

Ref: EOGEP/CBM-RG (E)/MOEF/2022/4368  
Nov 28, 2022

Principal Chief Conservator of Forest & Head of Forest Force  
Department of Forest, Government of West Bengal  
Aranya Bhaban,  
Kolkata - 700106  
West Bengal

Essar Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Ltd.

ESSAR House - Durgapur  
Village & Post Office - Molandighi  
Block - Kanksa  
Durgapur Sub-Division  
Dist.-Paschim Bardhaman  
Durgapur - 713212  
West Bengal  
India

CIN : U11203GJ2016PLC091903

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**Sub: Proposal for diversion of 12.5492 ha of forest land in favour of Essar Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Ltd. For drilling CBM Gas wells, construct approach road & laying pipeline under Burdwan and Durgapur Forest Division of West Bengal -reg.**

**Ref: Letter No: IRO/KOL/WB/Others/154900/2022/474, dt Nov 23, 2022, by IRO, MOEFCC, Kolkata**

Dear Sir,

This refers to the captioned letter from IRO, MOEFCC. We submit our responses below for few specific queries as outlined below:

**Query (i): Area of the forest land proposed for diversion is revised from 17.6962 ha to 12.5492 ha. Part-I & Part-II in online portal may be corrected accordingly.**

Multiple attempts have been made to revise the same. EOGEP approached concerned MoEFCC officials at NIC, New Delhi for suitable modifications, but the change could not be done.

**Query (ii): It is submitted by the concerned CCF that elephants take shelter in the proposed patch of forests at times during their movement and if this patch of greenery is tampered with, Human-Elephant Conflict shall raise beyond control during their occasional visits. Also, the proposal is not a site specific project. The State Forest Department as well as the User Agency may explore the feasibility of shifting the proposal to the nearby non forest degraded forest land to avoid the loss of elephant movement corridor.**

CBM Wells location were identified on the basis of proposed CBM reserved after interpretation of subsurface data. EOGEP has carried out the location identification process since April 2021 and primarily identified around 40 well locations within the Forest area. But after further scrutinizing, EOGEP applied for 24 well locations. However, after a detailed inspection and site visit of each well location, CCF recommended for 18 well locations. There is no elephant movement corridor found in our proposed project site. Occasionally few elephant stray out from neighboring area of Bankura. As such there will be hardly any loss of elephant habitat. The recommendation of the CCF has already considered the elephant movement corridor. Kindly further note that, the human-elephant conflict as highlighted above by the IRO shall be appropriately addressed in the Wildlife Management Plan (separately enumerated in Query [viii] below).

**Query (v): Legal status of the proposed CA land needs to be uploaded.**

EOGEP had purchased 102.81 acres of land in Bankura solely for the purpose of Compensatory Afforestation for the forest land. As was planned, EOGEP had put up a Forest Diversion Proposal for 13.54 Ha for which Stage I approval was accorded by MoEFCC, Bhubaneswar on Feb 2, 2016. Since this land was beyond the stipulated ceiling of 24.22 Acres as stipulated by the GOWB, the land was vested with the GOWB. EOGEP then requested the GOWB for transfer of 13.54 Ha (33.45 Acres) of land to the Forest



Department under "Inter Department Transfer (IDT)" so that Stage 2 Approval can be obtained. GOWB accordingly issued an Order for IDT for 13.54 Ha of land on Sep 26, 2022 (Copy enclosed for reference). Handover of the same including trenching and pillaring is in the final stages, and the same is expected to be completed within Dec 2022. In the meanwhile, EOGEP submitted a fresh FDP of 17.69 Ha (reduced to 12.54 Ha as recommended by the CCF) and accordingly requested GOWB to transfer additional land (out of the balance land in Bankura) vide its letter dated Oct 7, 2022 (Copy enclosed for reference). Kindly note that IDT order for such land shall be received from the GOWB only after receipt of the Stage 1 approval from the MOEFCC.

**Query (vi): NOC from the concerned DC/competent authority regarding the use of the proposed land as CA for the project.**

Kindly refer our response to Query (v) above. As mentioned above, IDT for transfer of land from GOWB to MOEFCC shall be received only after Stage 1 approval by the MOEFCC

**Query (viii) :The State Forest Department recommended the proposal with condition of Soil Moisture Conservation Plan & Wildlife Conservation Plan to be formulated by concerned DFO. Upload such Plans duly approved by the Competent Authority/ CWLW.**

Preparation of the Soil Moisture Conservation Plan & Wildlife Conservation Plan has already been initiated and is in process. The same shall be submitted for review and approval of the DFO in the due course. We understand that these plans are required to be uploaded after receipt of Stage 1 approval.

**Query (ix): The proposal No.FP/WB/Others/7248/2014 (Raniganj Coal Bed Methane Project) of the same User Agency had been accorded "in-principle" approval on 2.02.2016. After passage of more than 6 years, compliance report of the conditions stipulated in "in-principle" approval are still awaited. Status of the compliance report needs to be submitted.**

We invite your attention to our response mentioned in Query (v). EOGEP had applied for transfer of land to the GOWB in 2016 which took some time mainly due to various processes followed by the GOWB including approval by the Cabinet. About 2 years were lost due to Covid lockdowns also. Now that the IDT has been received in Sep 2022 and the local administration is involved in the transfer of the land to the Forest Department, we expect such transfer to be completed in Dec 2022, post which EOGEP shall approach the MOEFCC for grant of Stage 2 approval.

**Query (x):The validity of the Environmental Clearance of the project is expiring on 26.02.2023. However, the forest clearance of the instant proposal had been applied for 25 years. It may be clarified.**

The EC of the project is valid till Feb 2023. However, as per the notification dated Jan 18, 2021, issued by MOEFCC (copy enclosed for reference), extension of 1 year has been granted to all projects due to "No work due to COVID Pandemic Situation". The validity therefore stands extended to Feb 2024. Application for suitable extension in the EC, if required, shall be done at an appropriate time.

Thanking You,  
For, Essar Oil and Gas Exploration & Production Ltd



Ranjan Jindal  
Chief Financial Officer

Cc:

- Addl. PCCF&CCF-South East Circle, WEBEL IT Park, Durgapur
- CCF-Central Circle, WEBEL IT Park, Durgapur

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND & LAND REFORMS AND REFUGEE RELIEF & REHABILITATION  
GE(M)/LRA-III BRANCH, NABANNA, 325, SARAT CHATTERJEE ROAD,  
P.O. SHIBPUR, HOWRAH-711 102

Memo No. 4286-GE(M)/3M-96/12 Pt-IV

Date : 26.09.2022.

From: The Deputy Secretary  
to the Government of West Bengal.

To : The District Magistrate & Collector, Bankura,  
Dist. – Bankura.

Subject : *Inter-Departmental Transfer of Govt. land in favour of the **Forest Department**, Govt. of West Bengal for the purpose of Compensatory Afforestation under Indpur Block in the district of Bankura in lieu of utilization of forest land for oil exploration and production by M/s Essar Oil and Gas Production Limited.*

With reference to the above, the undersigned is directed to say that the Governor is hereby pleased to accord sanction to the following inter-departmental transfer of Govt. land in favour of the **Forest Department**, Govt. of West Bengal *for the purpose of Compensatory Afforestation under Indpur Block in the district of Bankura in lieu of utilization of forest land for oil exploration and production by M/s Essar Oil and Gas Production Limited* as per land schedule below:

**Schedule**

District	P.S.	Mouza	J.L. No.	LR Plot No.	Area (in acre)
Bankura	Indpur	Mukutdihi	118	364	20.94
				365	4.00
				407	2.50
				425	6.02

Total Area – **33.46 acres**

2. The **Forest Department** Government of West Bengal will hold the land as sanctioned on the following terms and conditions:

(i) The land will be reverted to the Land and Land Reforms Department when no longer required by the **Forest Department** Government of West Bengal.

(ii) If it is found that the land has not been utilized for a period of 3 (three) years from the date of taking over possession, the Land & Land Reforms Department may resume such quantum of land from the **Forest Department**, Government of West Bengal.

(iii) The **Forest Department**, Government of West Bengal will not alienate the land.

(iv) The **Forest Department**, Government of West Bengal will not lease out or let out or transfer any portion or whole of the land at all.

(v) If any portion of the land so sanctioned is found surplus to the requirements at any stage for the purpose afore mentioned, the said portion of land shall be reverted to the Land and Land Reforms Department.

(vi) If it is subsequently found that the subject land is involved in any Court Case in any Hon'ble Court of Law including WBLRTT, then all concerned shall abide by the orders as may be passed by such Hon'ble Court or WBLRTT.

(vii) The **Forest Department**, Government of West Bengal will not utilize the land for commercial purpose.

(viii) If it is detected subsequently that land is being used for commercial purpose then the **Forest Department**, Government of West Bengal will be liable to pay full market value of the land as to be assessed on the date of such detection.

3. It is accordingly requested to hand over possession of land so sanctioned to the authorized representative of the **Forest Department**, Government of West Bengal immediately and report compliance thereof to this Department early. A copy of the possession certificate should also have to be furnished to this Department.

4. This has the approval of the Cabinet held on 19.09.2022. vide Cabinet Secretariat U/O. No. CAB(D)-410, dated 20.09.2022.

*Sd/-*

Deputy Secretary  
to the Govt. of West Bengal

Memo No. 4286/1(7)-GE(M)

Date : 26.09.2022.

Copy forwarded for information and necessary action to:

1. The Principal Secretary to the Govt. of West Bengal,  
Forest Department,  
Aranya Bhavan, 10A, LA Block, Sector – III,  
Bidhannagar, Kolkata – 700098.
2. The Finance Department of this Government,  
Nabanna, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor, Howrah - 711102.
3. The Director of Land Records & Survey, WB  
35, Gopalnagar Road, Alipore, Kol - 700027.
4. The ADM & DL & LRO, Bankura,  
Dist. – Bankura.
- ✓ 5. M/s Essar Oil and Gas Production Limited,  
AN 81B, Sector – 2B, Martin Luther King Road,  
Bidhannagar, Durgapur, PIN – 713212.
6. Guard file of GE(M) Branch.
7. Office Copy.

*Umm*

Deputy Secretary  
to the Govt. of West Bengal

EOGEPL/CBM-RG(E)/CA/2022/4127

Oct 7, 2022

The Secretary and Land Reforms Commissioner  
Dept. of Land & Land Reforms  
Govt. of West Bengal  
6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Nabanna  
Howrah – 711102

Essar Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Ltd.

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West Bengal  
India

CIN : U11203GJ2016PLC091903

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www.essar.com

**Sub: Request for Inter Departmental Transfer of 12.5492 Ha of land to West Bengal Forest Department, identified at Bankura (from within total land parcel of 102.81 acres) in relation to Forest Diversion Proposal by Essar Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Ltd (EOGEPL)**

Respected Madam,

At the outset, we sincerely thank you and your office for continued support in resolving the long pending issue pertaining to IDT for 33.46 ha in favour of West Bengal Forest Dept.

Now, in reference to the above mentioned subject and as previously informed, EOGEPL has submitted an additional Forest Diversion Proposal of 12.5492 Ha in the district of Paschim Burdwan. The land for Compensatory Afforestation has been identified from within the total land parcel of 102.81 acres at Bankura. We would also like to bring to your kind knowledge that concerned DFOs (Bankura North and South Divisions) has inspected the land to determine suitability of the same and the entire proposed patch has been found to be suitable for plantation. But the DFOs has also identified some agricultural and plantation activities and have accordingly requested EOGEPL to complete demarcation and fencing of the land proposed to be handed over to Forest Dept. Copy of Reports issued by respective DFOs enclosed for kind information.

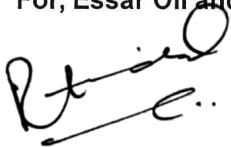
Hence, we would like to request your good office to kindly:

- I. Initiate IDT proceedings for 12.5492 Ha of land in favour of West Bengal Forest Dept.
- II. Allow EOGEPL to undertake land demarcation and fencing activities so that we may parallaly initiate handover proceedings at the earliest.

Your support on the above mentioned matters is kindly requested.

Thanking You,

For, Essar Oil and Gas Exploration & Production Ltd



Ranjan Jindal  
Chief Financial Officer

Copy to:

1. Principal Chief Conservator of Forest – HoFF – West Bengal Forest Dept.
2. Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forest and Nodal Officer - West Bengal Forest Dept.



# भारत का राजपत्र The Gazette of India

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असाधारण  
EXTRAORDINARY

भाग II—खण्ड 3—उप-खण्ड (ii)  
PART II—Section 3—Sub-section (ii)

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पर्यावरण, वन और जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय

अधिसूचना

नई दिल्ली, 18 जनवरी, 2021

**का.आ. 221(अ).**— केंद्रीय सरकार, तत्कालीन पर्यावरण और वन मंत्रालय में, पर्यावरण (संरक्षण) अधिनियम, 1986 की धारा 3 की उप-धारा (1) और उप-धारा (2) के खंड (v) के अधीन अपनी शक्तियों के प्रयोग करते हुए, पर्यावरण समाघात निर्धारण अधिसूचना, 2006 (जिसे इसके बाद उक्त अधिसूचना कहा गया है) संख्या का. आ. 1533 (अ), तारीख 14 सितंबर, 2006 द्वारा प्रकाशित किया जा चुका है, उक्त अधिसूचना की अनुसूची में सभी संबंधित सूचीबद्ध नई परियोजनाओं या क्रियाकलापों के लिए उनके विस्तार और आधुनिकीकरण और/या उत्पाद मिश्रण में परिवर्तन किया जा सकता है यथास्थिति, भूमि को अभिप्रास करने के सिवाय, परियोजना प्रबंधन द्वारा किसी भी संनिर्माण कार्य या भूमि को तैयार करने से पूर्व संबंधित विनियामक प्राधिकरण से पूर्व पर्यावरणीय अनापत्ति अपेक्षित होगी।

और कोरोना वायरस (कोविड-19) के प्रकोप को देखते हुए और तत्पश्चात इसके नियंत्रण के लिए घोषित लॉकडाउन (कुल या आंशिक) ने, क्षेत्र में परियोजनाओं या क्रियाकलापों के कार्यान्वयन को प्रभावित किया है। पर्यावरण और वन जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय उक्त अधिसूचना में अनुज्ञात अधिकतम अवधि से परे पूर्व पर्यावरणीय अनापत्तियों की विधिमान्यता के विस्तार के लिए अनुरोधों की संख्या प्राप्ति में है, क्योंकि कोविड 19 महामारी अभी तक समाप्त नहीं हुई है। मामले की उक्त मंत्रालय में समीक्षा की गई है और चिंता इस तथ्य को ध्यान में रखते हुए है कि लॉकडाउन (कुल या आंशिक) के कारण, क्षेत्र में क्रियाकलापों को जारी रखना कठिन हो सकता है।

अतः अब, केंद्रीय सरकार, पर्यावरण (संरक्षण) नियम, 1986 के नियम 5 के (4) खंड के साथ पठित पर्यावरण (संरक्षण) अधिनियम, 1986 (1986 का 29) की धारा 3 की उप-धारा (1) की उप-धारा (2) के खंड (v) द्वारा प्रदत्त शक्तियों का प्रयोग करते हुए, लोक हित में उक्त नियमों के नियम 5 के उप-नियम (3) के खंड (क) के अधीन नोटिस की अपेक्षा अभिमुक्ति के पश्चात् भारत के राजपत्र असाधारण, भाग- II, खंड 3, उपखंड (II), में प्रकाशित, भारत सरकार की तत्कालीन पर्यावरण और वन मंत्रालय अधिसूचना का.आ.1533 (अ), तारीख 14 सितंबर, 2006, में निम्नलिखित और संशोधन करती है, अर्थात्: -

उक्त अधिसूचना में,

(i) उप शीर्ष II “चरण (2)-विस्तारण”, के अधीन पैरा 7 के उप पैरा 7(i) में, खंड (viii) के पश्चात् निम्नलिखित खंड अंतःस्थापित किया जाएगा अर्थात्: -

“(ix) उपरोक्त में अंतर्विष्ट किसी बात के होते हुए, 1 अप्रैल 2020 से 31 मार्च 2021 की अवधि में कोरोना वायरस (कोविड-19) के प्रकोप को देखते हुए और तत्पश्चात् इसके नियंत्रण के लिए घोषित लॉकडाउन (कुल या आंशिक) की दृष्टि में इस अधिसूचना के उपबंधों के अधीन मंजूर संदर्भ की शर्तों की विधिमान्यता की अवधि की गणना के प्रयोजन के लिए विचार नहीं किया जाएगा ,तथापि उक्त संदर्भ की शर्तों के संबंध में इस अवधि के दौरान अपनाए गए सभी क्रियाकलाप विधिमान्य समझे जाएंगे।”;

(ii) पैरा 9 क के स्थान पर, निम्नलिखित पैरा रखा जाएगा, अर्थात्: -

“9 क. इस अधिसूचना में अंतर्विष्ट किसी बात के होते हुए, 1 अप्रैल 2020 से 31 मार्च 2021 की अवधि में कोरोना वायरस (कोविड-19) के प्रकोप को देखते हुए और तत्पश्चात् इसके नियंत्रण के लिए घोषित लॉकडाउन (कुल या आंशिक) की दृष्टि में इस अधिसूचना के उपबंधों के अधीन मंजूर पूर्व पर्यावरणीय अनापत्ति की विधिमान्यता की अवधि की गणना के प्रयोजन के लिए विचार नहीं किया जाएगा ,तथापि उक्त पर्यावरणीय अनापत्ति के संबंध में इस अवधि के दौरान अपनाए गए सभी क्रियाकलाप विधिमान्य समझे जाएंगे।”;

[फा. सं. 22-25/2020-आई.ए. III]

गीता मेनन, संयुक्त सचिव

**टिप्पण :** मूल अधिसूचना भारत के राजपत्र, असाधारण, भाग II, खंड 3, उप-खंड (ii) संख्या का.आ. 1533 (अ), तारीख 14 सितंबर, 2006 द्वारा प्रकाशित की गई थी और अधिसूचना अधिसूचना संख्या का.आ. 4254 (अ), तारीख 27 नवंबर, 2020 द्वारा अंतिम बार संशोधन किया गया था।

## MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE NOTIFICATION

New Delhi, the 18th January, 2021

**S.O. 221(E).**—Whereas, the Central Government in the erstwhile Ministry of Environment and Forests, in exercise of its powers by sub-section (1) and clause (v) of sub-section (2) of section 3 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 has published the Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006 (hereinafter referred to as the said notification) vide number S.O.1533(E), dated the 14<sup>th</sup> September, 2006, making the requirement of prior environmental clearance from the concerned regulatory authority mandatory for all new projects or activities listed in the Schedule to the said notification, their expansion and modernisation and/or change in product mix, as the case may be, before any construction work or preparation of land by the project management except for securing the land;

And whereas, in view of the outbreak of Corona Virus (COVID-19) and subsequent lockdowns (total or partial) declared for its control, implementation of projects or activities in the field has been affected. Ministry of

Environment, Forest and Climate Change is in receipt of number of requests for extension of the validity of prior environmental clearances beyond the maximum period allowed in the said notification, as the COVID-19 pandemic has not yet come to an end. The matter has been examined in the said Ministry and the concern is genuine keeping in view the fact that due to lockdowns (total or partial), continuation of activities in the field has been difficult.

Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (1) and clause (v) of sub-section (2) of section 3 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 (29 of 1986), read with sub-rule (4) of rule 5 of the Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986, the Central Government, after having dispensed with the requirement of notice under clause (a) of sub-rule (3) of rule 5 of the said rules in public interest, hereby makes the following further amendments in the notification of Government of India, in the erstwhile Ministry of Environment and Forests, number S.O. 1533 (E), dated the 14<sup>th</sup> September, 2006, published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part-II, Section 3, Sub-section (II), namely:-

In the said notification, -

- (i) in paragraph 7, in sub-paragraph 7(i), under sub-heading II. “Stage (2) – Scoping”, after clause (viii), the following clause shall be inserted, namely:-

*“(ix). Notwithstanding anything contained above, the period from the 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2020 to the 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2021 shall not be considered for the purpose of calculation of the period of validity of Terms of Reference granted under the provisions of this notification in view of outbreak of Corona Virus (COVID-19) and subsequent lockdowns (total or partial) declared for its control, however, all activities undertaken during this period in respect of the said Terms of Reference shall be treated as valid.”;*

- (ii) for paragraph 9A, the following paragraph shall be substituted namely:-

*“9A. Notwithstanding anything contained in this notification, the period from the 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2020 to the 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2021 shall not be considered for the purpose of calculation of the period of validity of Prior Environmental Clearances granted under the provisions of this notification in view of outbreak of Corona Virus (COVID-19) and subsequent lockdowns (total or partial) declared for its control, however, all activities undertaken during this period in respect of the Environmental Clearance granted shall be treated as valid.”.*

[F.No.22-25/2020-IA.III]

GEETA MENON, Joint Secy.

**Note:** The principal notification was published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 3, Sub-section (ii) vide number S.O. 1533 (E), dated the 14<sup>th</sup> September, 2006 and was last amended vide the notification number S.O. 4254(E), dated the 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2020.