

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS

RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT, 2005

CHAPTER –I

Organization, functions and duties

The primary role of the Department is to formulate and implement policies and programmes relating to conservation and development of environment, forests & wildlife to help the Administration achieve its overall objective of sustainable development and ecological security of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

The department is headed by the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests who is assisted by one Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and two Chief Conservator of Forests who in turn are supported by various officers as per organization chart given herewith. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests is also ex-officio Secretary (Environment & Forests). The Chief Conservator of Forests (Admn.&Vig.) is the ex-officio special secretary (Environment & Forests) and is assisted by a Deputy Conservator of Forests (Headquarters) in respect of all technical matters pertaining to Administration & Vigilance. The Deputy Conservator of Forests (HQ) is also the ex-officio Deputy Secretary (Environment & Forests), A & N Administration. The Chief Conservator of Forests (Planning & Development) is assisted by the Deputy Conservator of Forests (Planning & Monitoring) in respect of all technical matters pertaining to Planning and Development.

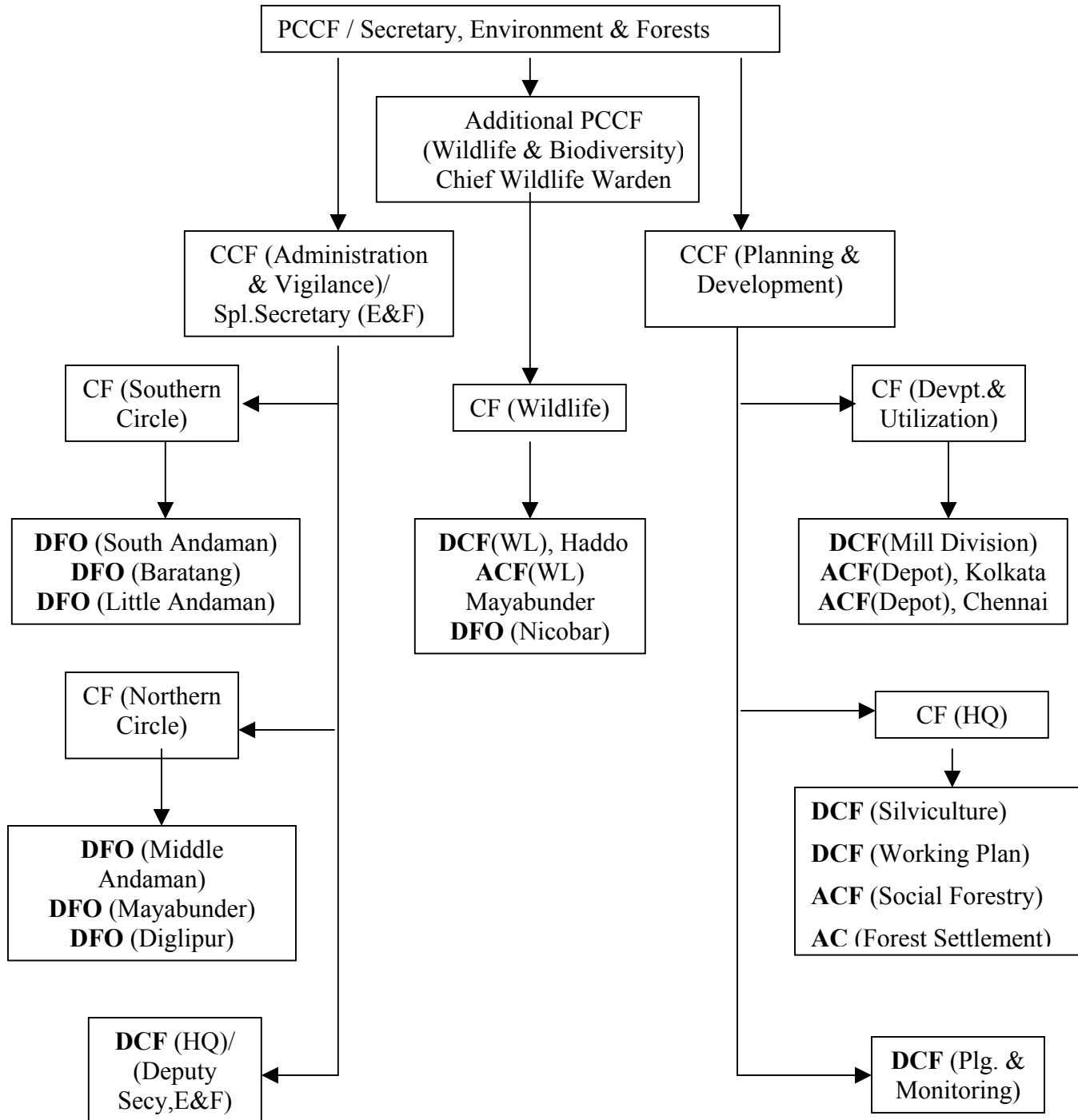
Besides the above, the department has a strength of about 3900 personnel which includes Assistant Conservators Forests, Forest executive staff (Forest Ranger/Deputy Ranger/Forester/ Head Forest Guard/Forest Guard), ministerial staff and industrial workers to execute various forestry works and factory workers to run two saw mills departmentally, one each at Chatham & Betapur. The Accounts Officer is posted to assist in matters pertaining to the Accounts. The Senior Veterinary Officer is responsible for care and maintenance of all livestock of the Department. Andaman and Nicobar Islands being one of the biodiversity hotspots displaying high degree of endemism, the Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests has also been designated as the Chief Wildlife Warden of the Islands and he administers all matters pertaining to Protected Area Network of the Islands comprising 9 (nine) National Parks, 96 (ninety six) Wild Life Sanctuaries and 1(one) Biosphere Reserve.

There are seven territorial divisions each under the charge of a Divisional Forest Officer, who actually execute various forestry programmes in the field. To guide, coordinate and control the works of the divisions, there are three territorial circles, namely, Northern Circle, Southern Circle and Wildlife Circle. Each circle is under the charge of a

Conservator of Forests. Northern Circle covers North Andaman, Mayabunder and Middle Andaman Division; Southern Circle covers, Baratang, South Andaman and Little Andaman Divisions and the Wildlife Circle covers Wildlife Divisions at Port Blair and Mayabunder and Nicobar Forest Division.

In addition to the above, there are two functional circles namely, Development & Utilization Circle and Headquarters Circle, each headed by a Conservator of Forests. The Conservator of Forests (Development & Utilization) looks after the utilization of forest produce and supervises the functioning of Mill Division at Chatham and the Depot Divisions at Kolkata and Chennai. He also handles procurement of stores in bulk and equipments and automobiles for the department. He is also Nodal Officer for Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and Member Secretary of Coastal Zone Management Authority of this Union Territory. The Conservator of Forests (Headquarters Circle) supervises works carried out by the Working Plan Division, Silviculture Division, Social Forestry Cell and Forest Settlement Unit.

**ORGANISATIONAL SET-UP OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
A&N ADMINISTRATION**



The department is committed to the service of the people and long-term conservation of nature and natural resources of these islands. It is also committed to safeguard the tropical forests of these islands in such a way that the conservation of biodiversity can be ensured along with sustained availability of goods and services from the forests. The main duties and functions are as follows;

- i) To conserve the biodiversity of the forests of these Islands.
- ii) To protect wild flora and fauna found in these islands especially the endemic species which are found only in these Islands.
- iii) To establish and manage protected area network for long term conservation of biodiversity and gene pool resources in-situ.
- iv) To conserve marine biodiversity of these islands specially coral reefs around these islands.
- v) To manage the forests of these islands on the basis of sound principles of silviculture and sustainability.
- vi) To provide raw material to the local forest based industries.
- vii) To provide sawn timber to public and artisans at reasonable rates from government saw mills.
- viii) To carry out silviculture research for sustainable management of the forests.
- ix) To protect the forest and wildlife wealth from local and foreign poachers.
- x) To enforce Indian Forest Act 1927, Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972, Environment (Protection) Act 1986, Forest (Conservation) Act 1980 and Coastal Regulation Zone Notification, 1991 and rules made there under in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- xi) To promote Ecotourism.

The Department of Environment and Forests of Andaman and Nicobar Administration was the only forest department in the country which was classified as commercial department till recently. Following the directives of the Supreme Court vide its order dated 7th May, 2002 in a Public Interest Litigation (PIL), W.P.(Civil) No.202 of 1995 the Department had a major shift in its programme and policies discontinuing many of its commercial activities. As a consequence, the activity of the Department is now geared to protecting, conserving and developing rich floral and unique faunal diversities of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. This

change in management policy necessitated change in accounting procedure of the Department which was hitherto commercial. Accordingly, the Ministry of Environment & Forests, Govt. of India declared the Department of Environment and Forests as a service department vide their communication No.131/2001-SU dated 18.05.2004.

Services provided by the Forest Department to people:

1. Providing Non-timber Forest Produce to the public on payment of royalty for their bonafide use.
2. Providing sawn timber to the public at reasonable rates from the government saw mills.
3. Regulating the movement of forest produce under the relevant rules in force.
4. Providing tourist amenities to the tourist/visitors at various tourism sites located in the forests, National Parks/ Sanctuaries and Zoo managed by the Department of Environment and Forests