

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

**Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bagh Road, Aliganj
New Delhi - 110003.**

Dated: 08th April, 2022

To

**The Principal Secretary (Forests),
Government of Madhya Pradesh,
Bhopal.**

Subject: Proposal for diversion of 382.131 hectares of forest land for Bunder Diamond Mining Project in favour of M/s Essel Mining & Industries Limited, District Chhatarpur, State of Madhya Pradesh (Online proposal No. FP/MP/MIN/45288/2020) – regarding.

Madam/Sir,

This is in reference to the Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Land Management) & Nodal Officer, FCA, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh's letter No. F-1/622/2021/10-11/577 dated 05.02.2021 on the above mentioned subject.

In this regard, the proposal for diversion of 382.131 ha forest land was considered by the FAC in its meeting dated 31.03.2022, wherein **the FAC deferred the proposal** with following observations:

- i. The Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife in its 39th meeting held on 23.08.2016 in case of Ken-Betwa proposal had recommended that no new mining lease will be granted in this landscape considering its significance in permitting tiger dispersal.
- ii. The site inspection committee constituted by the SCNBWL in its recommendation in case of Ken-Betwa proposal has recommended that:
To protect the small landscape of PTR and its surrounding areas and also to reduce sedimentation in the reservoir and maintain water flow in the Ken River, there should be no destructive activities, including mining in the Ecologically Sensitive Zone and catchment area of the river. New industrial development or mining or expansion of the existing mining in and around the landscape would seriously compromise the scope for tiger's survival in Panna Tiger Reserve.
- iii. The project involves 215875 trees. However, out of the total forest land involved, an area of 138.31 ha is proposed for side burden and waste dump and another 66.34 ha is to be used as Tailing Dump. The State Govt. has not provided enough justification for using large chunk of forest area for dumping.
- iv. While deciding the proposal for diversion of 971.595 hectares of forest land for Diamond Mining Project in case of Rio-Tinto the FAC had observed that as per NTCA report, project can potentially disrupt the landscape character vis a vis tiger dispersal around Panna landscape as such this may be taken only when Ken Betwa link project

is finalized as well as detailed study done to assess other alternatives. The State Govt. may therefore provide the status of the Ken Betwa link project.

- v. The project involves diversion of the course of a stream and creation of a water body, which may adversely affect the watershed and the flow of water downstream thereby affecting the biodiversity as well as the effectiveness of Ken-Betwa link project. The State Govt. shall examine whether the ecological impact of diversion of stream and creation of water body has been taken into account or not? A detailed report in this regard shall be submitted.
- vi. The State Govt. shall submit the latest status of the Original Application pending in the Hon'ble NGT in this regard.

The State Government is requested to take necessary action accordingly.

Yours sincerely,

Sd/-

(Suneet Bhardwaj)

Asst. Inspector General of Forests

Copy to:

1. The PCCF & HoFF, Department of Forest, Government of Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal;
2. The Regional Officer, Integrated Regional Office, MoEF&CC, Bhopal;
3. The Nodal Officer, FCA, Department of Forest, Government of Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal;
4. User Agency;
5. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF & CC, New Delhi, for uploading on PARIVESH portal.