

**F. No. 8-41/2017-FC**  
Government of India  
Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change  
(Forest Conservation Division)

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Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,  
Jor Bagh Road, Aliganj,  
New Delhi: 110003,  
**Dated: 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2017**

To,  
The Principal Secretary (Forests),  
Government of Chhattisgarh,  
Raipur.

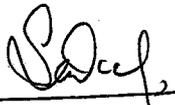
**Sub: Diversion of 112.385 ha of Revenue forest land for Gevra Open Cast Mine (OCM) in Katghora Forest range, District –Korba Chhattisgarh in favour of SECL, Chhattisgarh.**

Sir,

I am directed to refer to the Government of Chhattisgarh's letter No. F-5-12/2017/10-2 dated 01.05.2017 on the subject mentioned above seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section-2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and to say that the proposal has been examined by the Forest Advisory Committee constituted by the Central Government under Section-3 of the aforesaid Act.

After careful examination of the proposal of the State Government and on the basis of the recommendations of the Forest Advisory Committee, ***In-principle approval /Stage-I Clearance*** of the Central Government is hereby granted for diversion of 112.385 ha of Revenue forest land for Gevra Open Cast Mine (OCM) in Katghora Forest range, District –Korba Chhattisgarh in favour of SECL, Chhattisgarh subject to the following conditions:

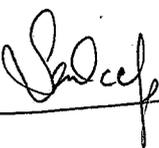
- (i) Legal status of the diverted forest land shall remain unchanged;
- (ii) Compensatory Afforestation shall be done over degraded forest land twice in extent to the forest area proposed to be diverted within a period of three years with effect from the date of issue of Stage-II clearance and maintained thereafter in accordance with the approved Plan in consultation with the State Forest Department at the cost of the user agency. At least 1000 saplings per hectares shall be planted over 224.77 ha (224770 plants). If this is not possible to plant these many seedlings in the identified DFL, the balance seedlings will be planted in other suitable degraded forest land as per the prescriptions of the Working Plan at the cost of the User agency. In such case CA cost will be revised and duly approved by competent authority and deposited online in the CAF managed by CAMPA. 25% of the CA cost additionally will be spent towards Soil and Moisture Conservation activities in the proposed CA area as per site requirement and deposited in CAF.
- (iii) **On examination of Compensatory afforestation land on Google Satellite Imagery and DSS tools, it is found that 30 ha area is having dense vegetation and 53 ha land seems to be under encroachment. State Government shall exclude the land under encroachment and under very dense vegetation from the proposed CA area and additional degraded forest land which is free from encumbrances/encroachment and degraded shall be selected prior to stage II approval. The land shall be analysed through DSS at state level prior to submission to MoEF&CC for consideration. State Government shall submit DSS analysis report along with the compliance of this condition.**
- (iv) State Government shall reconfirm the enumeration list of trees prior to stage II approval.

  
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- (v) The User Agency shall ensure that construction of residential accommodation for workers will be undertaken separately on non-forest land to avoid pressure on forest land for temporary construction.
- (vi) Safety zone shall be fenced with coiled barbed wire fencing of 6 feet high for the protection of forests;
- (vii) Safety zone along the lease boundary, shall be implemented by the User Agency in accordance with the guidelines issued by the MoEF&CC in this regard;
- (viii) Encroachment from the lease area of the User Agency should be evicted and in case eligible claimants are found in the area proposed for diversion, they should be rehabilitated as per the R&R policy of the State Government of Chhattisgarh in consonance with the National R&R policy.
- (ix) The user agency should undertake comprehensive greening in the villages located in the surrounding of their lease area.
- (x) Mined out forest area already reclaimed by the User Agency, should be handed over back to the State Forest Department with a view to bring it under the ambit of core forestry management.
- (xi) The UA should prepare a land surrender schedule for surrender of the mined out and biologically reclaimed forest land in accordance with the existing mine plan irrespective of progressive mine closure plan and submit an surrender schedule and an undertaking that mined out and biologically reclaimed forest land will be surrendered to the State Forest Department as per this schedule. No further change in the schedule for surrendering of forest land should be allowed.
- (xii) With a view to enrich the water regime in the area, a comprehensive Catchment Area Treatment Plan in the area to arrest flow of silt in the Hasdeo River and to improve water regime should be implemented at the project cost;
- (xiii) A study should be undertaken at the project cost to assess the impact of intervention undertaken by the SECL, in consultation with the State Forest Department, for the protection, conservation and development of wildlife in the area. Based on the outcome of such study, the measures for protection, conservation and development of the wildlife, if needed may further be strengthened at the project cost.
- (xiv) No forest land should be used for undertaking the diversion of district road, bifurcating the Revenue forest land proposed to divert by the User Agency. While undertaking diversion of the said road, the User Agency should select such alignment ensuring that accessibility/connectivity is maintained at the ease of the local residents.
- (xv) It is reported that the user agency had biologically reclaimed 404.8 ha of land. A subcommittee of FAC under the chairmanship of Sh. Deepak Sinha IG(FC) , Sh. R.K. Dey APPCF regional office Bhuvneshwar and Sh. Sandeep Sharma AIG(FC) shall visit the site and submit report on the status of biologically reclaimed area to MoEF and CC .
- (xvi) The land identified for the purpose of CA shall be clearly depicted on a Survey of India topo-sheet of 1:50,000 scale;
- (xvii) The User Agency shall transfer the cost of raising and maintaining the compensatory afforestation at the current wage rate in consultation with State Forest Department in the account of Ad-hoc CAMPA of the concerned State through online portal. The scheme may include appropriate provision for anticipated cost increase for works scheduled for subsequent years.
- (xviii) The User Agency shall transfer the funds for the Net Present Value (NPV) of the forest land being diverted under this proposal from the User Agency as per the orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India dated 28.03.2008, 24.04.2008 and 09.05.2008 in Writ Petition (Civil) No. 202/1995 and the guidelines issued by this Ministry vide its letter No. 5-3/2007-FC dated 05.02.2009 through online portal of Ad-hoc CAMPA account of the State Concerned;
- (xix) At the time of payment of the Net Present Value (NPV) at the present rate, the user agency shall furnish an undertaking to pay the additional amount of NPV, if so determined, as per the final decision of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India;

  
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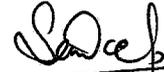
- (xx) Any fund received from the user agency under the project, except the funds realized for regeneration/ demarcation of safety zone, shall be transferred to Ad-hoc CAMPA through online portal of Ad-hoc CAMPA account of the State Concerned;
- (xxi) Following activities shall be undertaken by the user agency at the project cost and **appropriate cost of the plan/scheme shall be deposited in Ad-hoc CAMPA Account:**
- (a) A plan containing appropriate mitigative measures to minimize soil erosion and choking of streams shall be prepared and implemented;
  - (b) Planting of adequate drought hardy plant species and sowing of seeds in the appropriate area within the mining lease to arrest soil erosion;
  - (c) Construction of check dams, retention /toe walls to arrest sliding down of the excavated material along the contour;
  - (d) Stabilize the overburden dumps by appropriate grading/benching so as to ensure that that angles of repose at any given place is less than 28°; and
  - (e) Strict adherence to the prescribed top soil management.
- (xxii) User agency shall obtain the Environment Clearance as per the provisions of the Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986;
- (xxiii) User agency in consultation with the State Forest Department shall create and maintain alternate habitat/ home for the avifauna, whose nesting trees are to be cleared in this project. Bird nests artificially made out of eco-friendly materials shall be used in the area, including forest area and human settlements, adjoining the forest area being diverted for the project;
- (xxiv) Fencing, protection and regeneration of the safety zone area [7.5 meters strip shall be kept within the mining lease boundary and area of the safety zone shall be part of the total area of mining lease as per the Ministry's guidelines dated 27.05.2015] shall be done at the project cost within three years and maintained thereafter as per approved working plan of the State Govt. Besides this afforestation on degraded forest land to be selected elsewhere measuring one & a half times the area under safety zone shall also be done at the project cost;
- (xxv) User agency either himself or through the State Forest Department shall undertake afforestation on degraded forest land, one and half time in extent to the area used for safety zone;
- (xxvi) Period of diversion of the said forest land under this approval shall be for a period co-terminus with the period of the mining lease proposed to be granted under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, and the Rules framed there-under as amended;
- (xxvii) User agency either himself or through the State Forest Department shall undertake gap planting and soil & moisture conservation activities to restock and rejuvenate the degraded open forests (having crown density less than 0.4), if any, located in the area within 100 meters from outer perimeter of the mining lease;
- (xxviii) The User Agency shall prepare a list of existing village tanks and other water bodies with GPS co-ordinates located within five km. from the mine lease boundary. This list is to be duly verified by the concerned Divisional Forest Officer. The User Agency shall regularly undertake desilting of these village tanks and other water bodies so as to mitigate the impact of siltation of such tanks/water bodies. A detailed plan for desilting of identified ponds and water bodies to be prepared in consultation with forest department and shall be submitted to MoEF & CC before Stage-II approval;
- (xxix) User agency shall undertake mining in a phased manner and take due care for reclamation of the mined over area. The concurrent reclamation plan shall be executed by the User Agency as per the approved mining plan/scheme and an annual report on implementation thereof shall be submitted to the Nodal Officer, Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, Government of Odisha and the Addl. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Central), Ministry of Environment & Forests, Regional Office (Eastern Zone), Bhubaneswar. If it is found from the annual report that the activities indicated in the concurrent reclamation

  
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- plan are not being executed by the user agency, the Nodal Officer or the Addl. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Central) may direct that the mining activities shall remain suspended till such time, such reclamation activities are satisfactorily executed;
- (xxx) No labour camp shall be established on the forest land;
- (xxxii) User agency shall provide firewood preferably alternate fuel to the labourers and the staff working at the site so as to avoid any damage and pressure on the adjacent forest areas;
- (xxxiii) Boundary of the mining lease and safety zone shall be demarcated on ground at the project cost, by erecting four feet high reinforced cement concrete pillars, each inscribed with its serial number, forward and back bearing, distance from pillar to pillar and GPS co-ordinates;
- (xxxiv) Forest land shall not be used for any purpose other than that specified in the proposal;
- (xxxv) State Government shall complete settlement of rights, in term of the Scheduled Tribes and Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, if any, on the forest land to be diverted and submit the documentary evidence as prescribed by this Ministry vide their letter No. 11-9/1998-FC (pt.) dated 3rd August 2009 read with 05.07.2013, in support thereof;
- (xxxvi) The user agency shall submit the annual self compliance report in respect of the above conditions to the State Government, concerned Regional Office and this Ministry by the end of March every year regularly.
- (xxxvii) Any other condition that the Regional Office (Western Zone), Bhopal of this Ministry, may stipulate, from time to time, in the interest of conservation, protection and development of forests & wildlife; and
- (xxxviii) The State Government and user agency shall comply the provisions of the all Acts, Rules, Regulations, Guidelines, Hon'ble Court Order (s) and NGT Order (s) pertaining to this project, if any, for the time being in force, as applicable to the project.

After receipt of compliance report on fulfilment of the conditions mentioned above, the proposal shall be considered for final approval under Section-2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. Transfer of forest land shall not be affected till final approval is granted by the Central Government in this regard.

Yours faithfully,



(Sandeep Sharma) 27.9.17

Assistant Inspector General of Forests (FC)

**Copy to:-**

1. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Government of Chhattisgarh, Raipur.
2. The Addl. PCCF (Central), Regional Office, Nagpur
3. The Nodal Officer, the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, of Chhattisgarh, Raipur.
4. User Agency.
5. Forest Conservation Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi.
6. Guard File.



(Sandeep Sharma) 27.9.17

Assistant Inspector General of Forests (FC)