

I/10077/2022

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Aliganj, Jor Bag Road,
New Delhi - 110003.
Dated: 27th July, 2022

—
The Addl. Chief Secretary (Forests),
Government of Odisha,
Bhubaneswar

Sub: Proposal for diversion of 697.797 ha forest land for Pottangi Bauxite Mining Lease in village Pottangi of Koraput Forest Division under Pottangi Tahasil, Koraput District by M/s NALCO Ltd.- reg

Sir,

I am directed to refer to State Government of Odisha's letter No. FE-DIV-FLD-0056-2022-11955/FE&CC dated 08.07.2022, seeking prior approval of the Central Government under section 2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and to say the following:

- i. Analysis of the area proposed for diversion and area proposed for CA area using DSS (copy enclosed) analysis revealed the following:
 - a. A kuchha road is observed to be passing through the forest area proposed for diversion. State Government may comment on the present use of the road and alternate road, if any, required to be provided as the area is proposed to be closed for mining
 - b. Site suitability certificate has been submitted in respect of 294.70 ha of degraded forest land only. Complete certificate for the entire forest land of 1400 ha proposed for raising CA needs to be submitted by the State.
 - c. CA has been proposed in 16 patches. Of the total forest area for compensatory afforestation, 139 ha land is classified as moderately dense forest, 458 ha as open forest, 414 ha as scrub and 393 ha as non-forest (land without tree cover) in terms of forest classes. The State Government may, therefore, re-confirm the suitability of such area for raising afforestation and if required alternate sites, suitable for raising CA may be identified and inform the Ministry. Supportn documents showing details of various attributes such as KML files, derived from the Differential GPS surveys, CA scheme suitability certificate, etc., should also be furnished.
- iii. As the schedule-I species have been reported in the area, comments of PCCF (Wildlife) and CWLW Odisha on the likely impact of the project on the movement of wildlife in general and elephant in particular needs to be furnished by the State.
- iv. As the area has schedule-I and schedule-II species, comments of PCCF (Wildlife) and CWLW Odisha on the likely impact of the project on the movement of wildlife in general and elephant in particular needs to be

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- furnished by the State.
- v. From the purpose-wise breakup of forest land, the following may be ascertained:
- a. 40.077 ha has been reported to be scattered between the mineralized zone. Plans, if any, proposed by the user agency for the management and upkeep of these areas during the onset of mining operations may be intimated by the State.
- b. An area of 28.326 ha has been proposed for statutory buildings which appears to be exaggerated; therefore, statutory building-wise detailed breakup of 28.326 ha of forest land may be informed by the State.
- c. Similarly, further details of area proposed for primary crusher and power line corridor may also be provided by the State.
- d. Details of area proposed for dumping of overburden is not available in the purpose-wise breakup. Comments in this regard may be provided by the State.
- e. A consolidated KML file clearly showing various components of the proposed Mining Project may be submitted by the State.
- vi. Cost benefit Ratio has been estimated as 1:258.356 (Pg 233/c) which is exorbitantly high. It seems appropriation of cost and benefits components has not been done properly. The analysis may be revisited by the user agency by applying appropriate economic tools to accurately estimate the various parameters and detailed analysis thereof may be submitted to the Ministry.
- vii. Mining Plan stated to be approved by the IBM, Bhubaneswar over an area of 697.979 ha has not uploaded online; rather a receipt of Rs. 1,75,000/- addressed to NALCO has been submitted. Processing authorities in the State needs to scrutinize the correctness to the documents uploaded online before submitting the proposal to the Ministry and to ensure that correct and legible detail is uploaded online. The State Government may also confirm that land use proposed in the proposal is in conformity with the land use proposed in the approved Mining Plan.

In view of the above, I am directed to request the State Government to submit the information, as indicated above, to this Ministry for further necessary action in the matter.

Yours faithfully,
sd/-
(Charan Jeet Singh)
Scientist 'D'

Copy to:-

1. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Government of Odisha, Bhubaneswar.
2. Regional Officer (Central), Integrated Regional Office of the MoEF&CC at Bhubaneswar
3. Nodal Officer (FCA), Government of Odisha, Bhubaneswar.
4. Monitoring Cell of FC Divisions, MoEF&CC, New Delhi.
5. Guard file.