

F. No. 11- 306/ 2014-FC
Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change
(Forest Conservation Division)

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan
Aliganj, Jorbagh Road
New Delhi - 110 001
Dated: 8th August, 2014

To

The Principal Secretary (Forests)
All State /Union Territory Governments

Sub: Guidelines for diversion of forest land for non-forest purpose under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980- Creation of land bank of suitable non-forest land and revenue forest land for creation of compensatory afforestation- reg.

Sir,

I am directed to say that compensatory afforestation is one of the most important conditions stipulated by the Central Government while approving proposals for de-reservation or diversion of forest land for non-forest uses. As per the existing guidelines compensatory afforestation shall normally be done over equivalent area of non-forest land. 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 lands, on which the provisions of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 are applicable, may also be considered for the purpose of compensatory afforestation provided such lands on which compensatory afforestation is proposed shall be notified as Reserved Forests under the Indian Forest Act, 1927.

It has been brought to notice of this Ministry that delay in identification of suitable non-forest or revenue forest land for compensatory afforestation is the major reason for delay in processing the applications seeking prior approval of Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. To facilitate expeditious processing of applications seeking prior approval of Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, I am directed to say that State Governments shall identify in advance compact/sizeable blocks of non-forest land or revenue forest land free from encumbrance/ encroachment which are suitable for creation of compensatory afforestation and also from management point of view. Land available in the land bank may be made available to user agencies seeking prior approval of Central Government under the afore-mentioned Act on realization of appropriate fee/ land cost.

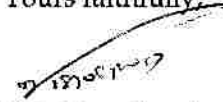
Similarly, to facilitate expeditious processing of proposals seeking prior approval of Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of forest land for projects of Central Government/Central Government Undertaking Projects and such other projects, which as per the extant guidelines, are eligible to raise compensatory afforestation over degraded forest land, State Government may also identify suitable degraded forest land. While identifying the pool of degraded forest land, blank forest lands in reserved forests in compact/sizeable blocks should be identified as first priority as



“plantation land bank”. Only when such areas are not available, the choice of compensatory afforestation will fall on protected, unprotected forests and unclassified forests in declining order of priority.

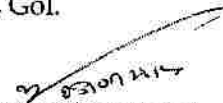
This issues with approval of the competent authority.

Yours faithfully,


(H.C. Chaudhary)
Director

Copy to:-

1. Prime Minister's Office (*Kind attn.:* Shri Santosh D. Vaidya, Director), North Block, New Delhi.
2. Secretary, Ministry of Power, Government of India, Shram Shakti Bhawan, New Delhi.
3. Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi.
4. Chairman, Railways Board, Rail Bhawan, New Delhi.
5. Secretary, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, Government of India, Transport Bhawan, New Delhi.
6. The Secretary (Coordination), Cabinet Secretariat, Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi.
7. Director General, Border Roads Organization, New Delhi.
8. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, all State/UT Governments.
9. Nodal Officer, the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, all State/UT Governments.
10. All Regional Offices, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India (GoI).
11. Joint Secretary in-charge, Impact Assessment Division, MoEFCC, GoI.
12. All Assistant Inspector General of Forests/ Directors in the Forest Conservation Division, MoEFCC, GoI.
13. Director, Regional Offices Headquarters Division, MoEFCC, GoI.
14. Sr. Director (Technical), NIC, MoEFCC, GoI with a request to place a copy of this letter on website of this Ministry.
15. Sr. PPS to the Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, GoI.
16. Sr. PPS to the Director General of Forests & Special Secretary, MoEFCC, GoI.
17. Sr. PPS to the Addl. Director General of Forests (Forest Conservation), MoEFCC, GoI.
18. PS to the Inspector General of Forests (Forest Conservation), MoEFCC, GoI.
19. Guard File.


(H.C. Chaudhary)
Director