

Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
(Forest Conservation Division)

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bag Road, Aliganj,
New Delhi – 110003
Dated: As per E-sign

To,

The Principal Secretary (Forests),
Government of Maharashtra,
Mumbai.

Subject: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 12.07 forest land for Sakhari-Irawati (Pouni III) Opencast Mine Project in Reserve Forest Compartment No. R-603 in favour of M/s Western Coalfields Limited in Chandrapur District of Maharashtra State (Online No. FP/MH/MIN/8832/2014) - regarding.

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer the APCCF and Nodal Officer, Government of Maharashtra letter No. 17/Nodal/1/FID-8832/1871/2024-25 dated 18.11.2024 on the above cited subject. In this regard, the following shortcomings have been observed in the information submitted:

- i. The State Govt. has informed that total project area is 1152.66 ha whereas the user agency has informed that the Mining plan has been approved for an area of 1105.95 ha. Further in online Part-I of the proposal, it has been mentioned that 12.07 ha forest land is required for mining work whereas the Mining plan revealed that the 12.07 ha forest land is required for internal dumping. This needs clarification and the State Govt. shall ensure that the proposed forest land is not being utilized for any non-site specific activity and the purpose wise proposed utilization of the forest land as mentioned in the proposal shall invariably commensurate with the land-use as per approved mining plan.
- ii. The software calculated KML file area of the project is found 1102.738 ha instead of 1152.66 ha as reported by the State Govt. whereas as per the user agency reported that the project area is 1105.95 ha. This needs clarification and the State Govt. shall submit the correct KML file of project area involving both forest and non-forest land.
- iii. Out of 1102.738 ha KML file of the project as submitted by the State Govt., the forest land (protected forest) within the project boundary/ lease has been found 32.653 ha based on the forest compartment boundaries of the Maharashtra State available on the DSS portal whereas the user agency has submitted diversion of only 12.07 ha. This needs clarification.
- iv. Satellite imagery shows that part of 32.653 ha forest land has been found

broken or under Non-forestry use. This needs clarification and State Govt. shall submit whether any violation has been carried out in the forest area within the Mining lease boundary.

- v. The software calculated KML file area of the safety zone has been found 27.429 ha. However the safety zone has not been proposed along the inner boundary of the proposed forest land. Therefore the State Govt. shall ensure that the Safety zone is earmarked all around inner boundary of the proposed forest area as per provisions mentioned in consolidated guidelines and clarification issued under Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.
- vi. As per DSS analysis it has been found that the user agency has now revised the shape and extent of KML file showing the proposed forest land. The State Govt. shall submit detail justification and shall ensure that the KML file of the proposed diversion area is in conformity with the ground realities.
- vii. The user agency has shown its inability to do needful correction in the online Part-I of the proposal w.r.t total mining lease area. In this regard the state shall raise the issue online with the NIC team handling PARIVESH portal in the Ministry, New Delhi.
- viii. As requested the comments of the CWLW, Govt. of Maharashtra on the efficacy of the Wildlife Management Plan of Rs. 20 lakhs has not been submitted. Moreover, the duly approved Wildlife Management Plan by CWLW, Maharashtra along with its recommendation has not been submitted.

Accordingly, it is requested to furnish the above mentioned information to this Ministry for further consideration of the proposal.

Yours sincerely,

Signed by Suneet Bhardwaj

Date: 06-12-2024 10:56:09

Sd/-

(Suneet Bhardwaj)

Assistant Inspector General of Forests

Copy to:

1. The PCCF (HoFF), Department of Forest, Government of Maharashtra, Nagpur;
2. The Dy. DGF (Central), Regional Office, MoEF&CC, Nagpur;
3. The Nodal Officer, Department of Forest, Government of Maharashtra, Nagpur;
4. User Agency;
5. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi for uploading on PARIVESH portal.