

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bag Road, Aliganj,
New Delhi - 110003.

Dated: 5th July, 2023

To,

The Principal Secretary (Forests),
Department of Forest and Environment,
Government of Himachal Pradesh,
Shimla.

Subject: Diversion of 7.3722 ha of forest land as additional forest land requirement in already approved diversion in favour of Shongtong Karchham Hydro Electric Project, HPPCL under the jurisdiction of Kinnaur Forest Division, Distt. Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh (Online Proposal No. FP/HP/HYD/40611/2019)- regarding.

I am directed to refer to the Nodal Officer-cum-APCCF (FCA), Government of Himachal Pradesh's letter No. Ft. 48-4019/2019 (FCA) dated 16.06.2023 submitting certain information in pursuance of this Ministry's letter of even number dated 19.05.2023. The monitoring of conditions stipulated in approval for this instant proposal has been carried out by the Sub-Office of this Ministry, Chandigarh Shimla and furnished their report vide letter No. 14-3/IRO/Site Inspection/2021/1/229 dated 27.06.2023. After examination of the response of State Government with Monitoring Report of SO Shimla and DSS report the following points emerged:

- i. From the monitoring report done by Sub-office (SO), Shimla, it is noticed that out of 08 sites for 128 ha, no plantation work has been started in 4 sites i.e., C-169, C-170, C-172, C-241, and nil survival percentage was recorded in C-176. In addition, the CA site provided by State Govt. is not matching with Plantation General of the particular CA sites. This needs clarification with justification and detail report.
- ii. With regard to Catchment Area Treatment (CAT) Plan, the Nodal Officer(FCA) informed that the utilization/ implementation of CAT plan is Rs. 41,06,94,500 against deposited fund of Rs. 60,40,00,000 for the CAT plan of Shongtong Karchham HEP whereas SO Shimla mentioned in their monitoring report that against the outlay of Rs. 701.95 million for Catchment Area Treatment (CAT) Plan, Rs. 604.4 million has only been deposited in CAMPA account with utilization of Rs. 50.07 lakhs. Therefore, the reason for non-depositing of balance approved amount of CAT plan along-with poor implementation of CAT plan shall be required.
- iii. There is a mismatch in dumping sites (DS). As per the component wise breakup provided by User Agency, there are 5 dumping sites whereas 8 number of dumping sites found during site inspection by Sub-office of this Ministry, Shimla. Moreover the muck is not being carried out in the designated site of DS-4. Some quantity of muck has been dumped opposite to DS-4 on the other site of the highway of the bank of river.
- iv. It is mentioned in the monitoring report of SO Shimla that the muck disposable capacity of the sites have reduced drastically due to change in course of river landslides nearby designated muck dumping of the project. It was further submitted by the proponent that a committee has been formed to assess the capacity of all the designated dumping sites

and the revised muck management plan will be finalized after finalization of land and the same shall be submitted for approval to MoEF&CC. The revised approved muck management plan need to be submitted before consideration of the instant proposal.

- v. The condition no. 8 of forest clearance approval dated 14.11.2012 which states that *"the entire reservoir created due to submergence shall be declared Reserve Forest under Indian Forest Act. 1927 within six months"* has not yet been complied.
- vi. The condition no. 10 of forest clearance approval dated 14.11.2012 regarding green belt plantation has not yet been complied.
- vii. The river basin study on the impact of HEP's on the flora & fauna area in compliance to condition no. 11 of forest clearance approval dated 14.11.2012 has not yet been complied.
- viii. The user agency has now been provided the KML file of diverted forest area in polygon format. However, the total area of given KML is found 68.979 ha instead of 63.5015 ha. Moreover, in the said KML file, the dumping site namely 'Dumping Site-3' has been included which is a part of present diversion proposal. Therefore, it needs clarification whether the dumping site No. 3 was the part of earlier approved proposal and if so, why it is again being proposed for diversion. The correct KML file of 63.5015 ha may also be provided.
- ix. In the present proposal the KML file of Dumping site No. 3 has been uploaded comprising 3.115 ha forest land whereas in the component-wise break-up it is mentioned 1.447 ha . Therefore, the correct KML file based on the component wise breakup as shown in Part-I needs to be uploaded on PARIVESH.
- x. KML file of 8 dumping sites along with the status of land as per the latest monitoring report furnished by the SO, Shimla against Stage-II approval granted for 63.5015 ha forest land may also be furnished.
- xi. With regard to condition no. 15 regarding regeneration of equivalent area of degraded forest land, SO Shimla in the report has mentioned that the staff of Forest department was not present during the site inspection, which has been intimated by SO, Shimla to the State Govt. vide letter dated 09.05.2023. Due to this, the site regenerated could not be visited. The State shall submit a detailed report in this regard.

In view of above, Government of Himachal Pradesh is requested to furnish their response on the above observation for further consideration of the proposal in this Ministry.

Yours faithfully,

Sd/-
(Suneet Bhardwaj)
Assistant Inspector General of Forests

Copy to:

1. The Principal Chief Conservation of Forests, Government of Himachal Pradesh, Shimla.
2. Dy. Director General of Forests, Regional Office of MoEF&CC, Chandigarh
3. The Sub- Office of MoEF&CC, Shimla,
4. The Nodal Officer-cum-APCCF (FCA), Government of Himachal Pradesh, Shimla.

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5. User Agency.
6. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi.