



भारत सरकार/Government of India
पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय
Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change
क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, भुवनेश्वर/ Regional Office, Bhubaneswar
उप-कार्यालय, कोलकाता/ Sub-Office, Kolkata
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File No.FP/WB/Others/154900/2022 /242

Date: 1st January 2024

To,

The Addl. Chief Secretary,
Department of Forests,
Government of West Bengal,
Aranya Bhawan, Block-LA, 10-A, Sector – III,
Salt Lake City, Kolkata – 700106.

Sub: In-principle (Stage-I) approval of Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for non-forestry use of 12.5492 ha of forest land in favour of Essar Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Ltd. for drilling CBM Gas wells, construct approach road & laying pipeline under Burdwan and Durgapur Forest Division of West Bengal- reg.

Sir,

I am directed to refer to letter No.1591-For/O/L/10T-29/2022 dated 9.11.2022 & letter No.1185-For/O/L/10T-29/2022 dated 25.07.2023 of the State Government, West Bengal on the above-mentioned subject seeking prior approval of the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.

After due consideration of the proposal of the State Government & on the basis of the recommendations of the Regional Empowered Committee and with due approval of the competent authority, the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change hereby conveys '**Stage-I/in-principle**' approval for non-forestry use of 12.5492 ha of forest land in favour of Essar Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Ltd. for drilling CBM Gas wells, construct approach road & laying pipeline under Burdwan and Durgapur Forest Division of West Bengal subject to the following conditions and stipulations:

1. Legal status of forest land proposed for diversion shall remain unchanged.
2. The compensatory afforestation over suitable non-forest land, equal in extent to the forest land being diverted i.e. 12.5492 ha (Area – 6.41 ha, Site – Saldiha, Range – Kamalpur, Plot No.3066, 4587 & 4556 under

Bankura (South) Forest Division & Area – 6.1392 ha, Site – Dhatala, Range – Saltora, Plot No.1775 under Bankura (North) Forest Division), shall be raised by the State Forest Department at the cost of the User Agency and the work of compensatory afforestation shall start within two years of issue of order of diversion of forest land.


3. The non-forest land identified for raising Compensatory Afforestation shall be demarcated by concrete pillars of suitable size and handed over, free from all encumbrances to the State Forest Department and the same will be notified as protected forest under section 29 of Indian Forest Act, 1927 (16 of 1927) or under any other law for the time being in force before the Final/ Stage-II approval.
4. The User Agency shall transfer the cost of raising and maintaining the compensatory afforestation as per the approved CA Scheme at the current wage rate in consultation with State Forest Department in the account of CAMPA of the concerned State through online portal;
5. The cost of compensatory afforestation at the prevailing wage rates as per compensatory afforestation scheme and the cost survey, demarcation and erection of permanent pillars, if required on the CA land shall be deposited in advance with the Forest Department by the User Agency. The CA will be maintained for 10 years. The scheme may include afforestation of indigenous species with appropriate provision for anticipated cost increase for works scheduled for subsequent years.
6. The State Government shall charge the Net Present Value (NPV) for the 12.5492 ha forest area to be diverted under this proposal from the User Agency in accordance with the MoEF&CC's guidelines dated 6.01.2022 read with guidelines dated 19.01.2022.
7. At the time of payment of 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.
8. The cost of the Soil Moisture Conservation Plan and Wildlife Conservation Plan shall be deposited by the User Agency and implemented by the State Forest Department.
9. All the funds received from the user agency under the project shall be transferred / deposited to CAMPA fund only through **e-portal** (<https://parivesh.nic.in>).

10. The complete compliance of the FRA, 2006 shall be ensured by way of prescribed certificate from the concerned District Collector.
11. The boundary of the diverted forest land shall be suitably demarcated on ground at the project cost, as per the directions of the concerned Divisional Forest Officer.
12. Any tree felling shall be done only when it is unavoidable and that too under strict supervision of the State Forest Department.
13. Wherever possible and technically feasible, the User Agency shall undertake appropriate afforestation or vegetation enrichment measures near the site(s) related to the area diverted under this approval, in consultation with the State Forest Department at the project cost. The User Agency shall keep the unused area green by protection and plantation or greening activities as admissible and technically feasible.
14. The State Government shall ensure that the User Agency shall take necessary measures to prevent fire hazards, fire extinguishers shall be provided as per the recommended scale during drilling and work-over operations.
15. The State Government shall ensure that the User Agency shall implement emergency response plan through trained staff for effective implementation of fire prevention and protection.
16. The State Government shall ensure that the User Agency shall ensure that all well pads are securely fenced to prevent unauthorized entry/ animals.
17. The Plan for treatment of the effluent water generated due to pumping out of the underground water along with the Methane should be strictly implemented by the User Agency
18. The User Agency shall obtain the amended Environmental Clearance as per the provisions of the Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986.
19. The lay out plan of the proposal shall not be changed without prior approval of the Central Government.
20. (a) The User Agency shall ensure that the labourers and staff engaged in construction activity do not damage the nearby forest flora and fauna.

- (b) Earth or any other material shall not be brought from and debris resulting during construction shall not be disposed of in the adjoining forest area by the user agency.
- (c) No labour camp shall be established on the forest land.
- (d) The User Agency shall provide alternate fuels preferably LPG to the labourers and the staff working at the site so as to avoid any damage and pressure on the nearby forest areas.
- (e) All the natural streams and water bodies in surrounding area shall be protected.
- (f) Proper soil and moisture conservation measures shall be taken up by the User Agency while using forest land for these purposes.
21. (a) The forest land shall not be used for any purpose other than that specified in the Project proposal.
- (b) The period of diversion under this approval shall be co-terminus with the period of the temporary use of the land.
- (c) The forest land proposed to be diverted shall under no circumstances be transferred to any other agencies, department or person without prior approval of Central Government.
22. Violation of any of these conditions will amount to violation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and action would be taken as prescribed in para 1.21 of Chapter 1 of the Handbook of Comprehensive Guidelines of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 as issued by this Ministry's letter No.5-2/2017-FC dated 28.03.2019.
23. Any other conditions that the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate change may stipulate from time to time in the interest of conservation, protection and development of forest and wildlife.
24. The compliance report shall be uploaded on *e-portal* (<https://parivesh.nic.in>).

After receipt of the compliance report from the State Government regarding due compliance and fulfillment of the above conditions as stipulations, formal approval will be issued in this regard under Section 2 of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. **Transfer of forest land by the State Government to the user agency should not be given effect to till formal order approving diversion of forest land is issued by the Central Government.**

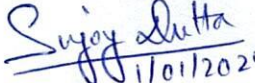
Yours Sincerely,


11/01/2024
(Sujoy Dutta)

Assistant Commissioner (F)

Copy to:-

1. The DIGF(ROHQ), Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, Jor Bagh Road, New Delhi – 110 003.
2. The APCCF cum Nodal Officer (FCA), Department of Forest, Government of West Bengal, Aranya Bhawan, Salt Lake City, Kolkata, 700106.
3. The Divisional Forest Officer, Burdwan & Durgapur Forest Division, West Bengal.
4. The Vice President, Main Compressor Station (MCS), Village & PO Malandighi-Harki Road, Paschim Bardhaman - 713212.
5. Guard file.


11/01/2024

Assistant Commissioner (F)