

**GOVERNMENT OF KERALA**

Forest & Wildlife (C) Department

No.C3/121/2024-FWLD

02-05-2024, Thiruvananthapuram

From

The Additional Chief Secretary to Government

To

The Deputy Conservator of Forest (Central),
Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change,
Government of India, Regional Office (Southern Zone),
Kendriya Sadan, 4th Floor, E & F Wing, 17th main Road,
Koramangala, Bangalore-560034

Sir,

Sub: Forest & Wildlife Department - Proposal for diversion of 0.04 ha of forest land under Section 2 of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for the construction of Geo Environmental Observaory (GEObs) for Assesement of Global Environmental Changes in Sahyadri at Sankhumalai in Mankulam Division - regarding.

Ref: Letter No FC2-3392/2020 dated 01/04/2024 from the Chief Conservator of Forests, Nodal Officer, Thiruvananthapuram.

I am directed to recommend and forward herewith the proposal in Form A under Section 2(ii) of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of 0.04 ha of forest land in Mankulam Forest Division for the construction of Geo Environmental Observatory (GEObs) for Assessment of Global Environmental Changes in Sahyadri in the High Altitude region of Periyar River basin at Sankhumalai, Munnar in the Western Ghat. Scientist, National Centre for Earth Science Studies, Thiruvananthapuram is the user agency.

As per the site inspection report of Divisional Forest Officer, Mankulam, "Geo Environmental Observatory" will serve as a primary data source of several hydrological, geological, agronomical and climate change studies, in the high-altitude region of Periyar river basin at Sankhumalai, Munnar. It will consist of an array of field instruments to

monitor various climatic, hydrological and geochemical parameters. The User Agency proposes to install these instruments in an area of 20m x 20m (0.04 Ha) protected by fencing. The instrument proposed to be installed does not pose any danger to wild animals, habitats or the ecology of region, if properly protected by fencing and maintained regularly, which shall be ensured by the User Agency. The selection of this particular site for the observatory as an undisturbed peak with grassland with minimum animal movement and disturbance, and so this location provides the best suitable point. The requirement of forest land as proposed for the project is unavoidable and barest minimum. The area is situated in proximity to shoalar patches which has various rare species of *Strobilanthes* genus.

Chief Conservator of Forests (High Range Circle) Kottayam has recommended that it is an automatic set up and watcher for protection will be staying outside in nearby building of Police, no disturbance is envisaged. The site is situated on the fringe of forest of Mankulam Division along boundary between Mankulam proposed reserve forest and land of KDH Company. The site is just 200 M away from boundary of Eravikulam National Park and falls in the Eco-sensitive zone of the Protected Area. Nilgiri Tahr is very common in the location.

Hence the proposal for forest clearance is forwarded with recommendation to accord Stage I (in-principle) approval under Rule 9(4)(j) of Forest (Conservation) Rules 2002 subject to the following conditions:

1. Legal status of the forest land shall remain unchanged.
2. The boundary of the diverted forest land shall be suitably demarcated on ground at the project cost, as per the directions of the concerned Divisional Forest Officer.
3. The User Agency shall make online payment of cost of Compensatory Afforestation, Net Present Value through e-payment module of forest clearance portal, (forestclearance.nic.in)
4. Additional amount of Net Present Value of the diverted forest land, if any becoming due after revision of the same by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in future shall be charged by State Government from the User Agency. The User Agency shall furnish

an undertaking to this effect.

5. All the funds received from the User Agency under the project shall be transferred/ deposited to CAMPA fund only through e-portal (<https://parivesh.nic.in/>).
6. Necessary certificates/documents under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 as per the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change vide letter No. 11-9/1998-FC(pt) dated 05.07.2013 shall be furnished before Stage-II clearance.
7. The layout plan of the proposal shall not be changed without prior approval of Central Government.
8. No labour camp shall be established on the forest land.
9. No additional or new path will be constructed inside the forest area for transportation of construction materials for execution of the project work.
10. The forest area shall be used only for the purpose for which it is granted. The total forest area utilized for this project shall not exceed 0.04 ha.
11. The forest land proposed to be diverted shall under no circumstances be transferred to any other agencies, department or person without prior approval of Government of India.
12. The User Agency has to sign an agreement with Divisional Forest Officer incorporating all the conditions imposed by Government of India/Government of Kerala in this regard and lease rent as decided by the Government of Kerala may be remitted.
13. The compliance report shall be uploaded on e-portal (<https://parivesh.nic.in/>)
14. The User Agency shall apply for renewal after 25 years.
15. Any other condition that the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change may stipulate from time to time in the interest of conservation, protection and development of forests & wildlife.
16. Violation of any of the above conditions will amount to violation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and action would be taken as per

guidelines issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate
Change vide F. No. 11-42/2017-FC dated 29/01/2018.

Yours Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Shajan.A', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

SHAJAN.A

ADDITIONAL SECRETARY
For Additional Chief Secretary to Government.