

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan  
Jorbagh Road  
New Delhi - 110 003  
Dated: 7<sup>th</sup> October, 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- Exemption of survey and investigation carried out in national parks and sanctuaries without clearing of forest or cutting of trees from requirement of obtaining approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980- *reg.*

Sir,

I am directed to say that paragraph 1.3 of guidelines issued under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 (FC Act) *inter-alia* provides that investigations and surveys carried out in connection with development projects such as transmission lines, hydro-electric projects, seismic surveys, exploration for oil drilling, mining etc. will not attract the provisions of the Act as long as these surveys do not involve any clearing of forest or cutting of trees, and operations are restricted to clearing of bushes and lopping of tree branches for purpose of sighting. The said guidelines however, provides that notwithstanding the above, survey, investigation and exploration shall not be carried out in wildlife sanctuaries, national parks and sample plots demarcated by the Forest Department without obtaining the prior approval of the Central Government under the FC Act whether or not felling of trees is involved.

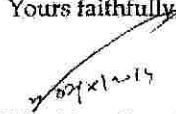
After examination of the matter it has been observed that, Wildlife Division in this Ministry vide O.M. No. 6-133/2014-(part) dated 26<sup>th</sup> September 2014 has issued the guidelines to provide that Chief Wildlife Warden may exercise the mandate provided under section 28 of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to permit survey or investigation work for any development project within a protected area if it does not involve any invasive activity coming in definition of section 29 of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

Accordingly, I am directed to say that investigations and surveys carried out in connection with development projects such as transmission lines, hydro-electric projects, seismic surveys, exploration for oil drilling, mining etc. in wildlife sanctuaries, national parks and sample plots demarcated by the Forest Department also will not attract the provisions of the FC Act as long as these surveys do not involve any clearing of forest or cutting of trees, and operations are restricted to clearing of bushes and lopping of tree branches for purpose of



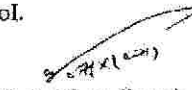
sighting. Permission from the Chief Wildlife Warden, as provided in the said O.M. No. 6-133/2014-(part) dated 26<sup>th</sup> September 2014 issued by this Wildlife Division in this Ministry, will however be required to be obtained for such activities to be carried out in wildlife sanctuaries and national parks.

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 Coal, Government of India, New Delhi.
3. Secretary, Ministry of Mines, Government of India, New Delhi.
4. Secretary, Ministry of Steel, Government of India, New Delhi
5. The Secretary (Coordination), Cabinet Secretariat, Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi.
6. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, all State/UT Governments.
7. Nodal Officer, the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, all State/UT Governments.
8. All Regional Offices, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India (GoI).
9. Joint Secretary in-charge, Impact Assessment Division, MoEFCC, GoI.
10. All Assistant Inspector General of Forests/ Directors in the Forest Conservation Division, MoEFCC, GoI.
11. Director, Regional Offices Headquarters Division, MoEFCC, GoI.
12. Sr. Director (Technical), NIC, MoEFCC, GoI with a request to place a copy of this letter on website of this Ministry.
13. Sr. PPS to the Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, GoI.
14. Sr. PPS to the Director General of Forests & Special Secretary, MoEFCC, GoI.
15. Sr. PPS to the Addl. Director General of Forests (Forest Conservation), MoEFCC, GoI.
16. PS to the Inspector General of Forests (Forest Conservation), MoEFCC, GoI.
17. Guard File.

  
(H.C. Chaudhary)  
Director