



No. 3- SK B 066/2018-SHI/52

18th March 2021

To

**The Principal Secretary-cum-PCCF,
Forest and Environment Department
Forest Secretariat, Deorali,
Gangtok-737102**

Sub: In-principle (Stage-I) approval of Central Government under Forest (Conservation) Act 1980 for Diversion of 1.3344 ha of forest land for construction of Rural Connectivity Road from PWD Road to Rongbul in South District of Sikkim by Rural Management & Development Department, Govt. of Sikkim

Sir,

This refers to letter letter No. 1755/FCA/FE&ED/993 dated 25.02.2021 of the State Government, Sikkim on the above mentioned subject seeking prior approval of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change under section 2 of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

After due consideration of the proposal of the State Government, the “**In-principle**” approval of Central Government, is hereby conveyed for diversion of 1.3344 ha of forest land in favour of Rural Management and Development Department for construction of rural connectivity road from PWD Road to Rongbul in South District of Sikkim, subject to the following conditions and stipulations.

A: Conditions which need to be complied prior to handing over of forest land by the State Forest Department.

- (1) The cost of compensatory afforestation on the CA land at the prevailing wage rates as per compensatory afforestation scheme (including the cost of survey, demarcation and erection of permanent pillars etc. as required for securing the land against encroachment) shall be deposited in advance with the State Forest Department by the project authority. The CA will be maintained for 10 years. The scheme may include appropriate provision for anticipated cost increase for works scheduled for subsequent years.

- (2) The State Government shall charge the Net Present Value (NPV) for the 1.3344 ha forest area to be diverted under this proposal from the User Agency as per the order of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India dated 30/10/2002, 01/08/2003, 28/03/2008, 24/04/2008 and 09/05/2008 in IA No. 566 in WP (C) No. 202/1995 and as per the guidelines issued by the Ministry vide letters No. 5-1/1998-FC (Pt.II) dated 18/09/2003, as well as letter No. 5-2/2006-FC dated 03/10/2006 and 5-3/2007-FC dated 05/02/2009 in this regard.
- (3) 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/>).
- (4) The User Agency should submit a suitable Wildlife Management Plan to mitigate the effects of the project for birds and other wildlife before the issuance of Stage-II approval. The cost of implementation of the provisions of the *Wildlife Management Plan* shall also be borne by the User Agency.
- (5) The complete compliance of the FRA, 2006 shall be ensured by way of prescribed certificate from the concerned District Collector.
- (6) 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.

B: Conditions which need to be strictly complied on field after handing over of forest land to the User Agency by the State Forest Department but the compliance in form of undertaking shall be submitted prior to Stage-II approval:

- (1) Legal status of the forest land shall remain unchanged.
- (2) Compensatory afforestation shall be taken up by the Forest Department over 2.6688 ha. degraded forest land at Sadam RF under Namchi Range (T) in South (T). Forest Division at the cost of the user agency. As far as possible, a mixture of local native species shall be planted and monoculture of any species, especially non-native species should be avoided.
- (3) Additional amount of the NPV of the diverted forest land, if any, becoming due after finalization of the same by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India on receipt of the report from the Expert Committee, shall also be charged by the State

Government from the User Agency. The User Agency shall furnish an undertaking to this effect.

- (4) User Agency shall restrict the felling of trees to minimum number in the diverted forest land and the trees shall be felled under the strict supervision of the State Forest Department and the cost of felling of trees shall be deposited by the User Agency with the State Forest Department.
- (5) Wherever possible and technically feasible, the User Agency shall in consultation with SFD undertake appropriate afforestation/ vegetation enrichment measures all around the site related to the area diverted under this approval, at the project cost.
- (6) 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.
- (7) The User Agency shall raise strip plantation on both sides of the road as per the IRC norms.
- (8) The layout plan of the proposal shall not be changed without prior approval of Central Government.
- (9) (a) No labour camp shall be established on the forest land.
(b) 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.
- (10) The period of diversion under this approval shall be co-terminus with the period of the project life.
- (11) (a) The forest land shall not be used for any purpose other than that specified in the project proposal.
(b) 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.
- (12) Any other condition that the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change may stipulate from time to time in the interest of conservation, protection and development of forest & wildlife.
- (13) The compliance report shall be uploaded on e-portal (<https://parivesh.nic.in/>).

2. After receipt of the compliance report regarding fulfillment of the conditions as stipulated above, from the State Government, formal approval will be issued in this regard under Section 2 of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. Transfer of forest land to user agency should not be given effect to by the State Government till formal order approving diversion of forest land is issued by the Central Government. To facilitate speedy execution of this project involving rural connectivity road the in-principle approval may be deemed as the permission for commencement of works, if the required funds for CA, NPV and other compensatory levies specified in the in-principle approval are realized from the user agency and accordingly the State Government, by passing an order, may allow the commencement of work of the linear project in forest land for a period of one year (The detail guideline issued vide Ministry letter No. 11-306/2014-FC, dated 28.08.2015 may be referred).

Yours faithfully,
S.M. Mohapatra
(Subrat Mohapatra) 8/3/21
Inspector General of Forest

Copy to:-

1. The Director, RO(HQ), Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, Jor Bagh Road, New Delhi – 110 003.
2. Additional Chief Secretary-cum-PCCF, Forest and Environment Department, Forest Secretariat Deorali, Gangtok-737102.
3. Chief Engineer-I, Rural Development Department, Govt. of Sikkim, Gangtok, Sikkim -737101.
4. Guard File.