

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

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

Dated: 23rd November, 2021

To

The Special Chief Secretary (Forests),
EFS&T Department
Government of Telangana,
Hyderabad.

Sub: Diversion of 649.3014 ha forest land in Ramavaram RF of Ramavaram Range of Kothagudem forest division for grant of mining lease for proposed venkateshkhani OCP from underground rights to surface rights in Kothagudem area in Bhadradi Kothagudem District in favour of M/s SCCL.-Regarding (Online proposal No. FP/TG/MIN/44798/2020).

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer to Govt. of Telangana's letter no. 232/For.I(1)/2021 dt 16.07.2021 on the above-mentioned subject, forwarding additional information/documents in response to this Ministry's letter dt. 08.03.2021. In this regard it is informed that the matter was further examined and the following shortcomings were observed:

i. As per the certificate issued by the Chief Secretary, Government of Telangana dt 03.06.2021, it has been informed that 'bigger chunks' of revenue land suitable for plantation are not available contiguous to forest. It is pertinent to mention here that as per extant guidelines made under the Forest (Conservation) Act 1980, there is no restriction on size of non-forest land identified for CA purpose, if identified land is contiguous to forest area. Further, it may be stated here that earlier the State govt. vide letter no. Rc.no.10129-A(i)/2020/WLR-1 dt 04.06.2021 in response to this Ministry's letter no F. No. FC-11/81/2021-FC dt 20.03.2021 has informed that an extent of 29560.642 ha of forest area is there outside notified forests in the state. Ministry, while according Stage-I approval dt 12.03.2021 in respect Proposal for diversion of 162.45 ha of forest land in Indaram RF for grant of Mining Lease for Srirampur Open Cast-II Expansion Project of this User Agency had informed that in all future coal mining projects of this User Agency, CA has to be undertaken in areas outside notified degraded forest land. CA on degraded notified forests in these cases shall be considered only in exceptional circumstances when:

- a. State Government has issued a certificate that degraded forest land (double in extent) outside notified forest boundary is not available for CA purpose, and
- b. The Nodal Officer has certified that no afforestation/plantation has been taken up under any plan/programme/scheme in the degraded forest area proposed for CA in the last ten years.

Accordingly, it is requested that, the State Govt. may identify degraded forest land outside notified forest or Non-forest land equivalent to area proposed for diversion and communicate the same for further action in Ministry.

It is also requested that the details of the revised CA land identified outside the notified degraded forest land may also be provided to the Integrated Regional Office, Hyderabad for carrying out the Site inspection.

Yours sincerely,

Sd/-

(Suneet Bharadwaj)

Asst Inspector General of Forests

Copy to:-

1. The PCCF & HoFF, Govt. of Telangana, Hyderabad.
2. The Nodal Officer (FCA), Government of Telangana, Hyderabad.
3. The Regional Officer, Integrated Regional Office, Hyderabad-**With a request to carry out the SIR once the desired information on revised CA land is received from the State Government.**
4. User Agency.
5. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF & CC, New Delhi.