demarcated.</p> <p>Further, ESAs have been merged and presented as one single colour, taking away all distinguishable elements. Unlike the detailed listing in S. 2.1.1(a), the draft CZMP does not list out and demarcate horseshoe crab habitats, mangrove areas, sand dunes, mudflats, protected areas, turtle nesting grounds, salt marshes, etc. Hence,</p>

		guideline has been violated
5(iii)	In the CRZ areas, the fishing villages, common properties of the fishermen communities, fishing jetties, ice plants, fish drying platforms or areas infrastructure facilities of fishing and local communities such as dispensaries, roads, schools, and the like, shall be indicated on the cadastral scale maps. States and Union territories shall prepare detailed plans for long term housing needs of coastal fisher communities in view of expansion and other needs, provisions of basic services including sanitation, safety, and disaster preparedness.	No information about fisher community infrastructure has been included in the draft maps for the CZMP for Purba Medinipur, West Bengal. This lack of demarcation provides no protection to coastal commons being used by the fishing communities for livelihood. It raises the risk of eviction for fishing communities from coastal areas. Predictably, the maps do not come with any sort of long-term housing plan for the fishing communities either. Hence, guideline violated.
5(iv)	The water areas of CRZ-IV shall be demarcated and clearly demarcated if the water body is sea, lagoon, backwater, creek, bay, and estuary and for such classification of the water bodies the terminology used by Naval Hydrographic Office shall be relied upon.	No terminologies from the Naval Hydrographic Offices have been used to demarcate CRZ IV. No creeks, lagoons, backwaters, and estuaries are marked on the map – they have all been merged into CRZ IVB and given one homogenous colour.
5(v)	The fishing Zones in	In spite of this point being

	the water bodies and the fish breeding areas shall be clearly marked.	repeatedly raised in public hearings, none of the maps contain any details of fishing zones or breeding areas for the CZMP Map for the PurbaMedinipur district. This is in spite of the fact that [such places have been marked/present in the key legend on the CZMP for the North 24 Parganas district]. Hence, guideline violated.
5(vi)	In CVCAs, the land use maps shall be superimposed on the Coastal Zone Management Plan clearly demarcating the CRZ-I, II, III, IV.	No critically vulnerable areas have been demarcated and no land use maps of these areas have been superimposed on the Plan. Hence, guideline violated.
5(vii)	The existing authorized developments on the sea ward side shall be clearly demarcated.	No existing constructions/authorized constructions have been demarcated in any map uploaded. Hence, guideline violated
5(viii)	The features like cyclone shelters, rain shelters, helipads and other infrastructure including road network may be clearly indicated on the CZM Maps for the purpose of rescue and relief operations during cyclones, storms, tsunami and the like.	This is a critical element that has not been clearly demarcated in the draft map
6(i)	The draft CZMP prepared shall be	

	<p>given wide publicity and suggestions and objections received in accordance with the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. Public hearing on the draft CZMP shall be held at district level by the concerned CZMA.</p>	<p>Public hearings have been conducted with inadequate notice and without any effort to translate into local languages. Local stakeholders have been given no opportunity to examine the draft maps. Hence, guideline violated.</p>
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Annexure 3

[Previous letters sent by PMMF/DMF]

জল বাঁচাও, তট বাঁচাও

উপকূলের লোক বাঁচাও

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PURBA MEDINIPUR MATSYAJIBI FORUM

পূর্ব মেদিনীপুর মৎস্যজীবী ফোরাম

দক্ষিণবঙ্গ মৎস্যজীবী ফোরাম (রেঃ জিঃ নং-২০৪৭৪/৯২) এর শাখা



Memo No- PMMF/A/203(1)/22

Date; 26/08/2022

To:
The District Magistrate and Collector,
Purba Medinipur District,
Ganapatnagar, Uttar Sonamui,

Subject: Objections to the process undertaken regarding the Draft Coastal Zone Management Plan, 2019

Madam/Sir,

Greetings from the Purba Medinipur Matsyajibi Forum (PMMF)!

The Purba Medinipur Matsyajibi Forum (PMMF) is an association of small-scale fish workers of Purba Medinipur, whose livelihood protection is central to the Coastal Regulation Zone, 2019 Notification and the Coastal Zone Management Plans formulated thereunder. The PMMF is the Purba Medinipur District Branch of the **Dakshinbanga Matsyajibi Forum (DMF)**—a registered trade union of small-scale fish workers of West Bengal.

The PMMF would like to place its objections to the process and manner in which the invitation of suggestions/comments with regard to the draft updated Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP) of Purba Medinipur district under the CRZ, 2019 notification are being carried out. On the 23rd of August, 2022, a member of the media informed the organization that a Public Hearing on the aforementioned issue had been undertaken by the State Coastal Zone Management Authority on the 22nd of August, 2022. Upon carrying out a search on the internet, we were able to find a notice regarding an invitation of comments and the holding of the Public Hearing on the website of the Environmental Department (<http://www.environmentwb.gov.in/wbsczma-czmp2019.php>).

We found the notice inviting comments and declaring the public hearing uploaded in English. The organization finds it unacceptable that a notice regarding a matter pertaining to a coastal district of West Bengal—an area where the overwhelming majority of the primary stakeholders are unfamiliar with the language—has been published only in English. Moreover, it is also unacceptable that the notice has been published only on an *online portal*—on the website of the Department of Environment. Only a minority of fishworkers are digitally connected (and, that too, mostly through an occasional smartphone) and the reach of the e-notice is so limited that its reach raises questions about it serving as a public notice. Furthermore, the department should have taken cognisance of the inclement weather situation prevailing over coastal Purba Medinipur since the 10th of August, 2022. Most fishers are without electricity in the coastal villages, and their homes, ponds, and village roads were inundated in the period under consideration. Further, services continue to be disrupted in some areas. Under these circumstances, it is not possible for any meaningful participation of the public in the process. And without a process that engages with the fishing community, the

So. E. O.
P. I. Discussion
29.8.22
S. S. S. S.

26/8/22

ঠিকানা - জালালখানবাড় (ওয়ার্ড নং-২১), কাঁথি বাজার, কাঁথি, পূর্ব মেদিনীপুর
ফোন- ৭২১৪০৩, ফোন - ৯৪৩৪২১৮৩৮ / ৯৯৩৩৬০২৮০৮

Address : Jalalkhanbar (Ward No.-21), Coantai Bazar
Contai, Purba Medinipur, W.B. - 721403

E-mail : pmmf2018@rediffmail.com

mandate of the CRZ, 2019 notification to conserve marine and coastal ecosystems cannot be obeyed. For reasons indicated, the so-called public hearing that is reported to have been held on 22 August 2022 was overwhelmingly non-inclusive and, therefore, inappropriate and infructuous. **We demand an extension of deadlines for inviting comments and for holding a proper public hearing.**

Our organization has also undertaken a search of the local newspapers, e.g. *Dainik Chetana* and *Tirabhumī*, and has been unable to find any public notice regarding the invitation of comments and announcing the holding of the said public hearing. While it is possible that the department has published the public notice in some other local newspapers, it does not absolve the department of lack of attention and effort in reaching out to and engaging with the fishing communities in the region. Another testimony to this lack of effort is the fact that the PMMF, which interacts with various state government departments and institutions (Fisheries, District Magistrate, Zilla Parishad) almost on a daily basis, remained completely unaware of the aforementioned notice inviting comments and announcing the public hearing. This is not the first instance in which the department has reneged on its responsibility to undertake a process that meaningfully engages with the public. During the process of the finalization of the CZMPs under the CRZ, 2011, public notices were issued only three days in advance of the public hearings. The DMF had raised an objection to the process at that point in time. It is to be noted in this regard that as the current process of updating of the CZMPs is based on the accuracy of the CZMPs made under the CRZ, 2011, the inadequacy of the process then has an obvious bearing on the completion of the CZMPs under the CRZ, 2019.

The CRZ, 2011 under Annexure I, Section IV a) states that "*The draft CZMPs prepared shall be given wide **publicity and suggestions** and objections received in accordance with the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986*" whereas the CRZ, 2019 under Section 6 (iv) states that "*The draft CZMP shall be submitted by the State Government or Union territory to the concerned Coastal Zone Management Authority for appraisal, **including appropriate consultations, and recommendations in accordance with the procedure(s) laid down in the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 (29 of 1986)***". Under these provisions, **we demand that the department start a fresh process that abides by the provisions of the law and engages with the fishing community in a consultative process that can strengthen the updating of the CZMP.**

Your Faithfully,

(Tamal Taru Das Mahapatra)
Mob-7679928610

Copy to-

- 1) Secretary, Environment Deptt. & Member Secretary, WBSCZMA, Kolkata



President,
Purba Medinipur Matsyajibi Forum
Branch of Dakshinbanga Matsyajibi Forum



PURBA MEDINIPUR MATSYAJIBI FORUM

পূর্ব মেদিনীপুর মৎস্যজীবী ফোরাম

দক্ষিণবঙ্গ মৎস্যজীবী ফোরাম (রেঃ জিঃ নং- ২০৪৭৪/৯২) এর শাখা



Memo No- PMMF/A/204/22

To
The District Magistrate and Collector,
Purba Medinipur District,
Ganapatnagar, Uttar Sanamui

Dated: 06/09/2022

Sub: Public Hearing regarding Draft Coastal Zone Management Plan 2019

Sir,

We, the undersigned, are in receipt of your letter under Memo No. 797/XXV Dt.01.09.2022. It has been informed that the public hearing for finalization of the Coastal Zone Management Plan may again be conducted on the 6th of September, 2022 (Tuesday) at 12 noon at the Conference Hall-3, D Block, Second Floor, District Administrative Building, Nimtouri, Purba Medinipur, to provide opportunity to the Purba Medinipur Matsyajibi Forum prior to the finalisation of Draft Coastal Zone Management Plan, 2019.

While we thank you for providing us with the opportunity mentioned above, we are constrained to bring to the attention of all concerned our demand, vide our letter no. PMMF/A/203(1)/22 dated 26/08/2022 to your office, to hold a proper [see para 1(ii) of the CRZ notification, 2019] public hearing and consultation process with the fishing community, has not been met. There are severe lapses in the Public Hearing process, such as:

- The notice for the public hearing was only in English and that too only on the website and that there is no trace of it being published widely in local daily and/or major daily newspapers;
- No translation has been done of the documents for which comments are required from coastal community members, majority of whom speak Bengali only;
- The approved CZMP of 2018 and/or the revised CZMP as per CRZ Notification 2019 have not been made available in public domain;
- No public awareness or public announcement has been done about this exercise of mapping and no Panchayat or fish landing centres have been made aware of

the date and the relevance of the CRZ maps [see section 4 of the official languages act, 1963],

Furthermore, a meeting such as this held in a government office by involving only one organization cannot be taken for or claimed as a public hearing. In absence of any public awareness or proper public announcement, the very objective of prior consultation of the fishing community members in finalizing the draft CZMP stands defeated. We state that any lawful conduction of a public hearing for a second time have to follow the norms as prescribed under the CRZ Notification.

It is important to mention here that earlier also when the CZMP was being finalized as per the CRZ Notification 2011, adequate time was not given and proper public hearing procedure was not maintained, regarding which an objection letter was given from the Dakshinbanga Matsyajibi Forum dated 5th December, 2017 to the Member Secretary, West Bengal State Coastal Zone Management Authority. **Therefore, we once again implore you to consider undertaking a proper public announcement for all coastal villages and fish landing centres through your administration as well as other concerned departments of the Government, with the objective of ensuring the widest possible attendance of the concerned local fishing community and other coastal communities and to allow for sufficient time for people to access the Maps and Plan (translated in vernacular) and respond to it as per provisions of the CRZ Notification and Environment Protection Act, 1986.**

We would also like to mention here that when, on the 5th of December, 2017, a "public hearing" was held at the BDO Office of Ramnagar-I for finalizing the CZMP as per the CRZ Notification 2011, several concerns were raised from members of the fishing community - e.g. whether the fishermen who have built huts/semi pucca house in the CRZ areas would be allowed to build permanent masonry structures and whether Hotels and Lodges built on the beach in Mandarmani area would be dealt with as per the existing CRZ norms. Assurances were given (by IESWM, Letter No-311-IESWM/3P-152/2021-22(434N) dated-01/12/2021) that the same would be looked into as per CRZ law. A letter was also written to the Member Secretary, WBSCZMA by the Dakshinbanga Matsyajibi Forum, Letter No. DMF/VP/EM/10/21 Dt. 22. 02. 2021 pointing out several omissions in the CRZ maps and Coastal Zone Management Plan of West Bengal such as the details of housing plans for coastal fisher communities, mapping of common properties of fishermen communities like fish landing centres, jetties, ice plants, fish drying areas, etc. as per CRZ notification 2011 and 2019. However, as no revised CZMP detailing long-term housing and fishing community uses, identification and mapping of the fishing zones and fish breeding areas have been provided in public domain, we fail to understand how the concerns and issues raised before and/or during the revision exercise have been considered in the present CZMP.

We are alarmed at the incompetence of the Institute of Environmental Studies and Wetland Management (IESWM) who are repeatedly failing to denote the habitats, fish landing and working places on the coast with reference to the present coastal land use. The District Council of Purba Medinipur has taken resolutions to confer user rights of

such lands to the 43 Fish Landing Centre Committees and the Fisheries Department has also indicated the lands used for such purposes by the coastal fishing communities.

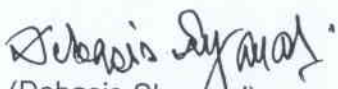
We have further observed that the authority signing the notice and member of WBSCZMA, the appraising authority under CRZ law, is also the director of the agency who undertook the CZMP mapping exercise. We would like to be apprised of the legality of this process since it seems to represent a conflict of interest.

Finally, despite several letters and earlier representations presenting the demands of the fishing community, the land use and rights of fishing community are not being looked into, whereas projects and infrastructure development are being allowed to come up in Purba Medinipur infringing on coastal areas being traditionally and regularly used by fishing community and is to protected use as per CRZ law.


We therefore demand that:

- i) The current process of Pubic Hearing be declared void and a fresh process be started according to the statutory norms;
- ii) All documents, including maps made and plans prepared in accordance with CRZ Notification 2019 and guideline issued by the MoEF&CC be placed in the public domain and made available with departments of government such as the BDO and Panchayat for ordinary fishing community members to access;
- iii) Such documents must be translated into Bengali, for fishing community members to understand;
- iv) Make sure that prior public announcements are made in a manner so that the members of the coastal fishing community can easily come toknow that a public hearing is being held at a public location. The time period between making translated documents available and actual date of hearing should be adequate and as per law and not arbitrary;
- v) That these preliminary exercises must be considered as essential pre-requisites and statutory requirements prior toconducting any public hearing and the same should be well documented andvideographed for future consideration of the concerned appraising authorities both at state and central government level.

Thanking You-


(Debasis Shyamal)

General Secretary,
Purba Medinipur Matsyajibi Forum
Branch of Debasish Shyamal Matsyajibi Forum


(Tamal Taru Das Mahapatra)

President,
Purba Medinipur Matsyajibi Forum
Branch of Debasish Shyamal Matsyajibi Forum

Enclosed:

- 1) Letter by Purba Medinipur Matsyajibi Forum to the District Magistrate and Collector, Puba Medinipur District dated 26/08/2022
- 2) Letter by DakshinbangaMatsyajibi Forum, to the Principal Secretary, West Bengal State Coastal Zone Management Authority dated 05/12/2017
- 3) Letter by DakshinbangaMatsyajibi Forum, to the Principal Secretary, West Bengal State Coastal Zone Management Authority dated 22/02/2021.
- 4) Copy of resolution by Purba Medinipur Zila Parishad.
- 5) Document of fisheries department.



PURBA MEDINIPUR MATSYAJIBI FORUM

পূর্ব মেদিনীপুর মৎস্যজীবী ফোরাম

দক্ষিণবঙ্গ মৎস্যজীবী ফোরাম (রেঃ জিঃ নং- ২০৪৭৪/৯২) এর শাখা



Memo No- PMMF/A/208(4)/22

Dt. 26/09/2022

To
The District Magistrate and Collector,
Purba Medinipur District,
Ganapatnagar, Uttar Sanamui.

Subject: Public Meeting on CZMP 2019 held on 6th September 2022

Dear Madam/Sir,

Greetings from Purba Medinipur Matsyajibi Forum
(branch of Dakshinbanga Matsyajibi Forum)

The contents of this letter relate to the meeting that was held on the 6th of September, 2022 on the subject of Public Hearing for the finalization of the Coastal Zone Management Plan (CZMP) under the CRZ, 2019 process for Purba Medinipur district. This meeting was attended by the representatives of the following: Purba Medinipur District Planning Officer, Institute of Environmental Studies and Wetland Management (IESWM), West Bengal Environmental Department, Assistant Director of Fisheries, Marine and Assistant Director of Fisheries, Brackish, Department of Fisheries (Purba Medinipur District), other government officers and representatives of the Purba Medinipur Matsyajibi Forum (PMMF).

During the meeting, certain resolutions had been made in order to strengthen the process of the finalizing the CZMP through the inclusion of fisher representation and fishing livelihoods. However, as on the date of submission of this letter, no such follow up action has been initiated by the relevant department. In view thereof and of the need of the hour, we submit to you the following requests:

A. Mapping of fishing-related activities in the CZMP, 2019:

During the aforementioned meeting, the PMMF had brought to the notice of the officials present that fishing related activities, infrastructure, housing areas, and other relevant aspects of fisher livelihoods are to be included in the CZMP as per Annexure-IV in the CRZ, 2019 notification. These were not included in the draft CZMP which was uploaded on the website of the WB Environmental Department. Acknowledging the absence, the Land Records department of the District Collector, the Department of Fisheries and the representatives of IESWM, the agency tasked with finalizing the CZMP had been directed to liaise with members of the PMMF to make these inclusions. However, this process has not been initiated. Any CZMP that is completed without the inclusion of the fishing-related activities and livelihood spaces shall violate the directions of the CRZ, 2019. And as a result of the absence of this vital aspect of the CZMP, the fishing communities face the threat of eviction from coastal areas.

B. Submission made by the Department of Fisheries

During the meeting, it was brought to the notice of the PMMF that the Purba Medinipur office of the Department of Fisheries had submitted a fisheries plan for the district to the mapping agency. However, this plan and its contents are unknown to the fishers themselves. It would be vital that a copy of this plan is made available to the fishing community, for checking its accuracy and ensuring that the plan made by the Department of Fisheries includes all aspects related to livelihood activities and habitation. Furthermore, in order to aid the process of mapping as indicated in Point A above, we request that a copy of this plan be made available to PMMF in local vernacular language. The availability of the plan in advance of the physical meetings to carry out the mapping shall strengthen the mapping exercise.

C. Minutes of the meeting

The meeting held on the 6th of September, 2022 was an extensive one. Many department representatives were present and officers of the agency tasked with finalizing CZMP made presentations. Likewise, representatives of the PMMF placed their comments during the meeting. We would request you to kindly make available to PMMF a copy of the minutes of the meeting such that we can maintain a record at our end of all the subject matters and topics covered on the day.

We urge you to kindly expedite the process of mapping and direct the relevant offices to initiate the process of engaging with the fishing communities. We also request you to make available to us the plan prepared by the Department of Fisheries and the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 6th of September, 2022 in relation to the finalization of the CZMP, 2019 as well as email us at pmmf2018@rediffmail.com and to kindly copy us in further discussions and execution of decisions from 6th September, 2022 meeting in the future.

Kind regards,

(Debasis Shyamal)

Copy to-

- 1) Principal Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, New Delhi- 110003
- 2) Member Secretary, National Coastal Management Authority, Office of the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, New Delhi- 110003
- 3) Secretary, Environment Deptt. & Member Secretary, WBSCZMA, Kolkata.
- 4) Assistant Director of Fisheries, Brackish, Purba Medinipur.
- 5) Assistant Director of Fisheries, Marine, Purba Medinipur.

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Debasis Shyamal

General Secretary,
Purba Medinipur NCC Forum
Branch of Dakshinbanga Mahajati Forum



DAKSHINBANGA MATSYAJIBI FORUM (DMF)

Trade Union Regn. No.20474/92.

Affiliated to National Platform for Small Scale Fish Workers (NPSSF)



Memo No- DMF/President-19/23

Date- 10.01.2023

To
The Member Secretary
WBSCZMA, DD-24,
Sector I, Salt Lake,
Kolkata 700064

Sub: Inclusion of fish landing centres in the CZMP mapping process.

Ref: Letter from the PMMF to the Dept of Environment, WB dated 26/09/2022 on the subject matter of "Public Hearing regarding draft Coastal Zone Management Plan 2019" and allied matters

Dear Madam,

The undersigned is a registered trade union whose members belong to traditional small-scale fishing communities in West Bengal and therefore is an important primary stakeholder in any policy decision involving administration and/or governance of coastal areas, where hundreds of thousands of fishworkers and other traditional coastal communities have been living and pursuing livelihood activities.

This letter is in furtherance to the letter of an affiliated trade union of ours, namely the Purba Medinipur Matsyajibi Forum (PMMF), vide Memo No. PMMF/A/208(4)/22, dated 26/09/2022, as mentioned above. In the said letter PMMF had pointed out the concerns of the coastal fisherfolk and emphasised on the identification of their activity-zones in the coastal areas for indication of the same in the Coastal Zone Management Map and plans as per law (particularly para 4 r/w para 5(iii) of Annexure IV of the CRZ Regulation, 2019). The PMMF has articulated its concerns vividly in the said letter and during the erstwhile public hearing dated the 6th of September, 2022.

However, the PMMF has neither received any response to its letter nor has the PMMF seen any initiative relevant to the above concerns taken by the authorities, especially the Land Records department of the District Collector, the Department of Fisheries, and the representatives of IESWM—the agency tasked with finalising the CZMP. We are still awaiting the fulfilment of promises made to us during the said public hearing meeting, wherein the Member Secretary of the West Bengal Coastal Zone Management Authority (WBSCZMA) specifically directed the aforementioned authorities to include the fish landing centres and fisherfolk activity zones in the cadastral maps of the Coastal Zone Management plan. In this regard it is further submitted that during the public hearing on the 6th of September, 2022, PMMF had submitted our earlier communications to the WBSCZMA particularly our letter, vide memo no. DMF/VP/EM/10/21, dated 22/02/2021, wherein we have provided a detailed description, including land records, of the areas wherein 44 fish landing centres and fishing activities have taken place.

Page 1 of 2

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Institute of Environmental Studies
and Wetland Management

DD-24, Sector-I, Salt Lake,
Kolkata-700064

Head Office: 20/4, Sil Lane, Kolkata - 700015. Phone & FAX: 033-23283989. e-mail: dmfwestbengal@gmail.com
Website: www.smallscalefishworkers.org

It is further humbly pointed out that we are yet to receive a copy of the minutes of the meeting of the public hearing held on 6th of September, 2022.

Furthermore, as far as we know, no other public hearings are scheduled or have taken place for the other two coastal districts of West Bengal, namely, the North and South 24 Parganas. In this regard, we will be highly obliged, if you could kindly share the dates of the said public hearing meetings for North and South 24 Parganas districts.

We humbly request your necessary action on this issue before the map is finalised in its current form. Otherwise it will have rendered the public hearing redundant.

Thanking you-



(Debasis Shyamal)

Mob-9933602808

President,
Dakshinbanga Matsyajit Forum