

Government of India  
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change  
(Forest Conservation Division)

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Indira Paryavaran Bhawan  
Aliganj, Jorbagh Road  
New Delhi – 110 003  
Dated: 12th March, 2021

To,  
**The Special Chief Secretary (Forests),**  
Department of Forests & Environment,  
Government of Telangana,  
Hyderabad.

**Sub: Proposal for diversion of 162.45 ha of forest land in Indaram RF, Mancherial Range of Mancherial Forest Division in Mancherial District for grant of Mining Lease for Srirampur Open Cast-II Expansion Project in Jaipur Mandal, Mancherial District in favour of M/s Singareni Collieries Company Limited, Srirampur Area Mancherial District. (Online Proposal No.FP/TG/MIN/29918/2017).**

Sir/Madam,

I am directed to refer to the Government of Telangana's letter No.460/For. I(1)/2019 dated 13.02.2019 on the above mentioned subject, seeking prior approval of Central Government under Section-2 (ii) of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, and to say that the said proposal has been examined by the Forest Advisory Committee constituted by the Central Government under Section-3 of the aforesaid Act.

2. After careful consideration of the proposal of the Government of Telangana and on the basis of the recommendations of the Forest Advisory Committee, the Central Government hereby accords **stage-I / In-principle** approval under Section 2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of 162.45 ha of forest land in Indaram RF, Mancherial Range of Mancherial Forest Division in Mancherial District for grant of Mining Lease for Srirampur Open Cast-II Expansion Project in Jaipur Mandal, Mancherial District in favour of M/s Singareni Collieries Company Limited, Srirampur Area Mancherial District, subject to the following conditions:-

**A: Conditions which need to be complied prior to handing over of forest land by the State Forest Department and compliance to be submitted prior to Stage-II approval:**

- i. The User Agency shall transfer online, the Net Present Value (NPV) of the forest land being diverted under this proposal, as per the orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India dated 28.03.2008, 24.04.2008 and 09.05.2008 in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 202/1995 and the guidelines issued by this Ministry vide its letter No. 5-3/2007-FC dated 05.02. 2009. The requisite funds shall be transferred through online portal into Ad-hoc CAMPA account of the State Concerned;
- ii. *From the analysis of the area through DSS it is observed that a river exists on the southern boundary of Srirampur mining lease area that flows through/alongside large forest area on the downstream at some distance of these leases. Therefore, it is essential to protect the water source for the sustainability of flora and fauna there.*

*The User agency shall get a detailed plan (comprising of vegetative and SMC protection barriers, and duly approved by the competent authority in the forest department) prepared by an expert agency and implement it to protect the riverbank so that debris, etc. from mines doesn't block or reduce water flow in the river and cause adverse impact on the flora and fauna in the downstream forested area. The plan shall be implemented within 3 years of handing over of proposed forest land to the User Agency;*

- iii. The area has several coal mines in the vicinity which together had/have been affecting the natural forest cover in this locality in a significant manner, and, therefore, CA over lands other than notified forest would have been ideal scenario. Therefore, keeping in view the goal of harmonious pursual of conservation and development, it was agreed to accept the proposal of Compensatory Afforestation on double the degraded notified forest area under forest department on the condition that in addition to the proposed CA, non-forest area equivalent in size to the diverted forest area shall be made available and mutated in favour of State Forest Department out of the area available immediately after the closure and rehabilitation of mines of M/S SCCL from 2027-28 (or, earlier) onwards as submitted by M/S SCCL vide their letter no.CMD/PS/H/129 dated 29.09.2020. A Board resolution in this regard shall be submitted by the User Agency to the State Forest Department, and the State Forest Department will accordingly ensure the compliance of this condition in a timely manner. The land so mutated shall be notified under the relevant sections of the Forest Act as a Reserve Forest. After handing over, the State Forest Department shall protect the so transferred land and may develop it further at own cost for bringing the area under sustainable forest management. For CA on notified forest land, Nodal Officer shall give a certificate that no afforestation/plantation has been taken up under any plan/programme/scheme on that land in the last ten years;*
- iv. The KML files of diverted area, the CA area and the areas mentioned in sub-clause (ii), (iii) and B(iii) shall be uploaded on e-Green watch portal with all requisite details prior to Stage II approval;*
- v. As reported by DFO, Mancherial Division and endorsed by State Government, the User Agency (M/SSCCL) is having two operational open cast mining projects, namely SRP-1 and RKP OC, 4 underground mines and soon to be operational Indram OC mines. The two operational mines and the Indaram OC will produce about 829 million tons and about 382 million tons of overburden respectively within their lifetime. It is, therefore, crucial to undertake overburden restoration/ stabilisation as the mining progresses as per high scientific to minimise further damage to flora, fauna, soil and hydrology of the adjoining area due to such huge overburden accumulation. As this is a new area of technical expertise, the User Agency has proposed to create adequate capacity in the State Forest Department so that the Eco-restoration of the overburden and the mined out area could be monitored effectively, and for this purpose to expose a team of at least 10 forest officers to global best practice being implemented in coal mines of Australia / New Zealand, etc. at User Agency cost. The recommendation of State Government as reported in the proposal and conveyed by PCCF (HoFF), Telangana and agreed to by the representative of User Agency in the meeting may be accepted on the condition that the visit is approved by the State Government and the admissible expenditure as per norms on this account is reimbursed by the User Agency to the Forest Department;*

- vi. The cost of felling of trees shall be deposited by the user agency with the State Forest Department;
- vii. The land identified for the purpose of CA shall be clearly depicted on a Survey of India topo sheet of 1:50,000 scale;
- viii. The User Agency shall transfer the cost of raising and maintaining the compensatory afforestation at the current wage rate in consultation with State Forest Department in the account of CAMPA of the concerned State through online portal. The scheme may include appropriate provision for anticipated cost increase for works scheduled for subsequent years;
- ix. All the funds received from the user agency under the project shall be transferred/deposited in CAMPA account only through e-portal (<https://parivesh.nic.in/>). Amount deposited through other mode will not be accepted as compliance of the Stage-I clearance.
- x. The compliance report shall be uploaded on e-portal (<https://parivesh.nic.in/>).
- xi. The complete compliance of the FRA, 2006 shall be ensured by way of prescribed certificate from the concerned District Collector;
- xii. Violation of any of these conditions will amount to violation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and action would be taken as prescribed in para 1.21 of Chapter 1 of the Handbook of comprehensive guidelines of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 as issued by this Ministry's letter No. 5-2/2017-FC dated 28.03.2019;
- xiii. The KML files of diverted forest land , CA area and other areas over which plantation and any other activities are proposed to be taken up from CAMPA fund shall be uploaded on egreen watch portal

**B: Conditions which need to be complied on field after handing over of forest land to the user agency by the State Forest Department but the compliance in form of undertaking shall be submitted prior to Stage-II approval:**

- i. Legal status of the diverted forest land shall remain unchanged;
- ii. *The validity of FC approval shall be up to 27.6.2030;*
- iii. *In addition to CA, restoration of degraded notified forests in an area equivalent to the diverted forest area will be undertaken at the cost of the User Agency in between Mancherial and Jaipur, as is being done elsewhere in Telangana State. The restoration work shall start within 6 months of handing over of proposed forest land to the User Agency;*
- iv. *The User Agency shall comply with the Hon'ble Supreme Court order and re-grass the mining area and any other areas which may have been disturbed due to mining to restore them to a condition which is fit for growth of fodder, flora, fauna, etc.in a timely manner;*
- v. Compensatory afforestation shall be taken up by the Forest Department over 324.9 ha. Degraded forest land (Compartment no. / Khasra No.691,693,69,687,688,689,690, Adilabad District) at the cost of the User Agency. As far as practicable a mixture of local indigenous species will be planted and monoculture of a species has to be avoided. If it is not possible to plant so many saplings in the area identified for CA, the balance saplings will be planted in any other forests as per prescriptions of approved working plan with provision for ten years on subsequent maintenance;
- vi. Additional amount of the NPV of the diverted forest land, if any, becoming due after finalization of the same by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India on receipt of the report from the Expert Committee, shall be charged by the State

Government from the User Agency. The User Agency shall furnish an undertaking to this effect;

vii. *The future forest diversion proposals in the coal mining projects of the User Agency (those which have not been forwarded to the Central Government by the State Governments as yet) shall have CA undertaken on areas outside notified forests. CA on degraded notified forests in these cases shall be considered only in exceptional circumstances when:-*

a. *State Government has issued a certificate that degraded forest land (double in extent) outside notified forest boundary is not available for CA purpose, and*

b. *The Nodal Officer has certified that no afforestation/plantation has been taken up under any plan/programme/scheme in the degraded forest area proposed for CA in the last ten years*

viii. Fencing, protection and regeneration of the safety zone area [7.5 meters strip shall be kept within the mining lease boundary and area of the safety zone shall be part of the total area of mining lease] shall be done at the project cost within three years and maintained thereafter as per approved working plan of the State Govt.;

ix. The User agency either himself or through the State Forest Department shall undertake afforestation on degraded forest land, at project cost, one and half time in extent to the area used for safety zone;

x. Period of diversion of the said forest land under this approval shall be for a period co-terminus with the period of the mining lease granted under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, as amended and the Rules framed there-under;

xi. The User Agency shall obtain the Environment Clearance as per the provisions of the Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986, if required;

xii. No labour camp shall be established on the forest land and the User Agency shall provide fuels preferably alternate fuels to the labourers and the staff working at the site so as to avoid any damage and pressure on the nearby forest areas;

xiii. The boundary of the diverted forest land, mining lease and safety zone, as applicable, shall be demarcated on ground at the project cost, by erecting four feet high reinforced cement concrete pillars, each inscribed with its serial number, distance from pillar to pillar and GPS co-ordinates;

xiv. The forest land proposed to be diverted shall under no circumstances be transferred to any other agency, department or person without prior approval of the Central Government;

xv. No damage to the flora and fauna of the adjoining area shall be cause;

xvi. The layout plan of the mining plan/ proposal shall not be changed without the prior approval of the Central Government;

xvii. The concerned Divisional Forest Officer, will monitor and take necessary mitigative measures to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the forests in the surrounding area;

xviii. The user agency shall explore the possibility of translocation of maximum number of trees identified to be felled and shall ensure that any tree felling shall be done only when it is unavoidable and that too under strict supervision of the State Forest Department;

xix. The User Agency shall undertake mining in a phased manner after taking due

care for reclamation of the mined over area. The concurrent reclamation plan as per the approved mining plan shall be executed by the User Agency from the very first year, and an annual report on implementation thereof shall be submitted to the Nodal Officer, Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, in the concerned State Government and the concerned Regional Office of the Ministry. If it is found from the annual report that the activities indicated in the concurrent reclamation plan are not being executed by the User Agency, the Nodal Officer or the concern Dy. Director General (Central) may direct that the mining activities shall remain suspended till such time, reclamation activities area satisfactorily executed;

xx. The User Agency shall submit the annual self -compliance report in respect of the above stated conditions to the State Government, concerned Regional Office and to this Ministry by the end of March every year regularly; and

xxi. The user agency shall comply all the provisions of the all Acts, Rules, Regulations, Guidelines, Hon'ble Court Order (s) and NGT Order (s) pertaining to this project, if any, for the time being in force, as applicable to the project.

After receipt of compliance report on fulfilment of the conditions mentioned above, the proposal shall be considered for final approval under Section-2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. Transfer of forest land shall not be affected till final approval is granted by the Central Government in this regard.

Yours faithfully,

Sd/-

**(Sandeep Sharma)**

Assistant Inspector General of Forests

**Copy to:-**

1. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF), Government of Telangana, Hyderabad.
2. The Regional Officer (Central), Integrated Regional Office, MoEF&CC, Hyderabad.
3. The Nodal Office (FCA), Forest Department, Government of Telangana, Hyderabad.
4. User Agency.
5. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF & CC, New Delhi, for uploading.