

F. No. 11-09/98-FC
Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
(Forest Conservation Division)

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan
Aliganj, Jorbagh Road
New Delhi - 110 003
Dated: 7th September, 2015

To

The Principal Secretary (Forests)
All States// UTs.

Sub.: Guidelines for diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 – General approval for underground laying of optical fibre cables, telephone lines, drinking water supply pipelines, CNG/PNG pipelines within existing right of way of roads and petroleum pipelines.

Sir,

I am directed to say that this Ministry vide letter of even number dated 16th October 2000 accorded general approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for a initial period of two years for laying of underground optical fibre cables, telephone lines, drinking water supply pipelines, electricity cables along the roads within existing right of way not falling in National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries, without felling of trees, where the maximum size of the trench is not more than 2.00 meter depth and 1.00 meter width, subject to following conditions:

- (a) The user agency will seek permission from the State Forest Department under local Acts/Rules etc.;
- (b) The user agency agrees to make good the land after use/ maintenance;
- (c) The user agency agrees to make good any loss to forest/ environment;
- (d) The user agency seeks permission from local Forest Department for carrying out any maintenance.
- (e) The State Government/ Union Territories will submit a quarterly progress report on the extent of the forest land diverted for such purpose to the Ministry as well as the concerned Regional Offices.

2. This Ministry vide letter of even number dated 31.10.2001 extended the said general approval to laying of underground electricity cables subject to conditions stipulated in the said letter dated 16th October 2000 and additional condition that the State Government/ user agency should ensure that the channels dug for underground laying are duly filled up and compacted so that these do not become source of constant soil erosion.

3. This Ministry vide letter of even number dated 23rd December 2002 extended the said general approval for a period of one year *i.e.* with effect from 16.10.2002 to 15.10.2003.



4. This Ministry vide letter of even number dated 19.09.2003 further extended the said General approval for a period of two years *i.e.* from 16.10.2003 to 15.10.2005.
5. This Ministry vide letter of even number dated 21.11.2005 extended the said general approval for a further period of two years ending 15.10.2007.
6. This Ministry vide letter of even number dated 26.12.2007 further extended the said general approval till 31.12.2008.
7. This Ministry vide letter of even number dated 8th April 2009 further extended the said general approval **till further orders** subject to the parameters and conditions already stipulated in this Ministry's letter dated 16.10.2000 and 21.11.2005.
8. This Ministry vide letter of even number dated 7th November 2014 extended the said general approval to underground laying of CNG/PNG pipelines along the roads within existing right of way not falling in National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries, without felling of trees, where the maximum size of the trench is not more than 2.00 meter depth and 1.00 meter width subject to fulfilment of conditions stipulated in this Ministry's said letter of even number dated 16th October, 2000.
9. After further examination of the matter, I am directed to say that this Ministry has decided to extend the said general approval to underground laying of optical fibre cables, telephone lines, drinking water supply pipelines, CNG/PNG pipelines **along petroleum pipelines within existing right of way** not falling in National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries, without felling of trees, where the maximum size of the trench is not more than 2.00 meter depth and 1.00 meter width, subject to conditions stipulated in this Ministry's said letters of even number dated 16th October, 2000 & 31st October 2001 and the additional conditions the State Government shall realise Net Present Value (NPV) of such forest land, except for those categories of activities/projects which have specifically been exempted from payment of NPV by the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

This issues with approval of the Hon'ble Minister of State (independent Charge) for Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

Yours faithfully,


(H.C. Chaudhary)
Director

Copy to:-

1. Prime Minister's Office (*Kind attn.:* Shri Santosh D. Vaidya, Director).
2. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, all States/UTs.
3. Nodal Officer, the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, all States/UTs.
4. All Regional Offices, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).
5. PS to the Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
6. All Directors/ Assistant Inspector General of Forests in Forest Conservation Division, MoEFCC.