



**ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE  
& FORESTS(FR.10) DEPARTMENT,  
SECRETARIAT, CHENNAI 9.**

**Letter No.6885/FR.10/2021-4, Dated :28.12.2021**

From  
Tmt.Supriya Sahu, IAS.,  
Principal Secretary to Government.

To  
The Additional Director General of Forests (Central),  
Government of India,  
Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change,  
Integrated Regional Office,  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Additional Office Block for GPOA,  
Shastri Bhawan, Haddows Road,  
Nungambakkam, Chennai-600 006.

Sir,

Sub: Forests - Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 – Dindigul / Madurai Circle / Dindigul / Madurai Forest Division - Proposal for diversion of 6.1 ha now revised as 2.3824ha of forest land for formation of Madurai-Natham road for preparation of DPR for development of Economic corridors, Inter corridors, feeder routes and coastal roads to improve the efficiency of freight movement in India - Regarding.

Ref: From the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Chennai letter No: TS4/35838/2017, dated. 05.04.2021.

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I am directed to state that the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Head of Department) has sent a proposal for diversion of forest land of (i) 1.567 ha in Alagarmalai Reserved Forest of Dindigul Forest Division, (ii) 0.2249 ha in Usilampatty Reserved Forest and (iii) 0.59 ha in Kiluvamalai Reserved Forest of Madurai Forest Division for formation of Madurai-Natham Road for development of Economic corridors, Inter corridors, feeder routes and coastal roads to improve the efficiency of freight movement in India in favour of the Project Director, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), Madurai under Section 2 of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

2. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests has stated that the area proposed for the Madurai-Natham project is widening of existing road to 4/6 laning by dividing into 2 packages in which package-1 is an elevated corridor that starts from Madurai (km 0+000) near Pandian Hotel Junction on the section of NH-785 and ends at Chettikulam (km7+300) for a length of 7.300 km and package-2 starts from Chettikulam (7/300km) and crossing at SH-35 inter junction ends at Natham Bypass (km36/690) for a length of 29.390 km in the State of Tamil Nadu. To cater the increasing traffic levels, the project road is proposed with Right of Way of 60 m for which the forest land is diverted which is under Madurai and Dindigul Districts.

3. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests has stated that the District Forest Officer, Madurai has inspected the proposed project area on 15.08.2019, 06.11.2019 and 16.11.2019 and furnished his report as follows:-

- (i) The proposed area for diversion is in Kiluvamalai Reserved Forest (0.59 ha) and in Usilampatty Reserved Forest (0.2249 ha) of Madurai Range, Madurai Division for Madurai-Natham Road project is minimum.
- (ii) The proposed area in both the Reserved Forest is having gentle terrain. The density of vegetation in Kiluvamalai Reserved Forest is 0.6 and in Usilampatty Reserved Forest is 0.4.
- (iii) The length proposed by the User Agency through Kiluvamalai Reserved Forest is 220 m and Usilampatty Reserved Forest is 260 m.
- (iv) There are 173 spontaneous trees (468 nos. including branch trees) present in the proposed area for diversion in Kiluvamalai Reserve Forest (Tree forked below breast height is treated as though it was a separate tree) The District Forest Officer has also stated that the User Agency has been directed to take necessary action to file Interlocutory Application for getting permission from the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India for felling of 173 Nos. of Spontaneous trees in Kiluvamalai Reserved Forest.
- (v) The project has been proposed under feeder route scheme by connecting Trichy from Madurai via Natham and Thuvankurichi.
- (vi) The project shall save distance and travel time between Madurai and Trichy.
- (vii) The proposed diversion in Kiluvamalai Reserved Forest and Usilampatty Reserved Forest will be having minimum effects on the environment.
- (viii) The proposed project will be beneficial to public.
- (ix) The District Forest Officer has stated that there are 197 trees in total in 0.59 ha area proposed for diversion of Kiluvamalai Reserved Forest. They are numbered individually for the branched trees and the total is 500. Of this, 24 Eucalyptus trees (i.e.32 in number including branched trees) are not spontaneous. The remaining 173 trees (i.e. 468 in number including branched trees) are spontaneous in origin. There are 27 trees (i.e. 84 in number including branched trees) of Eucalyptus species in 0.2249 ha area proposed for diversion in Usilampatty Reserved Forest which are non-spontaneous. For felling of 224 no. of trees (173 Nos of Spontaneous and 51 Nos of non-spontaneous growth), the District Forest Officer has sent the Compensatory Afforestation scheme for planting including 10 years maintenance cost of 2240 Nos. of seedlings for Rs.27,02,762/- in the degraded area of 2.24 ha identified in Waguthumalai Reserved Forest. The District Forest Officer has sent the Geo Reference map and suitability certificate for the compensatory area identified for the Compensatory Afforestation to be raised. The number of trees mentioned in Part-II is including number of branched trees.

4. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests has also stated that the District Forest Officer Madurai has recommended that the area proposed for diversion is minimum required and will be having minimum effects on the environment, shall decongest the Madurai city traffic, will be beneficial to the public

and hence recommended the proposal. The Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Madurai has inspected the areas proposed for diversion of 0.59 ha in Kiluvamalai Reserved Forest and 0.2249 ha in Usilampatty Reserved Forest on 03.03.2020 along with District Forest Officer, Madurai, Forest Range Officer, Forester and Forest Guard of Madurai Range and the NHAI authorities and recommended in Part-III of Form A proposal. He has stated that most of the vegetation in the Reserved Forest consists of Kiluvai species and Eucalyptus plantations and the density of the vegetation is 0.6. He has also stated that at the time of inspection most of the road work was in full progress, save the stretch passing through the Reserved Forests. The proposed road stretch connects Natham town with the city of Madurai and would also serve as an outlet to the proposed ring road under consideration for the decongestion of the city of Madurai.

5. The Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Madurai has recommended this proposal with the following conditions:-

- (i) A reinforced fence to prevent the crossing of wildlife, primarily small mammals may be provided along the length of the 220 m section of the Kiluvamalai Reserved Forest and length of 260 m section of Usilampatty Reserved Forest proposed to be diverted.
- (ii) Speed breakers need to be provided on the stretch of the road passing along the Reserved Forests to reduce the speed of the vehicles.
- (iii) Adequate number of sign boards at vantage points along the sides of the road may be erected to warn the drivers of vehicles and commuters passing through the affected stretch regarding wildlife crossing the road, avoid throwing of inflammable material like cigarette butts etc. along the roadsides leading to fire in the dry season, littering the road with discarded trash cans, rubbish etc.

6. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forest has stated that the District Forest Officer, Dindigul in his site inspection report has stated that the proposed areas in Alagarmalai Reserved Forest was inspected on 10.05.2019, 11.05.2020 and 30.05.2020 and furnished the following details:

- (i) This road project is for the development of Economic corridors, Inter corridors, feeder routes and coastal roads to improve the efficiency of freight movement in India from Madurai to Natham.
- (ii) The length of the road proposed in Alagarmalai Reserved Forest is 650 m and the total area required is 1.567 ha.
- (iii) The proposed area is having plain surface and there are 440 trees (294 nos. standing trees and 146 nos. branch trees) including 77 Nos. of spontaneous trees mostly comprising of Albizzia Amara and the plantation trees are mostly Eucalyptus species involved in the project.
- (iv) The proposed area is along the boundary of the Reserved Forest involving 5 Nos. of Cairns.
- (v) This project in Alagarmalai Reserved Forest has minimum effects on environment and more beneficial to the public.
- (vi) For diversion of 1.567 ha of forest land in Alagarmalai Reserved Forest to National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) which is a Central Government

Project, Compensatory Afforestation shall be raised and maintained at the cost of User Agency on degraded forest land twice in extent of forest area proposed for diversion as per Section-2.5 of Handbook of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. In this case the area to be diverted is 1.567 ha. For felling of trees of 294 Nos (i.e., 77 Nos. of spontaneous and 217 Nos. of miscellaneous trees), the District Forest Officer has sent the Compensatory Afforestation scheme in degraded forest land of 3.50 ha selected in Alagarmalai Reserved Forest of Alagarkovil Range for planting including 10 years maintenance to an amount of Rs.39,84,304/-. The District Forest Officer has sent the Geo Reference map and suitability certificate for the Compensatory Afforestation area identified for the Compensatory Afforestation to be raised.

And the District Forest Officer, Dindigul has recommended that;

- (i) The area proposed for the road project is 1.567 ha land and there is no alternative land for the proposed project except forest land.
- (ii) The User Agency has not started any work in Alagarmalai Reserved Forest.
- (iii) The project involves the formation of National Highway road at Alagarmalai Reserved Forest 19+000 to 19+650 RH distances and total length of the road is 650 m and the total area is 1.567 ha having plain surface.
- (iv) The proposed area for diversion does not have any archaeological and heritage related monuments.
- (v) There is no Tribal Rights affected in this project.
- (vi) Flagship species like Tiger and Elephants are not available in this Reserved Forest and hence there is no threat to major Wildlife species.
- (vii) The project in Alagarmalai Reserved Forest has minimum effects on environment and more beneficial to the public and hence recommended the project.

7. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forest has further stated that the Chief Conservator of Forests, Dindigul has inspected the proposed area on 19.02.2020 and 05.06.2020 along with the District Forest Officer, Dindigul and Forest Range staff of Alagarkovil Range and furnished the following details:-

- (i) The proposed area for diversion is situated in Alagarmalai Reserved Forest of Alagar Kovil Range, Dindigul Forest Division.
- (ii) An estimated area of 1.567 ha of Reserved Forest land is proposed for conversion of existing two lane road from Madurai to Natham into four lane for development of economic corridors through National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).
- (iii) The proposed diversion of area is essential for the development of this road. The area required is bare minimum, Alternative alignment is not possible because the existing road is passing through the Reserved Forest on both the sides. The forest type of the proposed diversion is Southern Tropical Thorn Forests with less than 0.4 canopy density.
- (iv) The proposed area contains old Eucalyptus plantation and sparse spontaneous growth of trees like Albizzia amara, Tamarindus Indica, Neem, Wringhtia tinctoria etc.

- (v) The proposed area does not fall in any wildlife corridor or movement path of Wild animals.

8. The Chief Conservator of Forests, Dindigul in Part-III of Form-A has agreed with the information given in Part-II of Form-A and the recommendations of the District Forest Officer. He also stated that the proposed area of 1.567 ha of Alagarmalai Reserved Forest land is proposed for conversion of existing two lane road from Madurai to Natham into four lane for development of economic corridors through NHAI and this is essential for the development of this road and hence recommended.

9. Regarding Forest Rights Act certificate received from the District Collector, Madurai and Dindigul, it is stated that the area of the jurisdiction of the Dindigul District Collector covers the area to be diverted in Alagarmalai Reserved Forest of 1.5675 ha of Dindigul Forest Division and Usilampatty Reserved Forest of 0.2249 ha of Madurai Forest Division and the Forest Rights Act certificate issued for a total area of 1.7924 ha (1.5675+0.2249) and The District Collector, Madurai has issued the FRA certificate for an area of 0.59 ha of Kiluvamalai Reserved Forest.

10. In this regard, the User Agency has uploaded all the certificates/ undertakings/ details as required in this proposal.

11. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests has sent the proposal, duly recommended in the Part IV format by the Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (FCA) / Nodal Officer (Forest Conservation Act).

12. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests has recommended the proposal for diversion of 1.567 ha of forest land in Alagarmalai Reserved Forest in Dindigul Forest Division and 0.59 ha of forest land in Kiluvamalai Reserved Forest and 0.2249 ha of forest land in Usilampatti Reserved Forest of Madurai Forest Division for formation of Madurai-Natham Road to improve the efficiency of freight movement in India, in favour of National Highways Authority of India, Madurai for a period of 20 years, under Section-2 of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, subject to the following conditions:-

- (i) The legal status of the land shall remain unchanged and shall remain as Reserved Forests.
- (ii) The demarcation of the proposed forest area shall be carried out by erecting 4 feet height cement concrete pillars duly numbered at an interval of 20 mts at the cost of User Agency.
- (iii) The User Agency shall remit Compensatory Afforestation amount as demanded by the Forest Department.
- (iv) The User Agency shall plant and maintain ten times the number of trees felled on the diverted land to maintain the green cover at the project cost, planting site for the purpose will be identified by the State Forest Department (Preferably within or in the surrounding area of the project). Only indigenous forest trees species shall be used for such plantations.
- (v) The User Agency shall pay the Net Present Value of the diverted forest area at the rates stipulated by the Ministry of Environment and Forests from time to time, as per the orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court Order dated 28.03.2008 and 09.05.2008 in IA Nos. 826 in 566 with related IAs in Writ Petition (Civil) No.202/1995.

- (vi) The fund from the User Agency towards Compensatory Afforestation and NPV under this project shall be deposited by generating challan from the Ministry's online web portal. UTR No; and date should be furnished.
- (vii) The Additional amount of the Net Present Value (NPV) 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 the State Government from the User Agency. The User Agency shall furnish an undertaking to the effect.
- (viii) The User Agency shall be responsible for any loss to Flora and Fauna in the surroundings and shall take all possible measures to conserve the same.
- (ix) The forest land shall not be used for any other purpose other than that specified in the proposal.
- (x) The lease rent should be realized from the User Agency as per G.O.(Ms)No.272, E&F(FR.XIII) Dept dated 15.04.1991.
- (xi) A reinforced fence to prevent the crossing of Wildlife primarily small mammals may be provided along the length of the 220 m section of the Kiluvamalai Reserved Forest and length of 260 m section of Usilampatty Reserved Forest to be diverted.
- (xii) Speed breakers have to be provided on the stretch of the road passing along the Reserved Forests to reduce the speed of the vehicles.
- (xiii) Adequate number of sign boards at vantage points along the sides of the road may be erected to warn the drivers of vehicles and commuters passing through the affected stretch regarding wildlife crossing the road, avoid throwing of inflammable material like cigarette butts etc., along the roadsides leading to fire in the dry season, littering the road with discarded trash cans, rubbish etc.
- (xiv) The User Agency has to obtain permission from Hon'ble Supreme Court of India for felling of trees of spontaneous origin.
- (xv) The mitigation plan for the proposed project should be submitted.
- (xvi) The period of lease is 20 years.
- (xvii) The User Agency should send renewal proposal before one year of expiry of lease.
- (xviii) The District Forest Officers may impose any other condition in the interest of conservation/ protection/ land development of forests.

13. The Government have examined the proposal of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (HoD) for diversion of forest land of (i) 1.567 ha in Alagarmalai Reserved Forest of Dindigul Forest Division, (ii) 0.2249 ha in Usilampatty Reserved Forest and (iii) 0.59 ha in Kiluvamalai Reserved Forest of Madurai Forest Division for formation of Madurai-Natham Road for development of Economic corridors, Inter corridors, feeder routes and coastal roads to improve

the efficiency of freight movement in India in favour of the Project Director, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), Madurai under Section 2 of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and recommended to forward the same to Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change.

14. I am therefore, directed to request you to kindly obtain the concurrence of the Government of India, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change and communicate the same to the Government early.

Yours faithfully,

*S. Mohamed Yusuf* 5/1/2022  
for Principal Secretary to Government  
5.1.22

Copy to:-

1. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (HoD), Chennai-15.
2. The Project Director, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI),  
307, Melur Main Road,  
K.K.Nagar,  
Madurai, Pin-625 020

**PART – V**

(To be filled in by the Secretary in charge of Forest Department or by any other authorized officer of the State Government not below the rank of an Under Secretary)

Proposal for diversion of 1.567 ha of forest land in Alagarmalai Reserved Forest in Dindigul Forest Division and 0.59 ha of forest land in Kiluvamalai Reserved Forest and 0.2249 ha of forest land in Usilampatti Reserved Forest of Madurai Forest Division for formation of Madurai-Natham Road to improve the efficiency of freight movement in India, in favour of National Highways Authority of India, Madurai for a period of 20 years under Section 2 of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

18. Recommendation of the State Government

- *Recommended* -

(Adverse comments made by any officer or authority in Part-B or Part – C or Part – D above should be specifically commented upon)

Signature

*S. Nathan*  
Under Secretary to Government  
Environment, Forests Change and  
Name & Designation  
(Official Seal)  
Forest Department  
Secretariat, Chennai-600 009.

Date : 28.12.2021

Place : Chennai-9.