

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
 Jor Bagh Road, Aliganj,
 New Delhi: 1100 03,

Dated: September, 2023

To

The Additional Chief Secretary to Government,
 Forest, Ecology and Environment Deptt.,
 Government of Karnataka,
 Bangalore.

Sub: Proposal for diversion of 2.048 ha (4.25 ha. as per form A) of forest land in SM Block, Kumarswamy Range, Ballari District for approach road to ML No. 2313 in favour of M/s. JSW Steel Ltd. -regarding (Online Proposal No. FP/KA/ROAD/21842/2016). –regarding.

Sir,

I am directed to refer to the Government of Karnataka's letter No. FEE 77 FFM 2017 dated 11.01.2018 on the above mentioned subject, wherein prior approval of the Central Government for diversion of 2.048 ha (4.25 ha. as per form A) of forest land in SM Block, Kumarswamy Range, Ballari District for approach road to ML No. 2313 in favour of M/s. JSW Steel Ltd, in Bellary District of Karnataka, was sought in accordance with Section-2 (ii) of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. After careful consideration of the proposal by the Advisory Committee constituted under Section-3 of the said Act, ***In-principle /Stage-I approval*** for diversion of the said forest land was accorded by the Ministry vide its letter of even number dated 11th April, 2018 subject to fulfillment of certain conditions. The State Government has furnished compliance report in respect of the conditions stipulated in the Stage-I approval and has requested the Central Government to grant final approval.

2. In this connection, I am directed to say that on the basis of the compliance report furnished by the Government of Karnataka vide their letter No. FEE 77 FFM 2017 dated 30.09.2022, letter dated 21.04.2023 and letter dated 13.09.2023 ***Final /Stage – II approval*** of the Central Government is hereby granted under Section-2 (ii) of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of 2.048 ha (4.25 ha. as per form A) of forest land in SM Block, Kumarswamy Range, Ballari District for approach road to ML No. 2313 in favour of M/s. JSW Steel Ltd., in Bellary District of Karnataka, subject to the following conditions: -

- i. Legal status of the diverted forest land shall remain unchanged;
- ii. Forest land will be handed over only after required non-forest land for the project is handed over by the user agency;
- iii. The Compensatory afforestation over the non-forest land, equal in extent to the **2.48 ha.** of forest land being diverted shall be raised on identified land **[(Village of Belgal Sy. No.414/A, 0.73 ha, 414/B, 1.55 ha., 413/B, 0.73 ha) (Village of Baggalgudda 67 (Pt.) 0.879 ha)]** within a period of three years with effect from the date of issue of Stage-II clearance and maintained thereafter in accordance

- with the approved Plan by the State Forest Department at the project cost;
- iv. The non-forest land to be transferred and mutated in favour of the State Forest Department for raising Compensatory Afforestation [**Village of Belgal Sy. No.414/A, 0.73 ha, 414/B, 1.55 ha., 413/B, 0.73 ha (Village of Baggalgudda 67 (Pt.) 0.879 ha)**] shall be notified as Reserved Forest under Section-4 or Protected Forest under Section-29 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927 or under the relevant Section (s) of the local Forest Act within a period of six months from issue of this letter. The Nodal officer (FCA), Govt. of Karnataka shall report compliance in this regard;
 - v. The State Govt. shall ensure that the User Agency shall take necessary steps to fulfill the condition as laid down by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in judgment dated 21-03-2017 passed in IA No. 247 & other IAs in Writ Petition Civil No. 562/2009 have approved construction of conveyer belt system, railway sidings and railway sub-lines as the most significant step towards controlling the environmental pollution that has persisted on account of open movement of iron ore by road. Further the area being diverted for road will be reverted back to Forest Department once the conveyer belt-railway system is made operational.
 - vi. The user agency shall pay the additional amount of NPV, if so determined, as per the final decision of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India and transfer the same to the ad-hoc CAMPA under intimation to this Ministry;
 - vii. The period of diversion of the said forest land under this approval shall be for a period co-terminus with the period of the mining lease proposed to be granted under the Mines and Minerals (Development & Regulating) Act, 1957, as amended or Rules framed there under;
 - viii. The State Govt. shall ensure the complete compliance on FRA, 2006;
 - ix. The State Govt. shall ensure that the boundary of the diverted forest land, 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 co-ordinates;
 - x. The User Agency shall obtain the Environment Clearance as per the provisions of the Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986, if required;
 - xi. The State Govt. shall ensure that the forest land shall not be used for any purpose other than that specified in the proposal and under no circumstances be transferred to any other agency, department or person without obtaining prior approval of the Central Government;
 - xii. The User Agency shall restrict the felling of trees to minimum numbers in the diverted forest land and trees shall be felled under strict supervision of the State Forest Department;
 - xiii. User agency in consultation with the State Forest Department shall create and maintain alternate habitat/ home for the avifauna, whose nesting trees are to be cleared in this project. Bird nests artificially made out of eco-friendly materials shall be used in the area, including forest area and human settlements, adjoining the forest area being diverted for the project;
 - xiv. The layout plan of the proposal shall not be changed without prior approval of Central Government;
 - xv. No labour camps shall be set up inside the forest area. Labour management plan should be implement with emphasis that no labour camp be set up in the close vicinity of the eco-fragile and sensitive areas;
 - xvi. The Sufficient firewood, preferably the alternate fuel, shall be provided by the User Agency to the labourer after purchasing the same from the State Forest Department or the Forest Development Corporation or any other legal source of alternate fuel;

- xvii. 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;
- xviii. No additional or new path will be constructed inside the forest area for transportation of construction materials for execution of the project work;
- xix. No damage to the flora and fauna of the area shall be caused; xx. The concerned Divisional Forest Officer, will monitor and take necessary mitigative measures to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the forests in the surrounding area;
- xx. 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;
- xxi. The State Government shall upload the KML files of the area under diversion and the accepted NFL/DFL for raising compensatory afforestation in the E-Green Watch portal of FSI, before handing over forest land to the user agency;
- xxii. The State Govt. shall ensure that the Compliance report of this approval is uploaded on e-portal (<https://parivesh.nic.in/>);
- xxiii. The Violation of any of these conditions will amount to violation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and action would be taken as per the para 1.21 of comprehensive guidelines issued vide this Ministry F. No.5-2/2017-FC dated 28th March, 2019;
- xxiv. Any other condition that the Ministry of Environment, Forest and 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
- xxv. The State Government and user agency shall ensure compliance to all conditions stipulated in the Stage-I approval letter dated 11.04.2018 for which undertakings have been obtained from the user agency and also the provisions of the all Acts, Rules, Regulations and Guidelines, relevant Hon'ble Court Order (S) and NGT Order (S), if any, pertaining to this project for the time being in force, as applicable to the project.

Yours faithfully,

Sd-

(Dr. Dheeraj Mittal)

Assistant Inspector General of Forests

Copy to: -

1. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF), Department of Forest, Government of Karnataka, Bangalore.
2. The Nodal Officer, (FCA), Department of Forest, Government of Karnataka, Bangalore.
3. The DDGF (Central), Regional Office, Bangalore, MoEF&CC.
4. User Agency.
5. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF & CC, New Delhi, for uploading.