

and comparable to unworked out forests except for minor differences. Paduak plantation at Campbell Bay was completely replaced by native communities and has species richness of 4.0. It may be noted that the structure and composition of rainforest communities are entirely different from that of dry or moist deciduous forest communities of Madhya Pradesh (MP) and hence the working plan applicable to forests of MP is not applicable to forests of ANI. Shri Kondas, an authority on forestry, also pointed out gap-planting is unwarranted in rainforests. Therefore, recommendation 5 of Shri Shekhar Singh is not only scientifically untenable but also impractical, and hence SC order 3 needs to be reviewed.

The Forest Department should carry out studies on regenerative potentials of different-sized natural gaps and evolve a method of harvesting wood from worked out forests in a way that promote natural generation. The Forest Department should also carry out studies on the structure and composition of regenerated worked out forests of different ages ranging from 50 years to 150 years to determine the rotation cycle.

11. As per SC order 5, a committee consisting of the PCCF, the Chief Conservator(s) and DFO of the concerned Division, an ecologist and a resource economist be constituted for formulating ecologically sound working plans.

12. The wood requirement of the Islands may be higher than the present permissible level of extraction due to construction of 10,000 houses, and repairs and reconstruction of damaged infrastructure such as schools and primary health centres in earthquake and tsunami effected areas; consequently, additional wood requirement if any may be met from harvesting 1,00,000 trees killed by earthquake and tsunami. Any further shortage in local requirement of the wood may be met from the mature plantations and worked out areas. The wood from phased out rubber plantations be also utilized for house construction.

13. Plantations of Red Oil Palm and Rubber are not economically viable and hence both the plantations be phased out starting from old plantations as per the plan prepared