

Subject: Diversion of 1283.570 hectares of forest land for Coal Mining in Amelia Coal Block by M.P. State Mining Corporation in Singrauli District of Madhya Pradesh.

1. Addl. Principle Chief Conservator of Forests (Land Management) and Nodal Officer, Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, Government of Madhya Pradesh vide his letter dated 1st February 2007 submitted a proposal to obtain prior approval of the Central Government in terms of section-2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1890 for diversion of 1283.570 ha of forests land in favour of Madhya Pradesh State Mining Corporation Ltd. for coal mining in Amelia Coal Block located in Singrauli District, Madhya Pradesh.

Timeline of the Proposal:

1. The proposal for the diversion of 1283.570 hectares of forest land for Coal Mining in Amelia Coal Block by M.P. State Mining Corporation in Singrauli District of Madhya Pradesh, was discussed in detail by the Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) on 9th August, 2007.
2. The proposal was submitted to the Hon'ble Supreme Court, and the Hon'ble Court has given directions on 20.02.2009 where 'CEC had made certain observations and **objections** regarding diversion of 1283.57 ha of forest land (**pg./9-10**).
3. The entire matter was jointly re-considered by the CEC and MoEF. Thereafter, jointly submission was made by the CEC and MOEF(**pg/23**):
 - a. That the recommendation of FAC may not be accepted.
 - b. That the State of Madhya Pradesh/MPSMCL may be asked to cancel the MOU entered into with M/s Sainik Mining and Allied Service Limited (SMASL) and to invite fresh applications after giving wide publicity and laying transparent guidelines.
4. The MoEF vide letter dated 2nd March 2009 communicated to the Government of Madhya Pradesh inability of the Central Government to grant approval under FC Act for diversion of the said forest land.
5. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests in his said letter dated 25.07.2012 informed that the forest land included in the said proposals falls in migration corridor of elephant. Non-forest land included in the applied land will result in fragmentation of elephant corridor, which will adversely affect breeding of elephant population. Details of the elephant corridor are provided in the working plan (**pg/30**).
6. The matter was placed before FAC on 29th – 30th April, 2014 along with site inspection report received from the Regional Office (Western Zone), Bhopal and additional information/documents received from the Government of Madhya Pradesh.
7. **It came to notice that the said area was allotted to THDC India Ltd. For Khurja Super Thermal Power project (STPP), Bulandsahar, UP vide order of Ministry of Coal, Govt. of India F. No. 103/11/2016-NA dated 17/01/2017.**
8. The FAC further recommended that the Regional Office (Western Zone) of the MoEF&CC, requested to inspect the forest land once again and submit a report to the Ministry.
9. The Regional Office (Western Zone), Bhopal has submitted the Site Inspection Report (SIR) vide their letter No. 6-MPA008/2007-BHO/237 dated 04/07/2018.

SITE INSPECTION REPORT OF PROPOSAL FOR DIVERSION OF 1283.570 HA OF FOREST LAND FOR COAL MINING IN AMELIA COAL BLOCK OF THDC INDIA LIMITED (JOINT VENTURE OF GOVT. OF INDIA AND GOVT. OF UP) IN SINGRAULI DISTRICT OF MADHYA PRADESH.

Background Note :

The proposal for diversion of 1283.57 ha in favour of M. P. State Mining Corporation was submitted to MoEF, New Delhi vide letter no. F.-1/437/06/10-11/281 dated 01/02/2007. The direction for site inspection was received from MoEF, New Delhi vide letter F. No. 8-6/2007-FC dated 21/02/2007. The Site Inspection report was submitted by Regional Office, Bhopal vide letter no. F. No. 6-MPA008/2007-BHO/3200 dated 30/05/2007 in which the *project was recommended for approval.*

The MoEF letter F. No. 8-6/2007-FC dated 02/03/2009 had communicated the “*inability of the Central Government to grant approval under section-2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980*” to the Pr. Secretary (Forest), Govt. of Madhya Pradesh. Further, MoEF letter F. No. 8-6/2007-FC dated 03/03/2009 communicated that “*the State Govt. of M.P. / M.P. Mining Corporation shall be asked to cancel the Memorandum of Understanding entered with M/s Sainik Mining and Allied Services Ld. Further, the State / State Mining Corporation shall invite fresh application after giving wide publicity and laying transparent guidelines. The action taken in this regard may kindly be informed to this Ministry.*”

The direction from MoEF was received for inspection of site vide MoEF letter F. no. 8-6/2007-FC dated 16/05/2014 along with three other shortfalls in the project.

The MoEF&CC letter dt. 02/05/2018 again directed Regional Office, Bhopal for site inspection report, other letter of MoEF&CC dt 02/05/2018 addressed Pr. Secretary (Forest), Govt. of M.P. have a mention about the Site Inspection from Regional Office, Bhopal.

It came to notice the said area was allotted to THDC India Ltd. For Khurja Super Thermal Power project (STPP), Bulandsahar, UP vide order of Ministry of Coal, Govt. of India F. No. 103/11/2016-NA dated 17/01/2017.

The information is presented as per the available information originally submitted along with the proposal in the year 2007 by M. P. State Mining Corporation and no any fresh data was supplied by the present agency i.e. THDC India Ltd. The THDC India Ltd. Has submitted the revised area, as there was area variation. As told by the THDC representatives, the survey was carried out by team consisting of CMPDI, Forest Department and THDC survey team. Revised area maps and KML file is submitted vide APCCF(LM), Govt of MP letter dt. 02/07/2018.

Officers present during site inspection:-

1. Shri B. Abhay Bhaskar, DCF(C), R.O. Bhopal
2. The Field Staff of MP State Forest Department and THDC India Ltd.

Date of Inspection: **18th and 19th June 2018**

1. Legal Status of Forest land proposed for diversion.
 - a. Protected forest land : 119.21 ha
 - b. Reserved forest land : 1063.00 ha
 - c. Private Forest land : 2.00 ha
 - d. Govt. Revenue land : 99.36 ha

In addition to above 335.53 ha of revenue land also involved in the project.

2. How the land proposed for diversion is to be utilized? : **Opencast mining project.**
3. Whether the proposal involves any construction of buildings (including residential): **No.**
4. Total cost of Project. : **Rs. 1166.60 crores (2007), present cost not submitted.**
5. Wild Life:

Whether the forest area proposed for diversion is important from Wildlife point of view or not : **Yes, Part-II of DFO in 2007. As per site inspection dt. 18th and 19th June 2018, no direct or in-direct sighting of wildlife.**

6. Aerial distance from the nearest boundary of any protected area: **beyond 10 km of PA.**
7. Vegetation :
- Trees to be felled: **11,80,884 trees are marked for felling as reported in Part-II of DFO of 2007 and Site Inspection report of RO, Bhopal of year 2007.**
 - Effect of removal on the general ecosystem in the area: **Yes, but it is Mining project. It will have effect on ecosystem.**

As per Part-II, Canopy Density is 0.2 to 0.6 & Eco-class 4. The forest reported is Mixed Sal forest. Similar situation was observed during site inspection, forest is mixed sal forest with mahua & tendu species with canopy density 0.2 to 0.6.

8. Background note of the proposal:

It is mining project, specifically opencast mining project.

9. Compensatory Afforestation :

- Applicable, CA over 2,600 ha degraded forest land in 17 patches was submitted along with the original proposal of 2007.**
- The CA land is revised by State Govt. vide APCCF (LM) Govt. of MP letter no. F-1/437/2006/10-11/1697 dt. 12/06/2018 and only KML file was submitted to this office.**
- The revised CA is over 2720.00 ha of degraded forest land in 51 patches. As per DSS, the area shows MDF and agricultural encroachment.**
- Documents supporting revised CA i.e. site suitability, free from encroachment, detail scheme and maps may be sought from the State Govt. of Madhya Pradesh.**

10. Whether proposal involves violation of Forest (Conservation) Act ? : **No.**

11. Whether the proposal involves rehabilitation of displaced people? : **No.**

12. Reclamation Plan details and Financial Allocation: **Applicable.**

13. Cost benefit ratio: **1: 4.5 (2007) as per old guideline.**

14. Utility of project: **Opencast coal extraction.**

15. Number of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe involved in the Project: **No.**

16. Compliance of FRA 2006-DC Certificate: **not submitted.**

17. Whether the land being diverted has any socio-cultural / religious value: **No.**

18. Whether any sacred groves or very old growth of tree of forest exist in the area proposed for diversion?
: **No**

19. Recommendation of Nodal officer and the State government: **Recommended.**

20. Details of comments of the APCCF (LM), MP: **Recommended by APCCF (LM), MP.**

21. Observations :

The site inspection was carried out on **18th and 19th June 2018**. The RF-296 & P-317 of East Sarai, P-388 of Waidhan and RF-289 of Sarai were inspected.

This project was submitted for diversion in 2007 and the Site Inspection report was submitted by Regional Office, Bhopal vide letter no. F. No. 6-MPA008/2007-BHO/3200 dated 30/05/2007 in which the *project was recommended for approval*. The direction from MoEFCC was received for re-inspection of site. A new agency i.e. THDC India Ltd have come, as the more than 10 years have passed, many of the ground situations have changed.

The following observations may be specifically looked in to while considering the project by FAC.

1. Document :
 - a. Present cost of the project and C:B ratio as per revised guideline.
 - b. FRA certificate in prescribed format from the concerned District Collector.
 - c. Documents of CA land with scheme & total cost.
 - d. The tree enumeration list is as per 2006-07.
 - e. Status of FRA patta holder on the proposed forest land.
2. The APCCF (LM) Govt. of MP vide letter no. **F-1/437/06/10-11/1902 dt. 02/07/2018** had submitted the fresh KML file for **1257 ha**. The DSS analysis of KML file shows following results about forest:

Sl. No.	Area (ha)	Land	VDF	MDF	OF
1	1167.97	Forest Land (RF & PF)	207	746	140
2	87.58	Rev. Forest land	3	40	20
Total	1255.55		210	789	160

3. Observations on CA land is give at point no 9 (above) may be seen.
4. At one of the location, the presence of coal on the surface was observed (photographs enclosed).

The coal is important for electricity, nation development, the user agency is joint venture of Govt. of India & Govt. of UP and based on the Nation development as main goal, the site inspection report is submitted for consideration in FAC, please

Recommendation of APCCF (C), R.O. , Bhopal: Based on the observations of DCF(C) in his Site Inspection Report, especially with regard to datum line most data being 2007, the proposal for diversion of 1283.570 ha of Forest Land for Coal Mining in Amelia Coal Block of THDC India Limited (Joint Venture of Govt. of India and Govt. of UP) in Singrauli District of Madhya Pradesh under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 may be considered keeping in view the national perspective of the said thermal power project, for meeting the energy needs of the country.

In view of the above facts related to the proposal, it is proposed that proposal may be submitted to the FAC, in its meeting scheduled to be held on **26.07.2018**.
