

RECOMMENDATION OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER, BILLAWAR FOREST DIVISION:

The Ujh Multipurpose project has been planned to utilize water resource potential of river Ujh, a tributary of River Ravi, which is one of the three eastern Rivers of Indus Basin system. The Project has been declared as a **National Project** as it allows India to utilize its share of Indus River system as per provisions of **Indus Water Treaty** between India and Pakistan. The project entails not only hydro power generation in power-deficit region but also catering to the drinking water requirement as well as meeting the irrigation demand of the area, and thus, will pave the way for overall socio-economic development of the region. The project envisages construction of 116m high Concrete Face Rockfill Dam (CFRD) across the river Ujh, a power house of installed capacity 186 MW and one toe power house of 26 MW and a barrage 11.5 km downstream of the dam. The irrigation benefits will comprise annual irrigation to area of 31380 ha. besides the drinking water supply to the Kandi region.

Besides providing the geo-political strategic advantage in the form of much more effective utilization of the water of Ujh River, which otherwise flows straightaway to Pakistan, the project will also unleash the agricultural potential of the otherwise barren Kandi area. It will also be a boon in the dry Kandi belt which is already reeling under the peril of the impending water crisis. Therefore, in view of the underlying urgency and the fact that the project has national strategic importance, the undersigned recommends that the Project must be granted the Stage-I or In-principle approval subject to certain terms and conditions based on the deficiencies which have been noticed in the project proposal in its present form. The grant of Stage-II or Final Approval may be granted only after the User Agency diligently removes the deficiencies associated with the present Indent which are enlisted below:

1. VARIATION IN RESPECT OF THE AREA PROPOSED FOR DIVERSION BY THE USER AGENCY:

The extent of forest land proposed to be diverted in the Ujh Multipurpose project in Billawar Forest Division for the Reservoir (Submergence Area) and Dam, spillways etc. as per the Indent has been shown to be **770 hectares**. However, against the proposed 770 hectares, only **609.41 hectares** of forest land is actually being utilized as per the joint verification and revision by the User Agency & Forest Department. Therefore, the difference in the forest land proposed for diversion by the User Agency and the forest land actually being utilized, must be noted by the User Agency and the corresponding changes thereof, must invariably be incorporated in the Indent by the User Agency.

2. INCOMPLETE DELINEATION OF FRL-2m & FRL-4m BY THE USER AGENCY:


Despite repeated reminders and EDS requests, the User Agency has still not been able to complete the process of delineation of FRL-2m and FRL-4m on ground by installation of Permanent Benchmarks, which has rendered the undersigned unable to enumerate the trees at FRL-2m and FRL-4m. This situation has had two-pronged repercussions in the preparation and uploading of CA Plan. First, the Enumeration Lists at FRL-2m & FRL-4m as mandated in the PARIVESH Portal could not be uploaded. Second, in absence of the Enumeration at FRL-2m & FRL-4m, the exact number of trees/poles to be felled could not be ascertained with accuracy, thereby rendering the associated Costs of Marking, Felling and Transportation and the overall cost of CA Plan liable to changes and review.

3. NON-HANDING OVER OF THE NON-FOREST LAND PATCHES FOR CA PLANTATION:

As the process of handing over of the Non-Forest Land Patches by the User Agency is still under process of joint demarcation, the exact extent of Compensatory Afforestation in absence of the exact extent of availability of the Non-Forest Land, is impossible. However, the CA Plans on Degraded Forest Patches have been prepared in anticipation of the shortfall in the non-forest land being handed over to the forest department by the U.T. government in lieu of the forest land being diverted. Therefore, the CA Plan on Degraded Forest Areas as well as the Classified Cost Abstract of CA Plan on Non-Forest Lands/State Lands, prepared in anticipation, are subject to revision as per the exact extent of the non-forest land actually made available by the User Agency. It is, as such requested that the User Agency may be asked to expedite the demarcation of CA Patches on Non-Forest Lands/State Lands and also enter the same in the name of the J&K Forest Department by declaring them as Reserved Forests as per the procedure enshrined under the Indian Forest Act, 1927.

Therefore, in light of the foregoing account of deficiencies, the Project may be granted the Satge-I or In-principle approval subject to certain terms and conditions based on the deficiencies mentioned herein before. The grant of Stage-II or Final Approval may be granted only after the User Agency removes the deficiencies and the necessary changes in the CA Plans are incorporated thereof.

Place: Billawar
Dated: 30.06.2020


(Vivek Modi) SFS
Divisional Forest Officer
Billawar Forest Division
Billawar