

**Additional Principal Chief
Conservator of Forests &
Nodal Officer, F(C) Act**



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KFDHQ/821/2025-SAandNO/FC2

Date:08-07-2026

To

The Additional Chief Secretary,
Forest & Wildlife Department,
Secretariat, Thiruvananthapuram.

Sir,

Sub:- Forest & Wildlife Department – Diversion of 0.138 ha of forest land under section 2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, for the construction of the Vellakkayam Micro Hydro Electric Project – reg.

Ref:- Letter no.: F. No. 4-KRC 4-KLB1437/2023-BAN dated 15.04.2026 of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

Kind attention is invited to the subject cited above The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has raised six queries regarding the proposal for the diversion of 0.138 ha of forest land under Section 2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, for the construction of the Vellakkayam Micro Hydroelectric Project, vide the reference cited above.

The replies to queries have been submitted by the DFO, Kothamangalam, through the PARIVESH portal on 07.07.2026

The above details are submitted herewith for kind perusal and for onwards submission to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

Yours faithfully,
Digitally signed by
for Deepa K S
Date: 08-07-2026

Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests &
Nodal Officer, F(C) Act

SOORAJ BEN K R. IFS

(PEN : 961233)

Divisional Forest Officer



Divisional Forest Office
Kothamangalam Division
Kothamangalam P.O. Pin 686691
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No: KFDDO/28586/2023-DFOKGLM A3

Date : 06.07.2026

To

The Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests &
Nodal Officer, F(C) Act
Thiruvananthapuram

Sir,

Sub : WP(C) No.8260/2025 filed by M/s Sreeba Vellakkayam, Micro Hydro Electric
before the Hon'ble High Court of Kerala- reg

Ref : That office letter No. KFDHQ/821/2025-SA andNO/FC2 dated 01.07.2026

Kind attention is invited to the subject and reference cited. The reply to the queries in reference is as follows:

1. The State Government is requested to submit the CIA and CSS study for the said river basin:

Reply: The user agency was instructed to conduct a Comprehensive Impact Assessment (CIA) of river basins and submitted CIA report. It has been uploaded in Parivesh portals by User Agency in *Form-A Part-1 Additional Information details Sl No. 25 as Environmental Assessment Report.*

2. The State Government has not taken any action against the officials responsible for approving/ allowing use of forest land for non-forestry purposes without prior approval of the Central Government.

Reply: As soon as the information regarding the construction of Vellakkayam Micro Hydro Electric Project by Mr. Y. Sreebachan was received, the then Mullaringad Range Forest Officer conducted an enquiry in to the matter and issued a stop memo on 01.03.2021. No further violation of Forest Conservation Act of any kind has happened in the area. Further the applicant filed an application for obtaining forest clearance application through Parivesh Portal. On the basis of the documents submitted by Mr. Y Sreebachan regarding the above matter, it was understood that NOC was obtained from Vannappuram Grama Panchayath for this project. The NOC was given, since the authority in the project lies with the Grama Panchayath. The names of the members of the committee that met on 09.02.2018 in Vannapuram GP were requested, and the Panchayath authorities have provided the names of the ward members who attended the above meeting. The name of the panchayath secretary was reported to your office vide

letter dated 06.11.2024. The disciplinary action against the said officers has to be taken up with the respective department.

In the site Inspection report of Chief Conservator of Forests High Range Circle Kottayam on 21.08.2025, it is observed that i) timely adequate actions were taken by Forest Officials preventing commission of any offence or Violation of Forest Conservation Act, 1980.ii) the user agency inadvertently made arrangements for initiation of the project oblivious to the fact that the status of land was Forest.He did not willingly intend to commit any offence. Further, on receiving instructions from Forest Officer to stop the work he had complied with the same and took necessary actions for secure appropriate clearance for the project. Hence no offence or violations were committed under Forest Conservation Act, 1980 or Kerala Forest Act, 1961.

3. **The powerhouse component of the project area of 0.012 ha and the road component area of 0.016 ha has been proposed in the Patta land. This Patta land has been purchased by the user agency from previous occupant whose Patta was issued in 2009 under Regularization of forest encroachment rule 1993.**

Reply:A hearing was conducted with Sleebachan before the DFO on 05.08.2025, and discussed the details in query raised by the MoEFCC letter dated 12.06.2025, he was directed to submit a revised DPR , sketch & plan, excluding the patta land. The user agency has submitted revised details via Parivesh portal. The power house component of the project area changed to 0.0162Ha, approach road- 0.0051Ha, weir(check dam)-0.0104Ha, Forebay Tank-0.03275Ha, Penstock-0.02313Ha, Submergence area-0.048Ha, Transformer Yard-0.0019Ha. Total -0.1374Ha. The area of the power house and approach road components and total project area rearranged completely in Reserve Forest area,also no part of the proposal is planned to be executed in patta land.

4. **The clarity on the status of land (forest/panchayat patta lands) proposed for diversion is lacking. The State Government is required to clearly provide the status of land been proposed for the project.**

Reply: User Agency was directed to submit a revised DPR , sketch & plan, excluding the patta land which the user agency has submitted via the Parivesh portal. In the revised plan submitted by user agency the patta land was excluded from the project. The Range Forest Officer and Division Surveyer surveyed the proposed project land and reported that the land is completely under Reserve Forest area. The kml files and toposheet prepared after inspection of site on 11.02.2026 was submitted to APCCF & NO,F(C) Act and CCFHRC on 16.02.2026.

5. **As per to SIR of the Regional Office, there has been a change in layout plan proposed. The cross-sectional details of the project component and any change in lay out plan need to be provided along with component wise KML file.**

Reply:The change in the component of land has been submitted by user agency in *Form-A, Part-1, B-2.4 Component wise breakup* and kml files uploaded in *C-Maps of Forest land proposed to be diverted*.

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6. As per the proposal, felling of 18 number of trees is required, which are marked for felling. The details of area proposed for felling along with KML file has not been submitted.

Reply: Details of 13 trees have been submitted on the Parivesh portal. These trees are standing in the submersible area of the project and need to be felled for the construction of the project. The kml file of the submergence area is uploaded in *Form-A, Part-1, C-Maps of Forest land proposed to be diverted SI No.07.*

This information is submitted for kind information and necessary action.


Divisional Forest Officer
Kothamangalam Division



Saju P. U. IFS

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KFDDO/28586/2023-DFOKGLM A3

Dated:06 .11.2024

To

Chief Conservator of Forests,
High Range Circle,
Kottayam

Sir,

- Sub :-** Clarification Vellakkayam Micro Hydro Electric Project – Diversion of 0.138 Ha. Forest Land-reg
- Ref :-** 1 That office Lr.No.C5-1792/2022 dated 25.09.2024
2 Letter No.4-KLB1437/2023-BAN dated 15.03.2023 of MoEFC, Bangalore.
3 FP/KL/HYD/44656/2021
4 Lr.No.FC1-226/2024 dated 22.02.24 &15.04.2024 of the Secretary, Vannappuram GramaPanchayath.
5 Lr No.M1-168/21 dated 01.11.2023 of Range Forest Officer, Mullaringad
6 Lr No.M1-168/2021 dated 05.11.2024 of Range Forest Officer, Mullaringad

Kind attention is invited to the subject and reference cited above. I am submitting clarification sought vide ref(1) regarding the Vellakayam Micro Hydro Electric Project through Parivesh Portal requesting 0.138Ha for the diversion of forest land as follows.

Sl No	Query	Reply /Remarks
1	The work regarding the above project is seen started before getting approval under section 2 of Forest (Conservation) Act,1980. Hence a detailed report on violation including names of erring officials may kindly be furnished.	The initial construction activities of the project commenced in 2021 by the User Agency. However, the Mullaringad Range Officer issued a stop memo dtd 01.03.2021, resulting in a halt to the work. Upon reviewing the NOC issued to the user agency, it was found that the Vannapuram Grama Panchayath had granted permission as per the decision taken in meeting on 09.02.2018 under section 218 and its sub-sections of the Panchayath Raj Act, 1994, to utilize the government land(Thodu Purambokku). Therefore, the User Agency's commencement of work in 2021 was in compliance with the NOC obtained from the Grama Panchayath.

		Consequently the User Agency submitted an application for permission to construct the project called Veliakayam Micro Hydro Electric Project through Parivesh Portal requesting 0.138Ha for the diversion of forest land. A letter was sent to the Vannapuram Grama Panchayath requesting clarification regarding the issuance of NOC for Vellakayam Project in which land is in Reserve Forest. According to the reply of Vannapuram Grama Panchayath it is stated that under section 218 and its sub-sections of the Panchayath Raj Act, 1994, the waterways, streams, canals and any adjoining land belongs to Grama Panchayath and based on this clause Sri. Y Sleebachan was given permission. Range Forest Officer Mullaringad has reported the name of the then Secretary of Vannapuram Grama Panchayath Sri. V.A Augustine who issued the NLC to the user agency (Sri. Sleebachan), as the person responsible for the violation of Forest Conservation Act 1980 .
2	The land bought by the User Agency from previous occupants whose patta was issued in 2009 under regularization of forest encroachment rules 1993, Kerala Land Assignment(Regularization of occupation of forest land prior to 01.01.1977 Special Rules 1993) had stipulated that a person in whose favor regularization of encroachment is to be done shall not be authorized to sell these areas.	As per reference (5), Mullaringad Range Forest Officer has reported that the land identified for the said project is not Patta land, the land comes under Thodupuzha Reserve in Mullaringad Range. Thus the land requested for diversion is fully Forest Land.

The above information is submitted for your information and further action.

Yours faithfully



Divisional Forest Officer
Kotthamangalam

