

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

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**Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,**  
Jor Bag Road, Aliganj,  
New Delhi – 110003  
**Dated: 24.09.2024**

To,

**The Principal Secretary (Forests),**  
Government of Madhya Pradesh,  
Bhopal.

**Subject: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 1397.54 ha forest land out of which 1335.35 ha Reserved forest land (RF) in various forest compartments and 62.19 ha Revenue forest in various Khasra's of Forest Range Waidhan/ Sarai East for Open Cast Dhirauli Coal Mine Project in favour of M/s Stratatech Mineral Resources Private Limited under Singrauli Forest Division, Singrauli District of Madhya Pradesh State (Online No. FP/MP/MIN/142344/2021) - regarding.**

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer the APCCF (LM) and Nodal Officer, Government of Madhya Pradesh letter No. F-1/845/2023/10-11/492 dated 22.01.2024 on the above subject seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 and to say that the proposal has been examined by the Advisory Committee constituted by the Central Government under Section-3 of the aforesaid Act.

After careful examination of the proposal of the State Government & on the basis of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and with due approval of the competent authority, the Central Government hereby accords “**In-principle/Stage-I**” approval under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for diversion of 1397.54 ha forest land for Open Cast Dhirauli Coal Mine Project in favour of M/s Stratatech Mineral Resources Private Limited under Singrauli Forest Division, Singrauli District of Madhya Pradesh State subject to fulfilment of the following conditions:

- i. Legal status of the diverted forest land shall remain unchanged;
- ii. **Compensatory Afforestation:**
  - a. *Compensatory afforestation (CA) shall be done on identified land through artificial regeneration of Sal and planting of other native associates of Sal to restore the ecological services of the area. This should be achieved by planting of trees as well as by other measures of eco-restoration, e.g. soil &*

*water conservation and rain water harvesting. Sal and associates of Sal of at least 18 month old seedlings should be used in CA;*

- b. The non-forest land to be identified shall be transferred and mutated in favour of the State Forest Department and shall also be notified as RF/PF under IFA, 1927 or any state /local act before granting the Stage-II approval;
- c. The cost of compensatory afforestation at the prevailing wage rates as per compensatory afforestation scheme and the cost of 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;

iii. **Net Present Value:**

- a. The User Agency shall transfer the funds towards the cost of Net Present Value (NPV) of the forest land being diverted under this proposal in accordance with the MoEF&CC's guidelines dated 6.01.2022 read with guidelines dated 19.01.2022;
- b. At the time of payment of the 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;
- iv. *As per the component wise breakup, the total rationalized area is mentioned as 72.11 ha out of which 51.82 ha is forest land. In this regard the user agency shall submit an undertaking that the said forest land shall not be used for any non-site specific activity or additional infrastructure;*
- v. *The User Agency shall prepare a detailed mining plan for 40 years, linking the progress of mining and felling of the trees clearly. Felling of trees shall be done, when it is absolutely necessary in phase-wise manner in the areas which become due for mining as per mining plan;*
- vi. *The identified forest land for external OB dump shall be used judiciously by taking appropriate measures to check soil erosion in the area. Since this is non-coal bearing area, hence, after the initial use as OB dump, the entire area shall be reverted back to original by flattening and taking suitable measures including planting of native species;*
- vii. *A hydrological study for the entire area shall be prepared by reputed organisations like any IIT or NIT at the cost of User Agency. The Hardul Nala retraining work should be done as per the hydrological study and in consultation with water Resources Department.*
- viii. *Diversion of transmission line shall be done using a defined corridor with minimum centre to centre distance between the lines to economise need of*

*additional land;*

- ix. *A comprehensive wildlife mitigation plan shall be prepared by the State Govt. for the entire landscape. Although the project area is not part of any Elephant Corridor, but in view of its proximity to an elephant corridor and ESZ of a tiger reserve, the site-specific mitigation plan should be prepared for funding by user agency to avoid future conflicts;*
- x. *A Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) Plan shall be prepared and implemented before commencing mining operations in the area;*
- xi. *Catchment treatment plan should be prepared to compensate the loss of catchment to the small nalas and rivulets in and around the proposed mining lease;*
- xii. The State Government shall upload the KML files of the area under diversion and the accepted area for raising compensatory afforestation in the e-Green watch portal of FSI, before handing over forest land to the user agency;
- xiii. All the funds received from the user agency under the project shall be transferred/deposited in CAMPA account only through **e-portal** (<https://parivesh.nic.in/>); Amount deposited through other mode will not be accepted as compliance of the Stage-I clearance;
- xiv. The User Agency shall undertake mining in a phased manner after taking due care for reclamation of the mined over area. The concurrent Reclamation Plan as per the approved Mining Plan shall be executed by the User Agency from the very first year, and an annual report on implementation thereof shall be submitted to the Nodal Officer, Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980, in the concerned State Government and the concerned Regional Office of the Ministry. If it is found from the annual report that the activities indicated in the concurrent reclamation plan are not being executed by the User Agency, the Nodal Officer or the Chief Conservator of Forests (Central) may direct that the mining activities shall remain suspended till such time, such reclamation activities are satisfactorily executed.
- xv. The user agency shall prepare a schedule for surrender of the mined out and reclaimed forest land in accordance with existing mining plan and submit the same along with an undertaking to surrender the mined out and reclaimed forest land as per such schedule to the MoEF&CC before grant of 'Final' approval under the Adhinyam for diversion of the said forest land;
- xvi. The rehabilitated forest area after closure of mining operations shall be handed over to the State Forest Department for sustainable forest management in the future;
- xvii. Safety Zone Management: Following activities, at project cost, shall be undertaken by the user agency for the management of safety zone as per relevant guidelines issued by the Ministry's guidelines:

- a. User agency shall ensure demarcation of safety zone (7.5 meter strip all along the inner boundary of the mining lease area), and its fencing, protection and regeneration by erecting adequate number of 6 feet high RCC boundary pillars inscribed with DGPS coordinates with barbed wire fencing and deploying adequate number of watchers under the supervision of the. State Forest Department;
  - b. Boundary of the safety zone of the mining lease, adjacent to habitation/roads, should be properly fenced by the user agency;
  - c. Safety zone shall be maintained as green belt around mining lease and to ensure dense canopy in the area, regeneration shall be taken up in this area by the user agency at project cost under the supervision of the State Forest Department; and
  - d. The State Government and the user agency shall ensure that safety zone is maintained as per the prescribed norms;
- xviii. Following activities, as per approved plan / schemes, shall be undertaken in the lease area by the User Agency under the supervision of the State Forest Department:
- a. Mitigative measures to minimize soil erosion and choking of stream shall be implemented within a period of three year with effect from the issue of 'Final' approval in accordance with the approved Plan/Scheme in consultation with the State Forest Department;
  - b. Planting of adequate drought hardy plant species and sowing of seeds, in the appropriate area within the mining lease to arrest soil erosion in accordance with the approved Plan/scheme;
  - c. Construction of check dams, retention /toe walls to arrest sliding down of the excavated material along the contour in accordance with the approved Plan/Scheme;
  - d. Stabilize the overburden dumps by appropriate grading/benching, in accordance with the approved scheme, so as to ensure that angles of repose at any given place is less than 28<sup>o</sup>; and
  - e. (e) No damage shall be caused to the top-soil and the user agency will follow the top soil management plan.
- xix. The validity of approval granted under the Adhiniyam shall be for a period co-terminus with the validity of the mining lease proposed to be granted under the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, as amended from time to time or Rules framed there under, or for such period as may be specified by the Central Government;
- xx. The User Agency either himself or through the State Forest Department shall undertake gap planting and soil and moisture conservation activities to restock and rejuvenate the degraded open forests (having crown density less than 0.40), if any, located within the periphery of 100 m from outer perimeter of the mining lease as per approved plan for plantation and SMC activities submitted along with compliance of 'in-principle' approval;
- xxi. The User Agency shall regularly undertake desilting of village tanks and other water bodies, located within five km from the mine lease boundary, as per

- approved plan, to mitigate the impact of project on such tanks/water bodies;
- xxii. The User Agency shall comply with the Hon'ble Supreme Court order on re-grassing, and re-grass the mining area and any other areas which may have been disturbed due to mining to restore them to a condition which is fit for growth of fodder, flora, fauna, etc. in a timely manner;
  - xxiii. Adequate care shall be taken to check any rolling of overburden/dumps beyond the designated area and to check soil erosion caused due to mining activities;
  - xxiv. The user agency shall undertake de-silting of the village tanks and other water bodies located within five km from the mine lease boundary so as to mitigate the impact of siltation of such tanks/water bodies, whenever required;
  - xxv. The User agency will undertake comprehensive soil conservation measures at the project cost in consultation with the State Forest Department. A scheme of the same shall be submitted to the Regional Office along with the 'in-principle' approval; and
  - xxvi. Under no circumstances, approval granted for the use of forest land for underground mining, shall subsequently be converted to opencast mining operations.
  - xxvii. The R&R Plan shall be implemented as per the R&R Policy of State Government in consonance with National R&R Policy, Government of India before the commencement of the project work and implementation. The said R&R Plan will be monitored by the State Government/Regional Office of MoEF&CC along with indicators for monitoring and expected observable milestones;
  - xxviii. The user agency shall explore the possibility of translocation of maximum number of trees identified to be felled;
  - xxix. The cost of felling of trees shall be deposited by the User Agency with the State Forest Department;
  - xxx. The User Agency shall obtain the Environment Clearance as per the provisions of the Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986, if required;
  - xxxi. No labour camp shall be established on the forest land and the User Agency shall provide fuels preferably alternate fuels to the labourers and the staff working at the site so as to avoid any damage and pressure on the nearby forest areas;
  - xxxii. The boundary of the diverted forest land, mining lease and safety zone, as applicable, shall be demarcated on ground at the project cost, by erecting four feet high reinforced cement concrete pillars, each inscribed with its serial number, distance from pillar to pillar and GPS coordinates; The layout plan of the mining plan/ proposal shall not be changed without the prior approval of the Central Government and the forest land shall not be used for any purpose

other than that specified in the proposal;

- xxxiii. The forest land proposed to be diverted shall under no circumstances be transferred to any other agency, department or person without prior approval of the Central Government;
- xxxiv. No damage to the flora and fauna of the adjoining area shall be caused;
- xxxv. The user agency shall comply all the provisions of the all Acts, Rules, Regulations, Guidelines, Hon'ble Court Order (s) and NGT Order (s) pertaining to this project, if any, for the time being in force, as applicable to the project;
- xxxvi. The User Agency shall submit the annual self -compliance report in respect of the above stated conditions to the State Government, concerned Regional Office and to this Ministry by the end of March every year regularly;
- xxxvii. Any other condition that the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change may stipulate from time to time in the interest of conservation, protection and development of forests & wildlife shall be carried with by the State Government and user agency; and
- xxxviii. Violation of any of these conditions will amount to violation of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 and action would be taken as prescribed in para 1.16 of Chapter 1 of the Consolidated Guidelines and Clarifications on Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 as issued by this Ministry's letter dated 29.12.2023;
- xxxix. The compliance report shall be uploaded on **e-portal** (<https://parivesh.nic.in/>).

After receipt of compliance report on fulfillment of the conditions mentioned above, the proposal shall be considered for final approval under section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980. Transfer of forest land shall not be affected till final approval is granted by the Central Government in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

(Dr. Dheeraj Mittal)

**Assistant Inspector General of Forests**

**Copy to:**

1. The PCCF (HoFF), Department of Forest, Government of Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal;
2. The Dy. DGF (Central), Regional Office, MoEF&CC, Bhopal;
3. The Nodal Officer, Department of Forest Government of Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal;
4. User Agency;

5. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi for uploading on PARIVESH portal.