



5-ORA497/2022-BHU

1st March, 2022

To

The Addl. Director General of Forests (FC),  
Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change,  
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,  
Jor Bagh Road, Aliganj,  
New Delhi - 110 003.

Sub: Diversion of 417.073 ha & Re-diversion (Change of land use) of 171.774 ha of forest land in respect of Integrated Lakhanpur-Belpahar-Lilari Opencast Project of Lakhanpur Area, Mahanadi Coalfields Ltd.

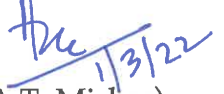
Ref: Ministry's letter No.8-280/1989-FC Vol. dated 29.12.2021.

Sir,

With subject and reference cited above, I am to inform that the site inspection of the above mentioned project site was carried out by the undersigned along with DFO, Jharsuguda and representative of MCL on 04.02.2022. Similarly, the compensatory afforestation site was inspected by the undersigned along with DFO, Keonjhar and representative of MCL on 26.02.2022. The site inspection report is attached herewith for favour of kind information and necessary action.

Encl: As state above.

Yours faithfully,

  
1/3/22

(A.T. Mishra)

Dy. Director General of Forests (C)

**SITE INSPECTION REPORT IN RESPECT OF DIVERSION 417.073 HA AND RE-DIVERSION (CHANGE OF LAND USE) OF 171.774 HA FOREST LAND FOR INTEGRATED LAKHANPUR-BELPAHAR-LILARI OPENCAST PROJECT OF LAKHANPUR AREA, MAHANADI COALFIELDS LTD.**

The site inspection of the above project was carried out by the undersigned on 04.02.2022 along with DFO, Jharsuguda and representatives from MCL, Lakhanpur.

**1. Legal status of the forest land proposed for diversion:**

As reported by State Govt., legal status of the forest land is as below:

Legal Status	Fresh forest land proposed for diversion (in ha)	Re-diversion (Change of land use) (in ha)	Total (in ha)
Revenue Forest	339.176	146.787	485.963
Reserved Forest	77.897	24.987	102.884
Total	417.073	171.774	588.847

**2. Item-wise break-up details of the forest land proposed for diversion.**

The item wise break up as proposed for diversion is as below:

Sl. No.	Purpose/item	Fresh forest land proposed for diversion (in ha)	Re-diversion (Change of land use) (in ha)	Total (in ha)
1.	Mining	315.055	165.878	480.933
2.	Infrastructure (*)	28.636	0	28.636
3.	7.5 Safety Zone	5.395	0.959	6.354
4.	Area for Green Belt	67.987	0	67.987
5.	Temporary Top soil yard	0	4.937	4.937
	Total	417.073	171.774	588.847

(\*) Total 28.636 ha is for Railway infrastructure.

**3. Whether proposal involves any construction of buildings (including residential) or not. If yes, details thereof:**

No.

**4. Total cost of the project at present rates:**

As reported by the State Govt., the estimated cost of the project is reported to be Rs.243475 Lakhs.

## 5. Wildlife:

As per Site Inspection Report of RCCF, Sambalpur Circle, wild animals like Hare, Fruit bat, Rhesus Macque, Langur, Indian Pangolin, Indian wolf, Fox Indian otter, Indian Grey Mongoose, Asiatic jackal, Jungle cat, Wild boar, Barking deer, Spotted deer, Striped hyena, Palm squirrel, Indian bush rat, Little Indian field mouse. As ascertained from local staff and villagers, Leopard use to visit occasionally. As reported by the DFO, Jharsuguda Forest Division, no rare/ endangered/ unique species of flora and fauna found in the area. But, occasional movement of Indian Pangolin and Asiatic elephant is noticed in the locality.

### **Whether forest area proposed for diversion is important from wildlife point of view or not:**

The DFO, Jharsuguda Forest Division has reported that the applied area does not form a part of any National Park/ Wildlife Sanctuary/ Biosphere Reserve/ Tiger Reserve/ Elephant Corridor. There is no rare/ endangered/ unique species of flora and fauna in the forest area proposed for diversion. It was also reported that the proposed site for the project does not come under eco-sensitive zone of any protected area.

## 6. Vegetation:

The forests of the proposed site is very dense forest. As reported by the DFO, Jharsuguda the canopy density of the forest growth is 0.55 and Eco-value Class-III.

### **(a) Total number of trees to be felled.**

As reported by the DFO, Jharsuguda Forest Division, total 1,27,111 Nos. of different trees have been enumerated, out of which 1,00,846 nos. over proposed area for diversion over 417.0732 ha and 26,265 nos. over proposed area for re-diversion (change of land use) over 171.774 ha.

### **Effect of removal of trees on the general ecosystem in the area:**

As there are large numbers of trees to be felled, it will affect the general ecosystem of the area. Trees should be felled in a phased manner to minimize the adverse impact on the eco-system.

### **(b) Important species:**

As per Site Inspection Report of RCCF, Sambalpur Circle, the tree species available in the applied area is Sal (*Shorea robusta*), Bija (*Pterocarpus marsupium*), Asan (*Terminalia tomentosa*), Dhaura (*Anogeissus latifolia*), Kashi (*Bridelia retusa*), Kendu (*Diospyrus melanoxylon*), Neem (*Azadirachta indica*), Sidha (*Lagerstroemia parviflora*), Achhu (*Morinda tinctoria*), Bahada

(*Terminalia belerica*), Bheluan (*Semicarpusana cardium*), Bheru (*Chloroxylon swietenia*), Chakunda (*Cassia siamea*), Char (*Buchanania lanzan*), Domkurdu (*Gardenia latifolia*), Gad khair (*Acacia lenticularis*), Harida (*Terminalia chebula*), Jamun (*Syzizium cumuni*), Kanteikoli (*Zizyphus oenplia*), Karla (*Cleistenthus colinus*), Karma (*Dellina aurea*), Kumbhi (*Cereya arborea*), Kurdu (*Gardenia lucida*), Mahul (*Madhuca indica*), Mai (*Lannea coromandelica*), Phalsa (*Butea monosperma*), Rohini (*Soymami dafibrifuga*), Sunari (*Cassia fistula*) etc.

## **7. Background note on the proposal:**

As reported, by the Govt. of Odisha Lakhanpur Area is under the administrative control of Mahanadi Coalfields Limited, a coal producing company under Coal India Ltd. a Govt. Company. The three operating mines of Lakhanpur Area, MCL are Lakhanpur OCP, Belpahar OCP and Lilari OCP are within Notified boundary of IB Block-II, IB Block-IV (Part-I) and IB Block-IV (Part-II) acquired under CBA (A&D) Act, 1957. Belpahar OCP was planned in Belpahar Block-I & II to exploit the lower seams (Ib and Rampur), whereas Lakhanpur OCP and Lilari OCP were planned further dip side in Belpahar Block-III to exploit upper Lajkura seam. Both the mines were planned for open cast mining. The lower seams (Ib and Rampur) below Lakhanpur OC and Lilari OC were not planned due to thick parting between Lajkura and Rampur seam resulting adverse economics.

In the present proposal, all the three mines have been proposed to be integrated into one mine within the same notified boundary of IB Block-II, IB Block-IV (Part-I) & Block-IV (Part-II) acquired under CBA (A&D) Act, 1957. Both the Ib and Rampur seams below Lakhanpur and Lilari OCP are virgin and were not planned earlier due to presence of thick parting between Lajkura and Rampur seam. Now, all the three mines have been planned to be integratd into one mine and planned upto the lower most workable coal seam for better conservation, safety and enhancing the capacity of the mine to meet the growing coal demand of MCL and also to add life to the project. Further new coal linkages have been given to MCL for which MCL has already issued LOA. The proposed integrated project will meet the coal demand from the coalfield, especially to the new consumers and reduce the gap between demand and availability. The three mines are adjacent to each other and have common lease boundaries. The area involved in the project has been delineated in Topo Sheet No.F44R13 & F44R44 on R.F. 1 : 50,000 and bounded y latitude 21°42'12" – 21°47'20" N and longitude 83°48'00" – 83°52'41"E in the district of Jharsuguda, Odisha.

## **8. Compensatory afforestation:**

In lieu of 417.073 ha of forest land to be diverted, State Govt. has identified equivalent 417.073 ha of Revenue Non-forest land (Hudi Kissam) in village Sudanga of Banspal Tahasil under Keonjhar District of Keonjhar Forest Division. The DFO, Keonjhar has submitted the C.A. Scheme for Block plantation @ 1600 seedlings per ha over 170 ha and ANR plantation @ 400 seedlings per ha over 247.07 ha with 10 years maintenance. Thus a total 3,70,828 nos. of seedlings can be planted over 417.073 ha of proposed C.A. land. The C.A. Scheme has been technically approved by APCCF (Nodal), Odisha for a financial outlay of Rs.9,06,59,200/- at current wage rate of Rs.311/- per manday. To accommodate balance seedlings of 46,245 nos., State Govt. has identified 50 ha of degraded forest land in Chhitra RF under Bamra (WL) Division. The DFO, Bamra (WL) Division has submitted CA scheme to raise additional C.A. @ 1000 seedlings per over 50 ha with 10 years maintenance. The financial outlay of additional C.A. Scheme has been technically approved by APCCF (Nodal), Odisha for Rs.1,24,79,600/-. The user agency has furnished an undertaking to pay the entire amount of the cost of C.A. and Additional C.A. with the proposal.

The proposed C.A. land at Sudanga village was visited on 26.02.2022 along with DFO, Keonjhar and representative of MCL. It is in two patches. Both the patches are separated by a perennial nala. A part of the proposed land has vegetation where as a part is devoid of vegetation. Accordingly, for the blank area 1600 seedlings per ha scheme has been proposed. Similarly, for the patch with vegetation ANR with 400 seedlings per ha scheme has been proposed.

### **(a) Whether land for compensatory afforestation is suitable from plantation and management point of view or not:**

The DFO, Keonjhar has furnished suitability certificate of non-forest land identified for C.A. The DFO, Bamra (WL) Division has also furnished land suitability certificate for degraded forest land identified for additional C.A.

The compensatory afforestation site is found to be suitable for plantation.

### **(b) Whether land for compensatory afforestation is free from encroachment/other encumbrances:**

The Tahsildar, Banspal has certified that non-forest C.A. land is free from encroachment and encumbrances and not covered under DLC report.

### **(c) Whether land for compensatory afforestation is important from Religious/Archaeological point of view:**

It has been reported that the land for CA is not important from Religious/Archaeological point of view.

**(d) Land identified for raising compensatory afforestation is in how many patches, whether patches are compact or not:**

The non-forest land identified in village Sudanga unde Banspal Tahsil of Keonjhar District for raising compensatory afforestation is comprising 417.073 Ha in two patches and degraded forest land identified in Chhitra RF under Bamra (WL) Division for raising additional C.A. is in one patch.

**(e) Map with details:**

The DGPS map and SoI Toposheet indicating location of identified degraded forest land for C.A. has been submitted by the State Govt.

**(f) Total financial outlay:**

The DFO, Keonjhar has submitted the C.A. Scheme for Block plantation @ 1600 seedlings per ha over 170 ha and ANR plantation @ 400 seedlings per ha over 247.07 ha with 10 years maintenance. The C.A. Scheme has been technically approved by APCCF (Nodal), Odisha for a financial outlay of Rs.9,06,59,200/- at current wage rate of Rs.311/- per manday. Similarly, to accommodate balance seedlings of 46,245 nos., the DFO, Bamra (WL) Division has submitted CA scheme to raise additional C.A. @ 1000 seedlings per over 50 ha with 10 years maintenance. The financial outlay of additional C.A. Scheme has been technically approved by APCCF (Nodal), Odisha for Rs.1,24,79,600/-.

**9. Whether proposal involves violation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 or not. If yes, a detailed report on violation including action taken against the concerned officials:**

As reported by the RCCF, Sambalpur Circle, no violation has been committed by the user agency under Forest (Conservation) Act 1980.

**10. Whether proposal involves rehabilitation of displaced persons. If yes, whether rehabilitation plan has been prepared by the State Government or not:**

Yes. The State Govt. has reported that total 2554 no. of families are required to be displaced out of which 1363 nos. of families have resettled during the mining operation of Lakhanpur OCP, Belpahar OCP & Lilari OCP, balance will be resettled during the assessment of village in due operation/ advancement of the project. Four nos. of Resettlement site i.e. Ganesh Nagar (20.77 Ac), Jagannath Nagar (39.17 Ac), Khadam (58.52 Ac) in Khadam Revenue village and Kadalimunda (3.75 Ac) in Belpahar Municipal Area are already been developed for resettlement of the displaced families. Further Chaurimahul Resettlement Site for an area of 100.85 Ac has been approved by Govt. of Odisha and Lease deed agreement with Collector, Jharsuguda executed and to be developed for Resettlement of balance displaced families

of Lakhanpur-Belpahar-Lilari Integrated OCP, 40 Mty. R&R plan approved by Collector, Jharsuguda has been furnished with the proposal.

**11. Reclamation plan:**

The State Govt. has reported that the Mining Plan & Mine Closure Plan for Integrated Lakhanpur-Belpahar- Lilari OCP, 40 MTY has been approved by MCL Board vide letter No.SBL/SBP/CS/BD-205/Exct/2018/266 dated 31.10.2018. The copy of the mining plan and mine closure plan has been submitted. Further, the user agency has submitted details of Reclamation Plan & Phased Reclamation Plan of Integrated Lakhanpur-Belpahar-Lilari OCP with the proposal.

As per the submitted Mining Plan, the reclamation work is proposed to be done progressively and concurrently with mining operation.

**12. Details on catchment and command area under the project:**

During site inspection it was found that one perennial nala named Lilalri flows in the proposed site. The representative from MCL present during inspection said that there are coal deposits under the nala and this nala is also within the Mining Plan. They said that as per the plan after 20 years from the beginning of the project the area in and around nala will be taken for mining. The nala will be realigned at the outer side of the lease area without sacrificing its flow. The nala will join the Hirakud dam as it drains water to Hirakud dam now.

It is very important to stabilize the banks to avoid siltation and flood. At the same time it is essential to ensure that no discharge from the mining site enters to the natural nala.

**13. Cost benefit ratio:**

As reported, the estimated cost and benefit of forest diversion is calculated as per guidelines of MoEF&CC, comes to as Rs.263,97,72,665/- and Rs.27228,19,64,362/- respectively. The C-B Ratio is 1 : 103.

**14. Recommendations of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests/State Government:**

The forest area proposed for diversion has been duly recommended by PCCF.

**15. Utility of the project:**

As reported by the user agency, the project will generate permanent employment to 5989 persons and temporary employment of 19,07,58,855 person days.

**Numbers of Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes to be benefited by the project:**

Not reported.



**16.**

**(a) Whether land being diverted has any socio-cultural/ religious value:**

Not reported.

**(b) Whether any sacred grove or very old growth trees/forests exist in the areas proposed for diversion:**

Not reported.

**(c) Whether the land under diversion forms part of any unique eco-system:**

As reported, there is no Archaeological/ Heritage/ Defence establishment or any other important monuments located in the area.

**17. Situation with respect to any Protected Area:**

During site inspection, DFO, Jharsuguda and project proponent have said that the nearest protected area is Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary, which is about 18 kms from the project site and the sanctuary is in the opposite side of the Hirakud Reservoir.

**18. Any other information relating to the project:**

**Photographs of proposed site for diversion is attached below (4):**





**Photographs of proposed CA Site is attached below (4):**



**19. Recommendations of Dy. Director General of Forests (Central) along with detailed reasons:**

1. The instant proposal is for fresh diversion of 417.073 ha of forest land and re-diversion of 171.774 ha forest land (out of 541.622 ha of already diverted forest land). The fresh diversion of 417.073 ha of forest land comprises of 339.551 ha of Revenue Forest land and 77.897 ha of Reserved Forest land.
2. The proposed site does not come under any Protected Area or within the Eco-Sensitive Zone. The nearest P.A. is Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary, which is about 18 kms from the project site and the sanctuary is in the opposite side of the Hirakud Reservoir. To mitigate the impact of mining on wild animals, Wildlife Conservation Plan has been proposed.
3. This proposal will involve rehabilitation and resettlement of families. Rehabilitation and Resettlement plan has been prepared and approved by Collector, Jharsuguda.
4. The number of trees to be felled is large. To minimize the adverse ecological impact, trees should be felled in a phased manner and when become absolutely necessary.

5. The Lilari nala drains water to Hirakud dam. The mining project will affect the catchment of Lilari nala. So there is a need for soil and moisture conservation measures in the rest catchment of this nala and the forest lands in and around the proposed site.
6. This diversion proposal is for mining of coal, which is site specific. The user agency has identified equal area i.e. 417.073 ha of Revenue non-forest land for raising Compensatory Afforestation.

In view of the above, the proposal may be considered for approval under provisions of FC Act, 1980 subject to compliance of other general conditions and observation made during site inspection.

  
(A.T. MISHRA)  
DDGF (CENTRAL)

