

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bagh Road, Aliganj,
New Delhi – 1100 03.

Dated: 12th April, 2021

To,
The Principal Secretary,
Government of West Bengal,
Kolkata-700 098

Sub: Diversion of 109.459 ha of forest land for Open Cast Mining Project at Gourangdih ABC coal mine in favour of WB Mineral Development and Trading Corporation under Durgapur Forest Division, West Bengal.

Sir,

I am directed to refer to the State Government's letter No. 307-For/O/L/10T-01/2019 dated 03.03.2021 furnishing their response on Ministry's letter of even number dated 15.07.2019 towards instant proposal. The compliance report has been examined in consultation with DSS Cell of this Division of the Ministry and it is noted that still complete information has not submitted by the State government for further processing of the proposal for appropriate decision at Ministry level. It is further requested to submit complete report /information on following points.

1. From the perusal and analysis of the KML files submitted by the State Government it is observed that some Non-forestry activity/ mining in the proposed Forest land has been noticed on the eastern boundary of Gourangdih 'C' Coal block. It is also observed through DSS tool that many forest patches specifically in the Gourangdih 'C' Coal block boundary in the proposed area of diversion has not been included. In this regard, Maps are enclosed for your ready reference [**Annexure-I (a to d)**].

2. Ministry vide its letter of even number dated 15.07.2019 has requested to revise the proposed CA sites proposed on Plot Nos. 281, 1580, 306 & 358 which are falling on the Forest compartment boundaries instead of non-forest Govt. land as mentioned in the proposal and the encroachment in the form of agricultural land is also observed through Google earth Imagery dated 4/1/2019 in the proposed CA patches bearing Plot Nos. 253, 1863, 73, 48, 1840 & 1841". In its compliance the state government has not changed the CA sites. The discrepancies in proposed CA are reiterated as under:

- a. Survey No/Khata No. 525, 306, 358, 3, 281 1580 and 1300 are falling in the Forest compartment.

- b. Survey No/Khata No. 1152 is having some Settlements.
- c. Survey No/Khata No. 561 (8.21 Ha) is having pre- plantation work.

The copies of relevant Maps are enclosed for your ready reference [Annexure-II (a to e)].

3.It is reported by the Govt. of West Bengal that *"there is no Mine adjacent to the Gourangdih 'ABC' Coal Project"* whereas the IRO, Bhubaneswar in the Site Inspection Report reported that *"on the eastern most side Gourangdih-'C' shares boundary with Gourangdih-'D' block, allocated to Eastern Coalfields Ltd"*. Thus, these contradictory information need clarification from the State Govt. and Integrated Regional Office for appropriate decision.

4. The conditional transfer of CA land in favour of Forest Department as approved by the Govt. of West Bengal vide their Memos No.1136-GE(M)/2L-358/17 dated 29.03.2018, No.1137-GE(M)/2L-13/18 dated 29.03.2018 and No.2232-GE(M)/2L-358/17 dated 22.06.2018 is not acceptable in accordance with provisions of FCA,1980 and guidelines thereof, as the equivalent non-forest land for compensatory afforestation has to be transferred and notified as RF/PF before Stage II approval.

5. The copy of minutes of the meeting wherein R&R plan approved is not given. Thus, the status of R& R plan is not clear.

In view of above, Govt. of West Bengal is requested to kindly review the proposal and CA sites with the help of DSS tool and submit with detailed clarification/information/documents on the points indicated above for further consideration of the proposal.

Yours faithfully,

Encl.as above.

Sd/-

(Sandeep Sharma)

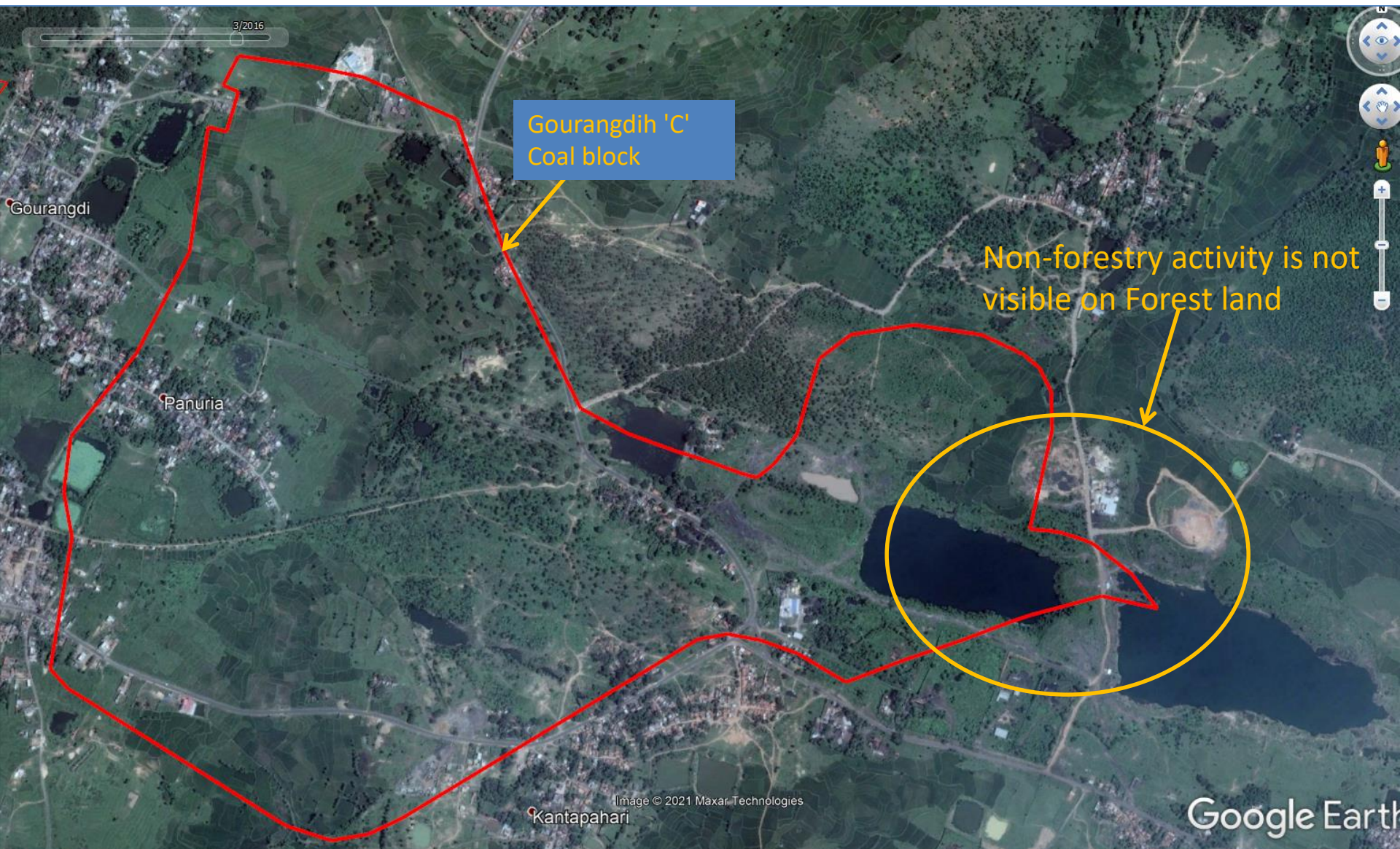
Assistant Inspector General of Forests (FC)

Copy to:

1. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Government of West Bengal, Kolkata.
2. The Nodal Officer (FCA), O/o the PCCF, Government of West Bengal, Kolkata.
3. Dy. Director General (Central), Integrated Regional Office, Kolkata-**with a request to kindly see the observation of the Ministry as mentioned above and visit the site proposed for diversion and thereafter submit detailed report for further action.**

4. Monitoring Cell of FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi.
5. Guard file.

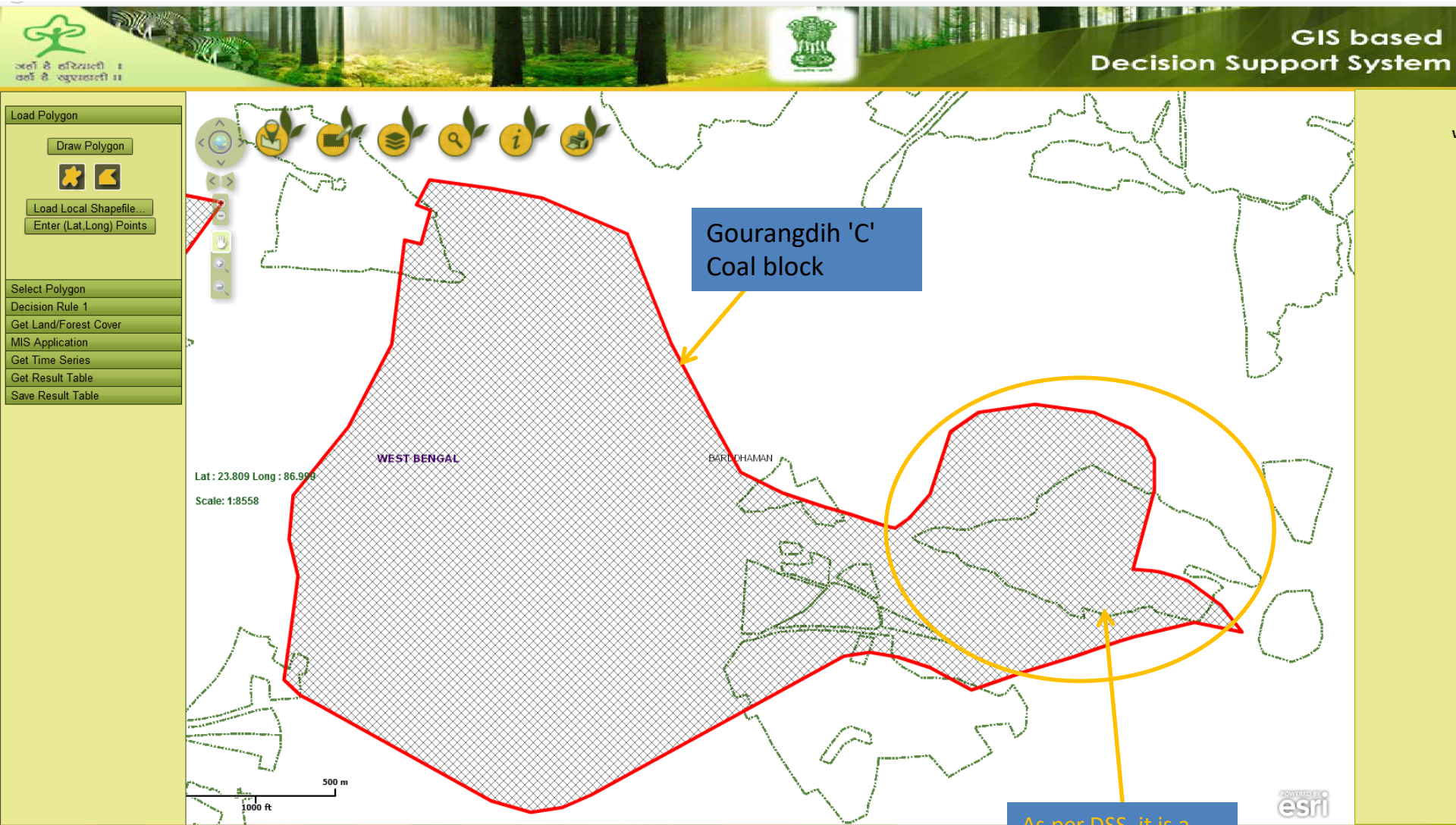
Google Imagery dated 07.09.2015 showing the Non-forestry activity on the eastern boundary of Gourangdih 'C' Coal block



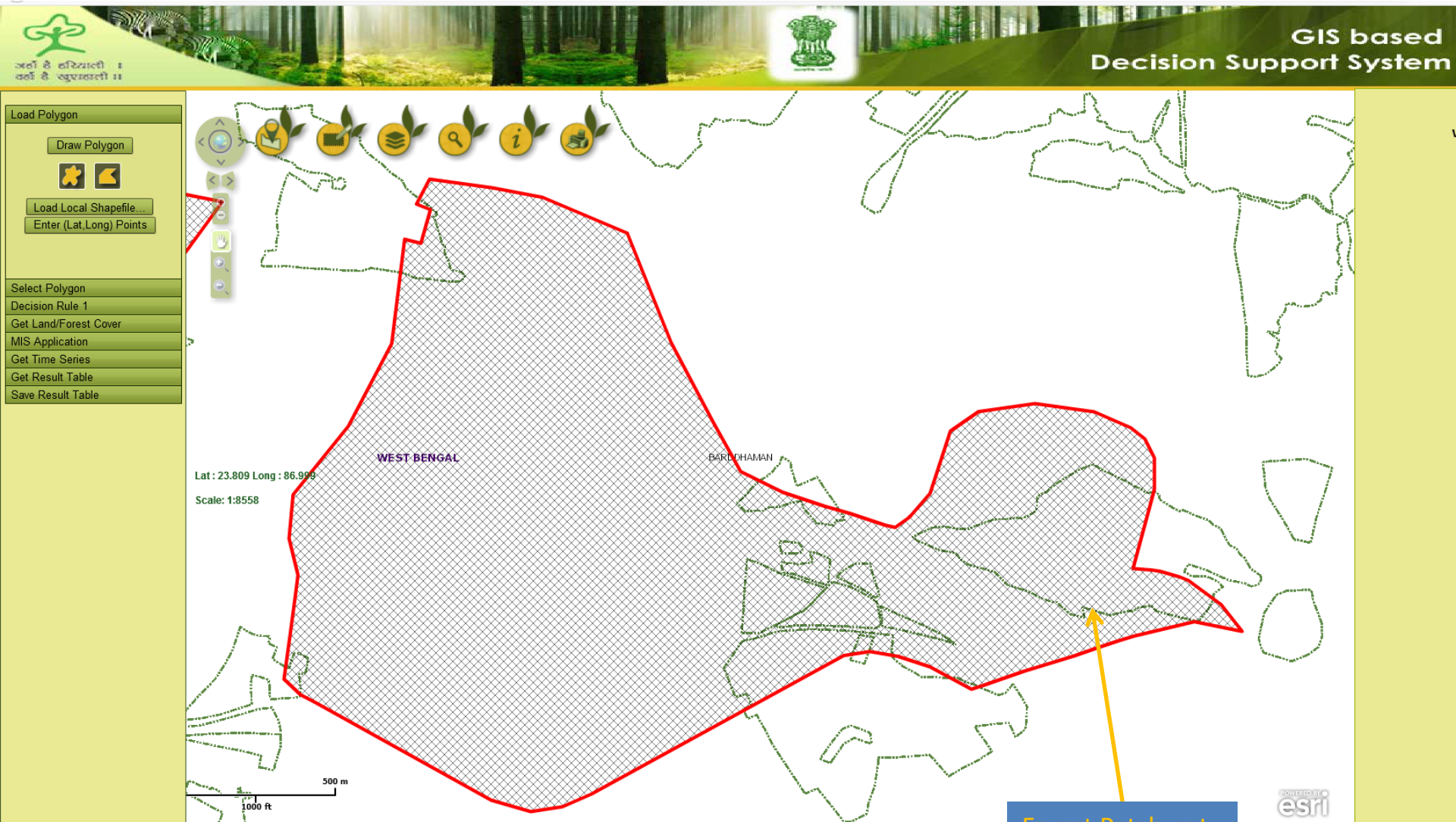
Google Imagery dated 06.11.2020 showing the Non-forestry activity on the eastern boundary of Gourangdih 'C' Coal block



DSS Map showing the presence of Forest land on the eastern boundary of Gourangdih 'C' Coal block

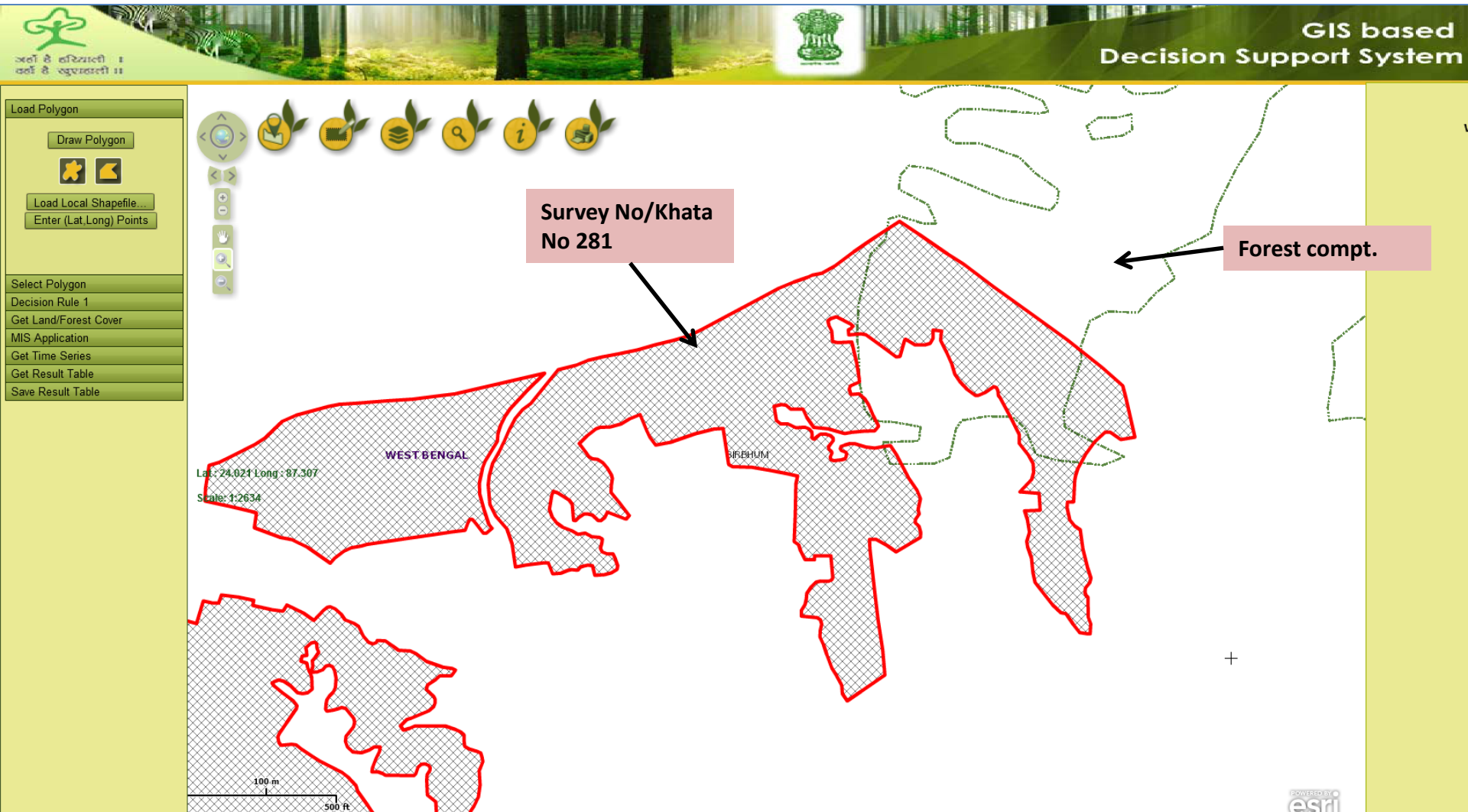


DSS Map showing the Forest Patch on the eastern boundary of Gourangdih 'C' Coal block not taken into consideration during the DGPS survey and thus left and does not become part of instant proposal

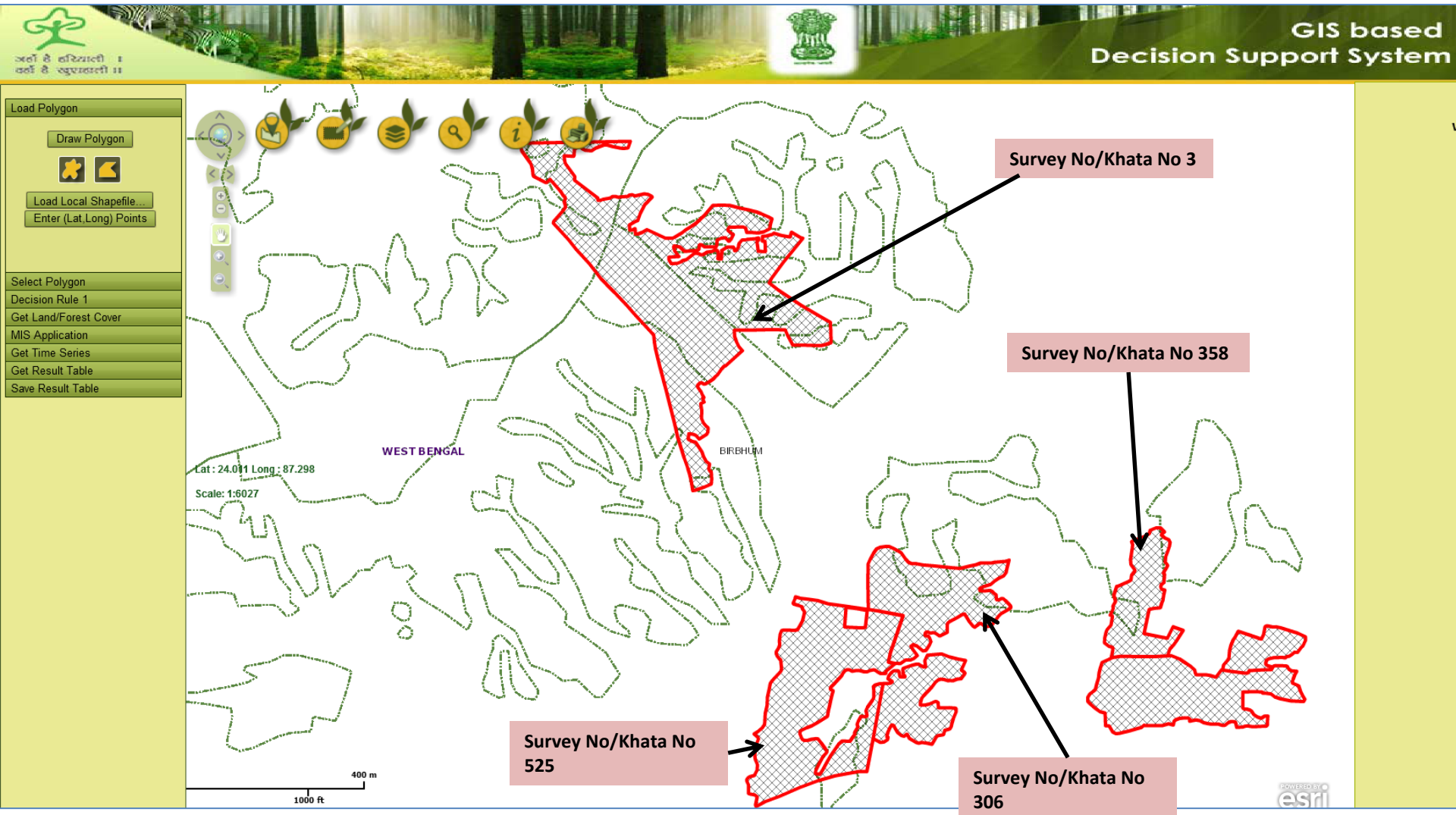


Forest Patch not taken into consideration

DSS Map Showing Part of Survey No/Khata No 281 falling on the Forest compartment boundary

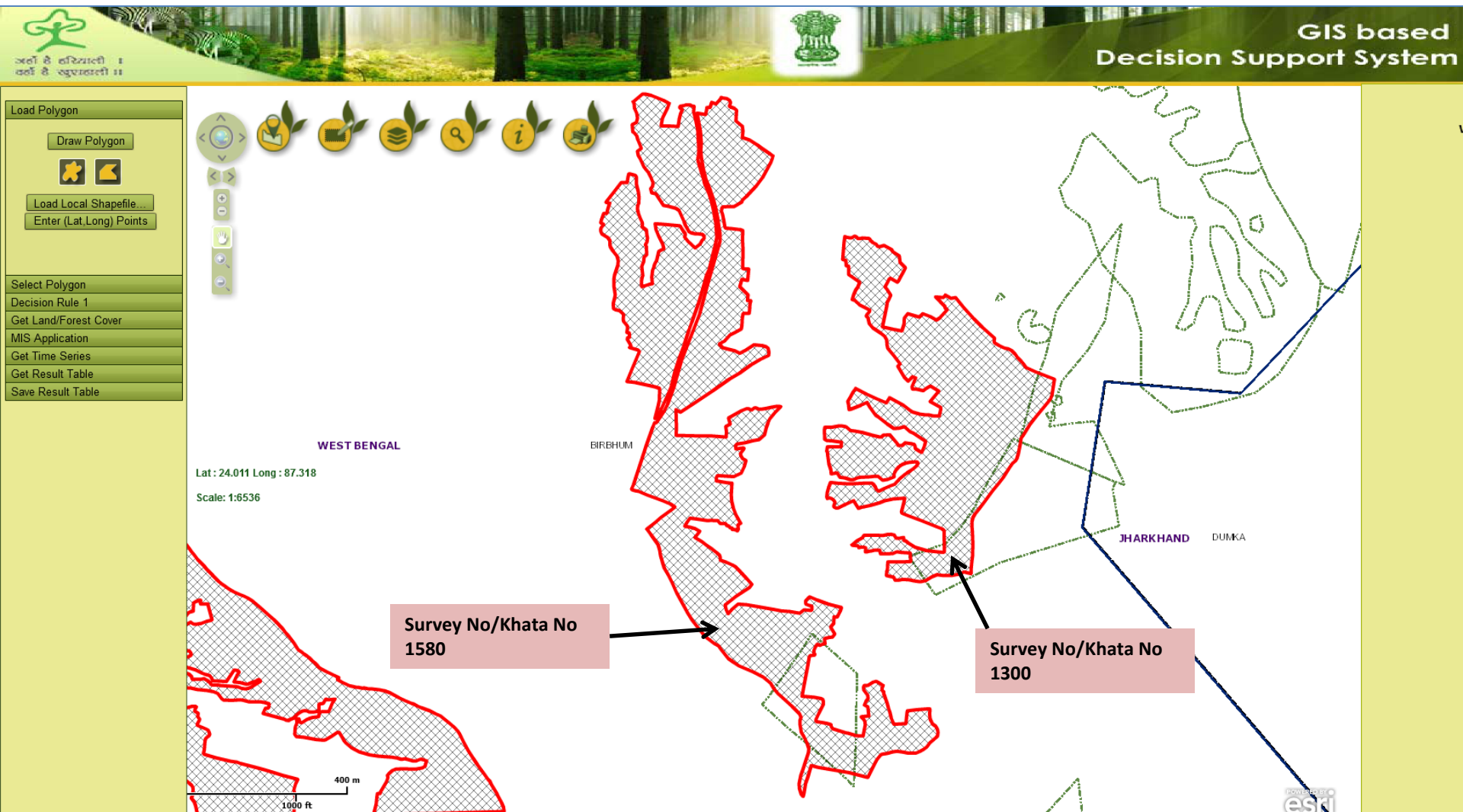


DSS Map Showing Part of Survey No/Khata No 03, 306, 525 and 358 are falling on the Forest compartment boundary



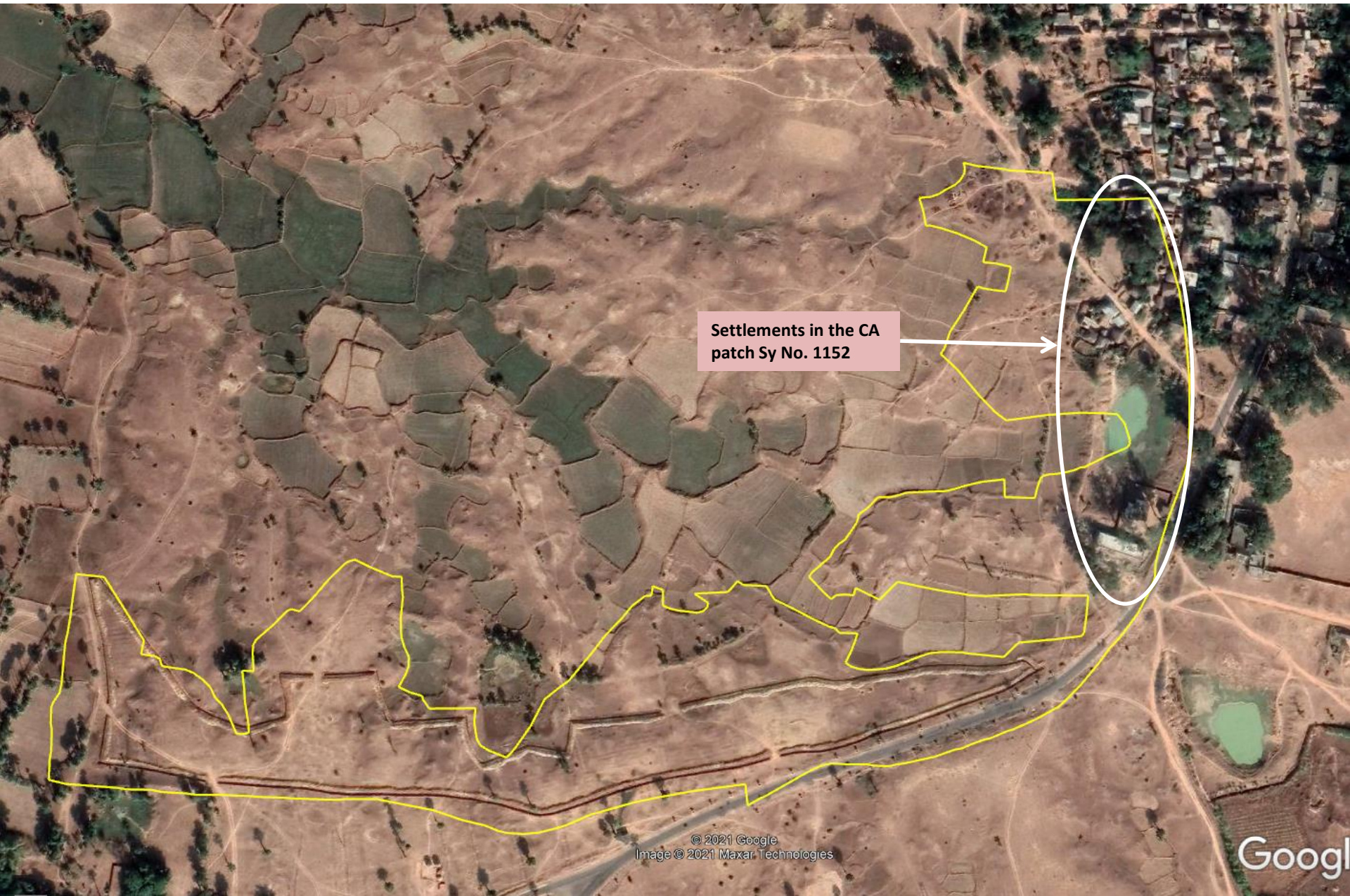
In above Map, Green lines shows the Forest Compartment Boundaries

DSS Map Showing Part of Survey No/Khata No 1580 and 1300 are falling on the Forest compartment boundary



In above Map, Green lines shows the Forest Compartment Boundaries

Google Imagery dated 05.01.2021 showing presence of Settlements inside CA patch having Survey No/Khata No. 1152



Settlements in the CA patch Sy No. 1152

Google Imagery dated 05.01.2021 showing Pre-Plantation operations inside CA patch having Survey No/Khata No. 561

