

F.No. 11-423/2011 – FC
Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
(Forest Conservation Division)

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bagh Road, Aliganj,
New Delhi-110003.
Dated: 8th November, 2017

To

The Principal Secretary (Forests)
All States/UT Governments.

Sub: Identification and suitability of Non-forest land for Compensatory Afforestation under Forest Conservation Act 1980 - regarding Identification of Land Bank for Compensatory Afforestation (CA)

Sir,

I am directed to invite your kind attention to the chapter III of guidelines issued in 2003 by MoEF to implement the Forest Conservation Act 1980 which deals with compensatory afforestation. The para 3.2 of the said guidelines provides for identification of land for compensatory afforestation.

In 3.2 (i) it has been clarified that Compensatory afforestation shall be done over equivalent area of **non-forest land (NFL)**.

As an explanation to 3.2(i) it has been mentioned that:

As a matter of pragmatism, the revenue lands/zudpi jungle/ Chhote/ Bade jhar ka jungle/ jungle-jhari land/civil – soyam lands and all other such categories of land, on which the provisions of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 are applicable, shall be considered for the purpose of compensatory afforestation provided that lands on which compensatory afforestation is proposed shall be notified as RF under the Indian Forest Act, 1927.

The application of the GIS based Decision support system (DSS) by the ministry suggests that in many cases a substantial portion of the land identified for compensatory afforestation already contain vegetation of varying density. Creation of compensatory afforestation on such land will not fully compensate the loss of trees, as there will not be enough space for the requisite number of plants to be planted. Outright rejection of such NFL for compensatory afforestation is not desirable. However, once such NFL are selected for compensatory afforestation, these NFL are required to be transferred to State Forest Department and brought under the regular management control of the SFD.

The issue of identification of suitable land for Compensatory afforestation and land bank consisting of both Degraded Forest Land (DFL) and Non Forest Land (NFL) to be made available to user agencies for compensatory afforestation has been considered in the Ministry and following guidelines are issued for identification of suitable land for Compensatory Afforestation and creation of Land Bank under Forest Conservation Act 1980:



The following amendment is made in 3.2(i) and **explanation 2** is added as under

- i. The purpose of compensatory afforestation (CA) is to compensate the loss of 'land by land' and loss of 'trees by trees'.
- ii. For compensatory afforestation the number of plants to be planted over compensatory afforestation land shall be at least 1000 plants per hectare of forest land diverted.
- iii. If the requisite number of plants @ 1000/ha can not be planted on the non-forest land identified for taking up CA, then the balance number of the plants will be planted in degraded forest land as per the provisions of working plans. The State Government will intimate to the MOEF&CC the names of the R.F./P.F. in which the balance seedling will be planted. The User Agency will deposit the cost of planting these seedlings.
- iv. If the compensatory afforestation has to be done on degraded forest land (DFL) identified for CA for as provided in para 3.2 (vi), 3.2(vii) and 3.2(ix) then normally, 1000 saplings will be planted per ha of the diverted land. In case 1000 saplings can not be accommodated per ha in the DFL identified for CA, the balance seedlings will be planted in any RF/PF as per prescription of working plan. The State Govt. will intimate names of the RFs/PFs in which the balance seedlings will be planted. The user agency will deposit the cost of plantation of the same.
- v. The compensatory afforestation may also include several activities like soil & moisture conservation, regeneration cleaning, silvicultural activities in addition to plantation as prescribed in the working plan as applicable. Compensatory afforestation schemes under Assisted Natural Regeneration models as applicable to the identified non forest land (NFL) as well as degraded forest land (DFL) may be considered as per the site requirement.
- vi. State Government will formulate compensatory afforestation scheme including activities like soil & moisture conservation, regeneration cleaning, silvicultural activities and shall ensure maintenance of these plantations for a period of seven to ten years as per requirement.
- vii. The non forest land over which compensatory afforestation will be taken up shall be notified as RF/PF and shall remain under the administrative control of State Forest Department. If the DFL over which CA will be taken up is not a notified forest under IFA or State Forest Act the same shall be notified as RF/PF under this act.

In para 3.2 (ix) the following sub para is added after (f) for identification of Land bank for compensatory afforestation


- (g) The States and UTs shall create land bank for Compensatory Afforestation for speedy disposal of the FC proposals under FC Act 1980. The degraded forest land with crown density upto 40% under the administrative control of forest department may be identified using the Satellite imagery and in consultation with Forest Survey of India and will be made available for CA for Central Government projects and Central Public Sector Units (CPSU). The *revenue lands/zudpi jungle/ Chhote/ Bade jhar ka jungle/ jungle-jhari land/civil – soyam lands* and all other such categories of land, on which the provisions of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 are applicable and other



waste lands and non-forest lands may also be identified as land bank for the purpose of Compensatory Afforestation. Accordingly, it was decided that to expedite creation of land bank in a systematic manner a Committee under Chairmanship of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests may be constituted with Chief Wildlife Warden and representatives of revenue department in the State as members of the Committee. The committee may identify the following areas as land bank on priority for inclusion in the land Bank in addition to the blank area and plantation blank referred in para 3.2 (ix)(c) :

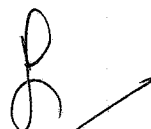
- (i) Degraded forest land with crown density upto 40% under the administrative control of forest department
 - (ii) Areas falling in wildlife corridors to improve **connectivity** between habitats.
 - (iii) Areas falling in and around the Protected Areas (PAs), eco-sensitive zone of PAs, forest areas under direct administrative control of the SFDs to ensure **consolidation** of such areas.
 - (iv) Habitat of rare, threatened and endangered species of flora and fauna located in the areas not under direct administrative and management control of the SFD to ensure long term **conservation** of such habitats.
 - (v) Areas falling in **catchment** areas of important rivers, water supply schemes, irrigation projects, hydro-electric projects etc.
- (h) To monitor the progress of creation of land bank for compensatory afforestation, the Ministry will constitute committees under chairmanship of Head of each Regional Office of the Ministry. Among others, representatives of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) and the FSI will also be included as member of these committees. These committees will review the progress in creation of land bank for compensatory afforestation in the States/UTs falling under jurisdiction of the Regional Offices and submit a quarterly report to the Ministry.

This issues with the approval of competent authority


(Nisheeth Saxena)
Assistant Inspector General of Forests (FC)

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(Nisheeth Saxena)
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