

BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN
TRIBUNAL, PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI

Original Application No. 618/2025

IN THE MATTER OF:

The research article titled "Transforming Food, Land and Water
Systems to Combat Climate Crisis in Ladakh, India" published in

Current Science, Volume 129, Number 8 dated 25.10.2025

REPLY BY WAY OF AFFIDAVIT ON BEHALF OF
RESPONDENT NO-6

I, Dr. Navneet Singh S/O Sh. Resham Singh, presently
serving as Officer-In-Charge, Zoological Survey of India, HARC,
Solan, Himachal Pradesh, Government of India, being duly
authorized and competent, do hereby solemnly affirm and state as
under:

1. That I am, in my aforesaid official capacity, well conversant
with the facts and circumstances of the present case, based on
the records and documents available with the Department. As

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SHEESH RAM
NOTARY PUBLIC
Govt. of India (Solan)

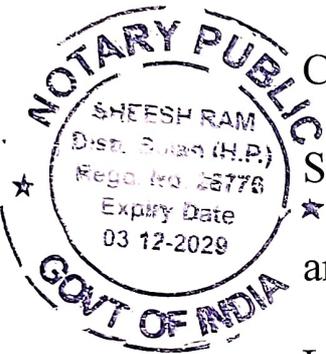
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such, I am competent and duly authorized to swear and file the present affidavit in reply on behalf of Respondent No. 6, namely the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) (hereinafter referred to as the “answering Respondent”).

2. That Original Application No. 618/2025 has been registered suo moto by the Hon’ble National Green Tribunal based on an article titled “Transforming Food, Land and Water Systems to

Combat Climate Crisis in Ladakh, India,” published in Current Science, Volume 129, Number 8, dated 25.10.2025. The said article discusses the serious environmental concerns affecting Ladakh, India, including rapid climate warming, glacier retreat, and increasing water scarcity due to declining snowmelt and erratic precipitation. It further highlights issues of land degradation, soil erosion, and desertification, along with growing pressure from infrastructure development and tourism. The article also notes declining agricultural productivity, vulnerability of traditional food systems, biodiversity stress in fragile high-altitude ecosystems, and the

weakening of socio-ecological resilience among local



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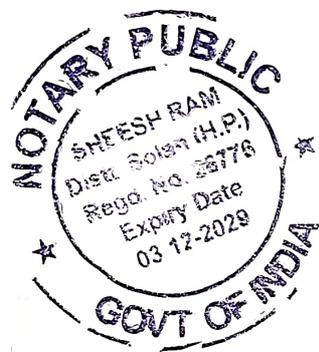
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communities, thereby emphasizing the urgent need for integrated transformation of food, land, and water systems to address the climate crisis in the region.

3. That animal biodiversity is only implicitly linked to the discussions in the report through references to ecosystem resilience and pasture management, and it does not constitute a core theme of the report. Based on the contents of the meeting report, there is no dedicated or detailed section specifically addressing animal biodiversity in Ladakh.

4. That the report briefly refers to biodiversity loss as a consequence of climate change and urbanization; pastureland rejuvenation and agropastoral systems (which indirectly relate to livestock and rangeland ecology); ecosystem services and carbon storage in pasturelands; and wetland and water resource management (which may influence aquatic and avian biodiversity). However, no specific wild animal species, such as the Snow Leopard, Kiang, or Black-necked Crane, are mentioned; nor is there any focused discussion on wildlife conservation, data or strategies specifically targeting faunal



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biodiversity, or reference to endangered species or wildlife habitat protection measures.

5. That it is pertinent to mention here that the replying respondent i.e., Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), functions under a well-defined scientific mandate, which includes exploration, survey, inventorying and monitoring of faunal diversity across various States, ecosystems and protected areas of India; maintenance and development of national zoological collections; taxonomic and systematic studies; periodic review of threatened and endemic species; publication of *Fauna of India*, *Fauna of States* and conservation area reports; ecological and biological studies on species and communities; creation and maintenance of national faunal databases; training and capacity building in taxonomy and conservation; wildlife forensics, species identification and advisory services; development and maintenance of zoological museums; and genomic studies on Indian fauna. In addition, its secondary objectives include undertaking environmental impact and biodiversity assessments for management planning; development and

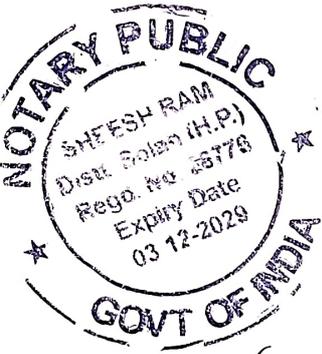


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maintenance of biodiversity information systems including EIACP and CITES-related activities; conducting research fellowship and collaborative programmes at national and international levels; application of GIS and advanced tools for faunal studies; and digitization and documentation of national zoological collections.



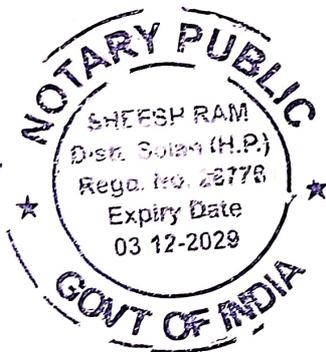
6. That at the outset, it is respectfully submitted that the present Original Application does not appear to be maintainable qua the answering Respondent, inasmuch as no specific allegation, averment, or relief has been made against Respondent No. 6, and the answering Respondent has been impleaded without any direct or specific role in the subject matter of the present proceedings; it is further submitted that no cause of action arises against the answering Respondent, as the issues involved primarily pertain to agricultural systems, land use, and water resource management, which do not fall within the functional mandate of the answering Respondent.

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In view of the above facts and circumstances, it is most respectfully prayed that this Hon'ble Tribunal may be pleased to take the present reply on record and hold that no cause of action is made out against the answering Respondent, and consequently discharge Respondent No. 6 from the present proceedings, Or pass such further order(s) as this Hon'ble Tribunal may deem fit and proper in the facts and circumstances of the case.

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Verification

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DEPONENT

(Navneet Singh)

Scientist E & O/C

प्रभारी अधिकारी / Officer-in-Charge
भारतीय ज्ञान संवर्धन / Zoological Survey of India
सोलन (हि.प्र.) / Solan (H.P.)

I, Dr. Navneet Singh S/O Sh. Resham Singh, presently serving as Officer-In-Charge, Zoological Survey of India, HARC, Solan, Himachal Pradesh, do hereby verify on this 27th day of March, 2026, at Solan, H.P., the contents of the above paragraphs are true

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NOTARY PUBLIC
Solan (H.P.)

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to my knowledge, derived from official records, and/or are in the nature of legal submissions which I believe to be true, and that no material fact has been suppressed therefrom.



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 SHEESH RAM
 NOTARY PUBLIC
 Govt. of India (Solan)

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 DEPONENT
 (Navneet Singh)
 Scientist E & O/c
 प्रभारी अधिकारी / Officer-in-Charge
 भारतीय ज्ञानी सर्वेक्षण / Zoological Survey of India
 सोलन (हि.प्र.) / Solan (H.P.)

Certified that the contents of
A. Adawat

 have been read over and explained
 to the *Depnent* who seems
 perfectly fit to understand the same

[Signature]
 NOTARY
 SHEESH RAM