



STATE FOREST HEADQUARTERS, ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL CHIEF CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS & HoFF
PLOT NO. GD-2/12, ARANYA BHAWAN, CHANDRASEKHARPUR
BHUBANESWAR-751023

E-mail:- nodal.pccfhoff@odisha.gov.in / nodal.pccfodisha@gmail.com

No. 22410 / 9F (MG) -66/2021

Dated, Bhubaneswar the 03rd November'2022

From

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
(Forest Diversion and Nodal Officer, FC Act)
O/o the PCCF & HoFF, Odisha, Bhubaneswar

To

The Assistant Inspector General of Forests (FC)
Government of India, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change
(FC Division), Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, Aliganj, Jorbagh Road
New Delhi-110003

Sub:- Proposal for non-forestry use of 42.608 ha of forest land in favour of M/s TATA Steel BSL Limited for iron ore mining in Kalmang West (Northern Part) Block in Keonjhar and Bonai Forest Division in Districts Keonjhar and Sundargarh (Odisha) – Compliance to GoI observations reg

Ref: F.No.8-13/2022-FC dated 12.07.2022 of the Scientist 'D', Government of India, MoEF& CC, New Delhi.

Sir,

In reference to the above mentioned letter on the captioned subject, this is to inform that Government of India, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, New Delhi have raised 5(five) nos. of observations and requested to furnish the compliance. The User Agency has complied all the observations of Govt. of India, MoEF& CC, New Delhi. The point wise compliance basing on the reports of the DFO, Keonjhar / Bonai and RCCF, Rourkela Circle are as follows:-

- i. *Elephant Habitat is reported in the area proposed for diversion; further, comments of PCCF (Wildlife) and CWLW, Odisha on the likely impacts of the project on the elephant habitat and other scheduled species reported in the area has not been provided and information on the same needs to be provided by the State Government to the Ministry.*

Basing on the report of DFO, Bonai division, the RCCF, Rourkela Circle has stated that the project area comes under Koira Range of Bonai Forest Division and the said Range is characterised by the movement of elephants. In the past, occasional movement of elephant was observed in the project area also. For appraising the situation, one Map of elephant movement for the last 3 years showing the project area is attached herewith as (Annexure-1).

The likely impacts of the project on elephant habitat include reduction of forest cover for movement of elephant and anticipated increase in human-elephant conflict issues in the nearby villages due to fragmentation of habitat.

A Site Specific Wildlife Conservation Plan needs to be prepared to address the above said issues and accordingly, one SSWLCP is being prepared by DFO, Bonai division as per the stipulation under Standard Condition No.19 of ToR issued by SEIAA vide Letter No.22/SEIAA dt.15.1.2021. In this SSWLCP, measures to check the adverse impacts of the project on elephant population and its habitat shall be included.

Basing on the report of DFO, Keonjhar division, the RCCF, Rourkela Circle has stated that there is occasional movement of elephants 1 Km away from the mine but within the impact area (Map). Elephants move from Gandhalpada of Bonai to Sidhamath RF and connecting Baitarani RF (Map). Within the impact area, there are 9 Nos working & 11 Nos. of non-working mines in Keonjhar Division. There might be further increase in Man – Elephant conflict in the villages in the impact area in future. The details of crop damage, house damage, human death and elephant death in impact area for last 10 years is incorporated in the Site Specific Wildlife Conservation Plan. Based on these conflicts & expected rise thereof, mitigative measures have been suggested (**Annexure-II**) and the same has been included in Site Specific Wildlife Conservation Plan. Further, Baitarani RF & Sidhamath RF in the impact area are the major habitat of elephant, in which Sal and Bauhinia valii (Siali) are predominantly seen. However, there is biotic pressure on these forests for firewood. Hence, for habitat improvement measures like plantation of Ficus, Bamboo & other elephant food species along with construction of water bodies have been proposed. Moreover, one elephant squad & elephant tracker have been proposed for elephant monitoring and forest protection along with Gaja Sathis”.

Two elephant deaths in impact area during last 10 years were due to natural cause and diseases has been recorded. Hence, cattle immunization in peripheral villages (**Annexure-III**) and creation of salt licks have been proposed (**Annexure-IV**). To avoid human death & elephant deaths due to Man-Elephant conflict, early warning systems along with voice & text messages have been proposed along with installation of portable cabins for elephant squad for elephant monitoring and giving prior information to villagers.

The detailed impact of the project on the elephant habitat & other schedule species reported in the area along with proposed mitigation measures have been reflected in the proposed Site Specific Wildlife Conservation Plan along with detailed financial forecast for implementation in the mining lease area as well as in its impact area. After approval of the scheme by the PCCF (WL) & CWLW, Odisha, Bhubaneswar work will be executed in the field on receipt of fund.

- ii. *Cost benefit ratio has been estimated to be 1 : 157.53 which seems to be on higher side. It seems estimation of cost and benefit components has not been done properly, i.e., cost corresponding to 42.608 ha. has been estimated while the benefits to be accrued from the entire mining lease area have been accounted for in the analysis. The analysis needs to be re-estimated by accounting CB parameters appropriately.*

The RCCF, Rourkela Circle has reported that the cost benefit ratio of the forest proposed for diversion has been assessed separately for both the Keonjhar and Bonai Forest Divisions as 1 : 157.53 and 1 : 136.17 respectively. The total cost of forest diversion of Keonjhar Forest Division is assessed as Rs.10,57,26,538/- and of Bonai Forest Division is assessed as Rs.12,23,04,395/- as per the format prescribed vide MoEF & CC Guideline No.7-69/2011-FC (pt) dated 1st August 2017. Therefore, the total cost for entire forest land over 42.608 ha. is estimated to be Rs. 2280.309 lakhs and the benefit of the project is estimated as Rs. 169389.766 Lakhs which would accrue due to mining of Iron Ore mainly from the mineralized zone laying within the forest land.

So, the overall Cost Benefit Ratio of the Project is now estimated to be 1: 74.28.

- iii. *Part-II and details given in the mining plan mentions that an area of 8.693 ha. has been reported to be under use for road (0.726 ha.), infrastructure (2.286 ha.) and safety zone (5.681 ha.). The State Government, therefore, needs to confirm whether the use of area of 8.693 ha. involves forest land and status of violation of Forest (Conservation) Act,1980, if any, committed by the user agency”.*

The RCCF, Rourkela Circle has reported that the Range Officer, Koira was instructed by DFO, Bonai division to conduct joint verification with the Revenue officials and User Agency and to report whether the use of area of 8.693 ha. involves forest land and status of violation under FC Act,1980, if any. In response to above, the Range Officer, Koira has intimated vide his Letter No.550 & No.551 both dated 30.08.2022 that a Joint verification with the R.I. Patmunda (Revenue officials), Forester, Koira and User Agency was conducted on 12.08.2022 and the following were found out.

- Presently, there is no mining operations or ancillary activity existing in the above lease area. As per the mining plan, the village road over 0.726 ha which is presently under use by villagers is passing through south side of the lease (Kalmang & Ghodabudhani village). As per the last Records of Rights (RoR) published on 02.01.1975 (existing prior to 25.10.1980) it has been classified as Road (Rasta). Part of the village road (0.260 ha) falls under DLC Forest and it is a pre-80 road.
- Habitation etc. under the heading of infrastructure is covered in 2.286 ha and the said area falls in Non-Forest land.

- The statutory safety zone of 7.5 meter all along the mining lease boundary is measured to be 3.972 ha. The breakup of forest and non-forest part of Safety zone in both Bonai & Keonjhar forest division is shown in the table given below.

Sl. No	Type of Land Use	Category wise Forest Land (in ha)		Total Forest Land (in ha)	Non-Forest Land (in ha)	Grand Total (in ha)
		Revenue Forest	DLC Forest			
1	Safety Zone- Keonjhar Forest Division	1.234	0.000	1.234	0.000	1.234
2	Safety Zone- Bonai Forest Division	0.009	1.139	1.148	1.59	2.738
3	Total Safety Zone: 7.5 meter along the inner side of ML boundary	1.243	1.139	2.382	1.590	3.972

Apart from above, 10m green belt is proposed to be maintained along both side of the village road. It is calculated to be 1.709 ha out of which 0.573 ha falls under DLC forest land as reported by the DFO, Bonai Division. As reported by the User Agency, in the conceptual stage of the Mining Plan, the above village shall be shifted out of the lease hold area after taking due permission from the concerned Govt. authorities because that road will be mined out.

Further, as reported by the DFO, Keonjhar Division, No mining operation or ancillary activities has been undertaken in the area proposed for diversion in Keonjhar Division

- The village road over 0.726 ha & 2.286 ha for infrastructure are coming under Bonai Division.
 - No violation has been observed in the safety zone area of 1.234 ha involved in Keonjhar Division.
- iv. ***The proposal does not involve displacement of people. However, Google Satellite imagery shows cultivation in the area. The State Government may therefore furnish its comments on the visible cultivation activity in the mining lease area and measures proposed to stop or remove such activities from the area.***

Basing on the report of DFO, Bonai division, the RCCF, Rourkela Circle has stated the Range Officer, Koira was instructed to conduct joint verification with the Revenue officials and User Agency and to report details of encroachment (if any) category wise (extent & plot details of encroachment within Revenue Forest land, DLC land and non-forest Govt. land separately). In response to above Memo, the Range Officer, Koira has intimated vide his Letter No.549 dt.30.08.2022 that a Joint verification with the R.I. Patmunda (Revenue officials), Forester, Koira and User Agency was conducted on 12.08.2022 and the findings were as follows.


- On joint verification it was found that there was no encroachment in the Revenue Forest, DLC land & Non-Forest Govt. land by way of cultivation. On the South side of the lease hold area, there is a habitation over 2.286 ha. which falls in Non-Forest land.
 - 5 Nos. of FRA title over an area 4.12 Acre in DLC Forest land have been issued in Ghodabudani village.
- v. **Single consolidated KML file depicting the purpose-wise break up of forest land as well as non-forest land, including the safety zone, may be furnished by the State.**

The RCCF, Rourkela Circle has reported that the User Agency has submitted the single consolidated KML file depicting the purpose-wise break up of forest land as well as non-forest land, including the safety zone which is **enclosed in the CD form.**

In view of the above, the compliance to the observations of Government of India, MoEF & CC, New Delhi is sent herewith for kind information and necessary action.

Encl: Compliance in one set


Yours faithfully


Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
(Forest Diversion and Nodal Officer, FC/Act)

Memo No. **22411** /Dt. **03.11.2022**

Copy alongwith the compliance report forwarded to the Dy. Director General of Forests (Central), MoEF & CC, IRO, Bhubaneswar for favour of kind information and necessary action with reference to F.No.8-13/2022-FC dated 12.07.2022 of the Scientist 'D', Government of India, MoEF & CC, New Delhi.


Encl: Compliance in one set


Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
(Forest Diversion and Nodal Officer, FC Act)

Memo No. **22412** /Dt. **03.11.2022**


Copy alongwith the compliance report forwarded to the Additional Chief Secretary to Government, Forest, Environment and Climate Change Department, Odisha, Bhubaneswar for favour of kind information and necessary action with reference to F.No.8-13/2022-FC dated 12.07.2022 of the Scientist 'D', Government of India, MoEF & CC, New Delhi.

Encl: Compliance in one set


Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
(Forest Diversion and Nodal Officer, FC Act)

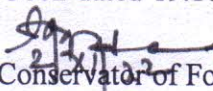
Memo No. **22413** /Dt. **03.11.2022**

Copy forwarded to the Regional Chief Conservator of Forests, Rourkela Circle for information and necessary action with reference to his office Memo No.3601 dated 19.10.2022.


Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
(Forest Diversion and Nodal Officer, FC Act)


Memo No. 22414 /Dt. 03.11.2022

Copy forwarded to the Divisional Forest Officer, Bonai / Keonjhar Forest Divisions for information and necessary action with reference to Memo No. 3602 dated 19.10.2022 of RCCF, Rourkela Circle.


Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
(Forest Diversion and Nodal Officer, FC Act)

Memo No. 22415 /Dt. 03.11.2022

Copy forwarded to the M/s TATA Steel BSL Limited, 273, Bhoum Nagar, Unit-IV, Bhubaneswar for information and necessary action.


Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
(Forest Diversion and Nodal Officer, FC Act)

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