



भारत सरकार
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST & CLIMATE
CHANGE



क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, गांधीनगर/ Regional Office, Gandhinagar

ए वींग- 407 एवं 409, "अरण्य भवन", सी.एच.-3 सर्किल के समीप, सेक्टर-10ए, गांधीनगर-382010 / A wing- 407 & 409, "ARANYA BHAWAN", Near CH-3 Circle, Sector-10A, Gandhi Nagar-382010
Tel No: +9179-23255067 Email: iro.gandhingr-mefcc@gov.in

Dated: 05th February, 2024

सेवामें,
महानिरीक्षक वन /Inspector General of Forests
आर.ओ.एच.क्यू/ROHQ Division
MoEF&CC, New Delhi-110003

(ऑनलाईन क्रमांक FP/GJ/IRRIG/44298/2020)


विषय: Proposal for diversion of 598.2427 ha. forest land for Methala Bandhara Irrigation Project near village Methala in Talaja Taluka in Bhavnagar District of Gujarat State.

संदर्भ: आपका पत्र क्रमांक F. No. 8-06/2021-FC dated 24.11.2023.

महोदय,

उपरोक्त विषय में संदर्भित पत्र द्वारा प्राप्त निर्देशानुसार अधोहस्ताक्षरकर्ता द्वारा Diversion Site एवम प्रस्तावित CA land का निरीक्षण किया गया था। निरीक्षण उपरांत Site Inspection Report/ स्थल निरीक्षण प्रतिवेदन संलग्न कर अग्रेतर कार्यवाही के लिये प्रेषित की जा रही है।

संलग्नक: उपरोक्तानुसार


भवदीय,
05/02/2024.
(श्रवण कुमार वर्मा / Shrawan Kumar Verma)
क्षेत्रीय अधिकारी / Regional Officer,
क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, गांधीनगर/
Regional Office,
Gandhinagar

Site Inspection Report (SIR) for the proposed Methala Bandhara Irrigation Project for diversion of 598.2427 ha Forest Land, is situated near village Methala in Talaja Taluka in Bhavnagar District. The purpose of the Scheme is to prevent Salinity Ingress & Reclaim the Saline Land and to improve socio-economic condition of the area and to store sweet water in the region.

Proposal No: - FP/GJ/IRRIG/44298/2020, Proposed Forest Land for diversion is in Mahua Range of Bhavnagar Forest Division.

User Agency: - EX ENGINEER (Irrigation), Bhavnagar

The Site inspection for the proposal was carried out by the undersigned Shrawan Kumar Verma, RO, with Sudarshan Sharma, AIGF, RO Gandhinagar Office) on 19th January 2024. The list of official presents during site inspection is provided below:

| S. No | Official Presents | Districts Visited |
|-------|--|--------------------|
| 1 | Shri Sadik Mujawar, IFS, DCF Bhavnagar | Bhavnagar District |
| 2 | Shri K.J. Barad, RFO, Vallabhipur | |
| 3 | Shri Suresh Baraiya, RFO, Mahua | |
| 4 | Shri Mukesh Vaghela, I/C ACF Bhavnagar | |
| 5 | RFO Survey, Chavda, Bhavnagar | |
| 5 | Shri J.R. Rathod, D.E.E, Salinity Control Sub. Div., Bhavnagar | |
| 6 | Shri N.P Solanki, A.E, Salinity Control Sub. Div., Bhavnagar | |

1. All the data as produced hereinafter is a convergence of perusal of available documents and other pertinent discussion during the course of site inspection and relevant data from Government sources.
2. The report of the site inspection is on prescribed Performa as per FCA guidelines.
3. Project Location Map and Photographs

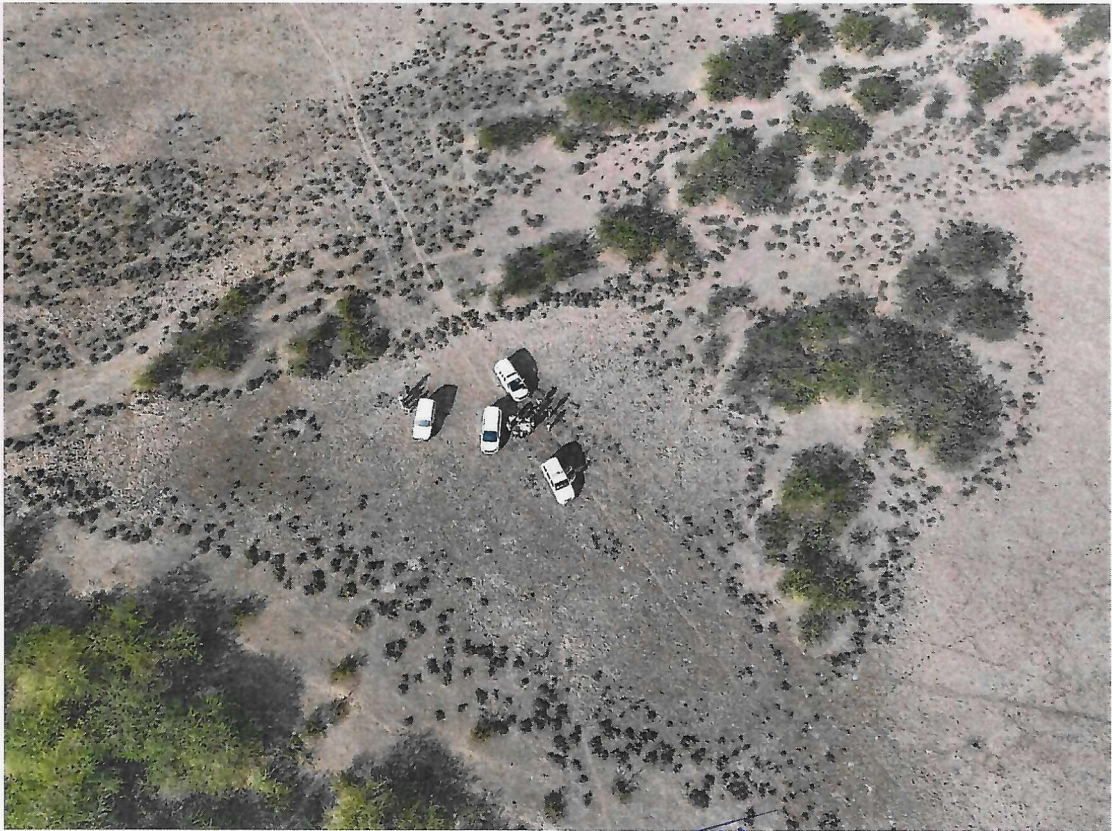


4. CA Land Photographs (300 NFL at Survey No. 515 Pt Vill. - Monpur, Range & Taluka-Vallabhipur, Dist.- Bhavnagar.)



Shrawan Kumar Verma
05/02/2024

5. CA Land Photographs (300 NFL at Survey No. 515 Pt Vill. - Monpur, Range & Taluka-Vallabhipur, Dist.- Bhavnagar.)



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6. **Short Narrative of the Project proposal with brief timeline of important events:**
- the proposed Methala Bandhara Irrigation Project is situated near village Methala in Talaja Taluka in Bhavnagar District. The purpose of the Scheme is to prevent Salinity Ingress & Reclaim the Saline Land and to improve socio economic condition of the area and to store sweet water in the region.
 - Proposal Uploaded by User agency – 30.01.2020.
 - Site Inspection Request received at RO Gandhinagar- 24.11.2023.
 - Proposal Received at Head Office – 03.02.2021.
7. **Legal Status of the forest Land proposed for diversion: Reserved Forest**
8. **Item wise break up details of the forest land proposed for diversion:**

| District | Forest Division | Forest Block | Forest Land (ha) | Non-Forest Land (ha) |
|----------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Bhavnagar | Bhavnagar | Bhavnagar | 598.2427 | 1111 |
| Village wise Breakup | | | | |
| S. No | Village | Forest Land (ha) | Non-Forest Land in Ha | |
| 1 | Methala | 534.362 | 42 | |
| 2 | Pratapara | 63.8807 | 17 | |
| 3 | Vejodri | 0 | 356 | |
| 4 | Valar | 0 | 236 | |
| 5 | Tali | 0 | 280 | |
| 6 | Bambhor | 0 | 103 | |
| 7 | Nichakotada | 0 | 77 | |
| Total | | 598.2427 | 1111 | |

9. **Whether proposal involves any construction of buildings (including residential) or not. If yes, details thereof: No.**

| Component Wise Break-up | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|------------------|----------------------|
| S.No. | Component | Forest Land (Ha) | Non-Forest Land (Ha) |
| 1 | Damline | 1 | 5 |
| 2 | Submergence | 597.2427 | 1106 |
| Total | | 598.2427 | 1111 |

10. **Total Cost of Project at Present Rates: - Rs. 13640.65 Lacs**
11. **Wildlife:** Waterlogged area avifauna was seen.
12. **Vegetation:** Density 0.01,0.4 Eco Class- IV.
13. **Nos of the tress to be felled girth wise:**
- Girth less than 30 cm: 0 trees.
14. **Compensatory afforestation:** The Compensatory Afforestation (CA) is proposed on at the following sites:

| Sr. No. | Name of Forest Division | CA proposed in Area (Ha.) | Details of CA Scheme | Total Financial Outlay for CA Scheme (Rs.) |
|---------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|--|
| | | | | |

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| | | | | |
|---|-----------|-----------------|--|-----------------------|
| 1. | Bhavnagar | 300 NFL | Survey No. 515 Pt Vill. - Monpur, Range & Taluka- Vallabhipur, Dist.- Bhavnagar. | 36,08,70,000/- |
| 2. | Bhavnagar | 298.2427 NFL | Survey No. 515 Pt 1 Vill. - Monpur, Range & Taluka- Vallabhipur, Dist.- Bhavnagar. | 43,47,38,067/- |
| Grand Total | | 598.2427 | | 79,56,08,067/- |
| (Rupees Seventy-Nine Crore, Fifty-Six Lakh, Eight Thousand, Sixty-Seven) only. | | | | |

15. **Whether land for compensatory afforestation (CA) is suitable for plantation and management point of view or not: Yes.**
- The proposed 300 ha NFL land for CA in Survey No. 515 Pt Vill. - Monpur, Range & Taluka- Vallabhipur, Dist.- Bhavnagar does not have any growth of trees and its of saline in nature. The species has to be selected keeping salinity in mind.
 - The proposed 298.2427 ha NFL CA in Survey No. 515 Pt 1 Vill. - Monpur, Range & Taluka- Vallabhipur, Dist.- Bhavnagar have fairly good growth of trees and in some of the patches growth of Propsopis juliflora is dense and scattered with Salvadoria persica. This patch has large herds of Blackbucks so proper protection is required for CA plantation. Good agricultural crops were seen adjacent to the proposed CA land.
 - The trees which cannot be planted in these two patches has to be planted on DFL in the same Division.
 - This non forest Land proposed for CA is adjoining to Velavadar Blackbuck National Park The area has large presence of Blackbuck and is a very good habitat for wild animals such as wolf. Hyena etc.
16. **Whether land for compensatory afforestation is free from encroachment/other encumbrances: Yes.**
17. **Whether land for compensatory afforestation is important from religious/archaeological point of view: No, But very good for the Blackbucks and other animals.**
18. **Land identified for raising compensatory afforestation is in how many patches, whether patches are compact or not: Total 2 Patches (2 sites of NFL Total area of 598.2427 ha) and all are compact.**
19. **Total financial outlay: Rs 79,56,08,067/-.**
20. **Whether proposal involves violation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 or not. If yes, a detailed report on violation including action taken against the concerned officials: No Violation.** The construction of the structure to stop ingressing the sea water has been done to stop the mixing of sea water with fresh water. It was informed that the sea water which use to travel back about 9 km in the pond making the whole water to render unfit for irrigation and drinking.
21. **Whether the forest land proposed for diversion is located within eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) of the Protected Area notified under Wildlife (Protection) Act,1972 (Note: In case, ESZ of a Protected Area is not notified, then,10kms distance from boundary of the Protected Area should be treated as ESZ): No.**
22. **Whether proposal involves rehabilitation of displaced persons. If yes, whether rehabilitation plan has been prepared by the state Government or not: NIL.**
23. **Cost Benefit Ratio: Submitted Ratio is 0.73.**
24. **Recommendation of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forest/State Government: Recommended with conditions.**

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25. **Numbers of Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes to be benefited by the project-** Regular Employment to 0 persons and temporary employment to 560000 (number of person-days).
26. **Whether land being diverted have any socio-cultural/religious value:** No
27. **Whether any sacred grove or very old growth trees/forests exist in the areas proposed for diversion-** No
28. **Any other information relating to the project-** EDS Raised by MoEF&CC Head Office New Delhi Dated 16.08.2023 Replied by State. Govt on 03.11.2023 as follows:

| S.No. | Query Raised by MoEF&CC Head Office | Reply by State Govt. |
|-------|---|---|
| 1. | The satellite imagery of the proposed Non-Forest Land for Compensatory Afforestation revealed that some part of the CA land is falling in the river and the presence of water ponds within the boundary of the proposed area been observed. This needs clarification and revision of CA areas accordingly if required. | This is to clarify that river seen in satellite image is a seasonal rivulet. The water ponds seen in the KML file are very small water harvesting structures with which would be utilized for irrigation of plantation. |
| 2. | The revenue record/ documentary evidence indicating that the area identified for Compensatory Afforestation is non-forest land has not been submitted, which is required to be done. | This non-forest land has been transferred to the Forest Department by the Collector Bhavnagar order dated 19/312020, which is attached herewith. Village Form No-7 sent by User Agency is also enclosed herewith. |
| 3. | In the CA Scheme, the followings shortcoming has been observed | |
| | a) The CA Scheme is submitted in two parts. The reason/justification for the same needs submission. | A two-part scheme for compensatory afforestation has been formulated as per site conditions of the non-forest land as well as keeping in view, the vicinity of Velavadar Blackbuck National Park. |
| | b) The number of plants proposed to be raised on the CA land is not uniform, as per the CA scheme in one patch comprising 300 ha area only 480 seedlings per ha. Have been proposed whereas in another patch comprising 298.247 ha area, 2500 seedlings per ha have been proposed. The huge variation in the number of seedlings per hectare i.e. 480 and 2500 needs to be examined by the State Govt. and a justification in this regard shall be submitted. As per the guidelines issued by the Ministry a minimum of 1000 plants (tree species) per ha are required to | This non forest Land is adjoining to Velavadar Blackbuck National Park The area has large presence of Blackbuck and is a habitat for wild animals such as wolf. Hyena etc. So technically suitable mixed model of grass seed planting with 400 saplings per hectare has been taken in 300-hectare area. The area so developed would serve to create suitable habitat for Blackbucks. According to the guidelines of Ministry 5,98,243 saplings should be planted in this 598.2427 Hectares of non forest land as per 1000 saplings per hectare. However, it is proposed to plant a total of 7,45,607 saplings in 298.2427 hectares at 2500 saplings per hectare. In the other 300 ha a plant density of 400 plants per ha along with grass plantation |

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| | | |
|----|--|---|
| | be planted for Compensatory Afforestation | has been proposed for suitable habitat requirement of Blackbuck population. Thus, total of 8,65,607 sapling will be planted on proposed CA land of 598.2427 ha |
| | c) The CA scheme for the proposed 300 ha area reads a few points as degraded area and a few points as non-forest area. Therefore, the CA scheme shall be submitted for proposed non forest land. | The scheme prepared for compensatory afforestation is for non-Forest land only, but the degraded area was written by mistake at one place in the scheme, which has been corrected and attached herewith |
| | d) Further, the copy of undertaking from the user agency to bear the cost of CA shall be submitted The Cost Benefit ratio has not been derived in the Cost-Benefit analysis report and cost on the parameters such as Animal husbandry productivity, compensatory Afforestation, increase in productivity etc. have not been calculated as required under relevant guidelines, which needs submission. | The Copy of undertaking from the User Agency to bear the cost of CA is enclosed herewith. Revised Cost-Benefit analysis is enclosed. |
| 4. | The Cost Benefit ratio has not been derived in the Cost-Benefit analysis report and cost on the parameters such as Animal husbandry productivity, Compensatory Afforestation, increase in productivity etc. have not been calculated as required under relevant guidelines, which needs submission | Revised Cost-Benefit analysis enclosed. |
| 5. | The State Govt. reported that dam like structure observed in the satellite imagery is an earthen bund constructed by the local villagers in the revenue area. Keeping this in view, the complete KML boundary of submerged area including 1111 Ha Non-forest land G.ffa) involved in the instant project needs submission. | KML file is enclosed. |

29. **Recommendations of the Site Inspecting Officer:** The proposed Methala Bandhara Bandhara Irrigation Project for diversion of 598.2427 ha Forest Land, is situated near village Methala in Talaja Taluka in Bhavnagar District to prevent Salinity Ingress & Reclaim the Saline Land and to improve socio-economic condition of the area and to store


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sweet water in the region for drinking and irrigation. Accordingly, the proposal is recommended with following **specific conditions**:

1. *The User Agency will not use the diverted forest land for construction of buildings and other non-site-specific activities.*
2. *Muck will not be disposed on forest/charagah land outside the proposed diversion land.*
3. *Six feet boundary wall shall be constructed at the cost of user agency along the boundary of the Non-Forest Land (NFL) proposed for CA in both patches towards the habitation and agriculture fields to prevent encroachment.*
4. *The User Agency shall provide at its cost the required number of Solar Pumps as given by the forest department for irrigating the CA Plantation.*
5. *The species has to be selected by the Forest Department Govt. Gujarat keeping salinity in mind.*


(श्रवण कुमार वर्मा/Shrawan Kumar Verma)

क्षेत्रीय अधिकारी/Regional Officer

क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, गांधीनगर/Regional Office, Gandhinagar.