

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Aliganj, Jorbagh Road,
New Delhi-110003
Dated: 23rd August, 2021

To

The Principal Secretary (Forests),
All State Governments/UT Administrations

Sub: Considering linear projects linked to mining projects as standalone projects– regarding.

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer to this Ministry's guidelines dated 05.08.2019 on the above mentioned subject and to inform that in the light of a request received from the Ministry of Coal, Government of India, the matter was again considered by the Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) in its meeting held on 29.04.2021. A copy of the minutes of the meeting of the FAC, may kindly be accessed at <http://parivesh.nic.in/>.

Based on the recommendation of the FAC and approval of the same by the competent authority, the Ministry hereby conveys that supplementary linear projects linked to mining that are conceived after the start of the original mining, should be considered as a standalone linear project and decisions on according approval for those shall be made at the REC/IRO concerned as per provisions provided in the Forest Conservation) Rules, 2003. However, to ensure that the sanctity of such delegation is maintained, the following may be complied with by the all concerned:

- i. All forthcoming forest clearance proposals (both for green field mining as well as brown field expansion) shall have an additional column for the project proponent to certify that they have critically examined the mineral extraction pathways and have found them to be adequate, and that no new extraction path outside mining area shall be proposed in the

next five years.

- ii. As far as possible, existing roads/ rails/ belts should be strengthened to minimise forest / tree cover loss.
- iii. In case of later-stage supplementary proposal for extraction path (linear projects such as road/ rail/ belt project), the concerned Regional Officer shall ensure that cogent and convincing reasons/justifications of not including such linear infrastructure at the inception stage are provided by the State Government/UT Administration.
- iv. The State Government/User agency shall ensure that dispensation considered by the Ministry is not misused in any way and likely tendencies to detach linear projects from main proposal of mining should not be encouraged. To the extent possible, linear infrastructure such as roads/railways/conveyor belts, etc. ancillary to mining should be included in the main proposal and under inevitable circumstance only, such proposals submitted by the user agency should be considered as standalone project.

The guidelines dated 5.08.2019 stands updated to the above extent.

This issues with the approval of competent authority.

Yours faithfully,

sd/-

(Charan Jeet Singh)

Scientist 'D'

Copy to:

1. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, All State Governments/UT Administrations
2. Regional Officers, All Integrated Regional Offices of the MoEFCC
3. The APCCF & Nodal Officer (FCA), O/o the PCCF, All State Governments/UT Administrations
4. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF, New Delhi
5. Guard File