

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bag Road, Aliganj,
New Delhi – 110003
Dated: 5th July, 2023

To,

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

Subject: Diversion of 229.348 ha forest land in compartment No. RF-272, 273 & 274 of Waidhan Range for the extension of Nigahi Open-cast Coal Mining Project by M/s Northern Coalfield Limited under Singrauli Forest Division, Singrauli District of Madhya Pradesh State (Online No. FP/MP/MIN/140863/2021) - reg.

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer the PCCF (LM) and Nodal Officer, FCA, 1980, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh letter No. F-1/840/2023/10-11/2189 dated 26.05.2023 forwarding a fresh proposal on the above subject seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section-2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. After examining the proposal, the following shortcomings have been observed:

- i. As per the online Part-1(A-1)of the application form it has been mentioned that the Nigahi Expansion Opencast Project (25 MTPA) is an expansion project of existing Nigahi OCP (21 MTPA). Total land requirement for the Nigahi Expansion OCP is 3582.723, out of which 3018.40 Ha has already been acquired for Nigahi OCP (21 MTPA), and 564.323 Ha land is additionally required for expansion project. Whereas, as per online Part-1(M-1) it has been mentioned that the total area of the mining lease is 564.323 ha. which needs clarification.
- ii. The detail of the forest land already diverted within the entire Nigahi OCP and the status of compliance of the conditions stipulated therein is required to be submitted.
- iii. The details of the mined out areas reclaimed by the User agency within the mining lease shall be submitted by the State govt.
- iv. Instead of a complete copy of approved mining plan, only Expansion Project Report has been uploaded in the application form. The complete copy of the mining plan along with the progressive mining closure plan and the details of the approval has not been submitted, which is required to be done.
- v. The details of the validity of the entire mining lease along with detailed chronology of approvals of the mining lease shall be submitted.
- vi. The land use map uploaded against the Mining details in the online Part-I shows the outer boundary of 229.348 ha forest land proposed for diversion. The detailed land use map showing different components proposed to be taken up needs to be uploaded/ submitted.
- vii. The KML files indicating different components of the project, including those proposed to be undertaken on non-forest land shall be submitted.
- viii. Cost benefit analysis indicates a CB ratio of 1:28.04 which seems to be on higher side. The same shall be re-examined by the State govt.
- ix. The area proposed for diversion is having high biological richness as per DSS analysis. The justification for proposing such biodiversity rich area for mining when other unbroken area is available in the vicinity shall be submitted. Also the State Govt. shall submit the

status of unbroken area available in the vicinity of the proposed diversion and within the mining lease area (**Map enclosed**).

- x. As per Satellite imagery the forest area already diverted has still not been fully utilized, moreover unbroken non-forest land is available in the mining lease. The justification for seeking fresh diversion in view of above is required to be submitted.
- xi. Satellite imagery shows that safety zone of in the Nigahi and the adjoining mine has not been maintained. The State Govt. shall submit the status of safety zone maintained in the mined out area.
- xii. Details of coal evacuation plan and involvement of forest land, if any, shall be intimated.
- xiii. The Details of proposed reclamation/back-filled area at the end of mine life has not been given in the project report. The same needs submission.
- xiv. The State Govt. recommended the proposal subject to fulfillment of the Wildlife Management plan at the cost of user agency. However, the copy of undertaking from the user agency has not been submitted. The same needs submission.
- xv. Satellite imagery shows that the construction of a building has been carried out after the year 2018 within the proposed forest land for diversion. This needs justification.
- xvi. As per the DSS analysis, two seasonal nullahas are flowing through the proposed forest land for diversion for which the provisions of conservation and protection measures have not been suggested by the State. Therefore, comments of the water resource department on the proposed measures and impact of the project on the hydrological regimes are required to be submitted.
- xvii. DSS analysis reported the presence of 1876.471 ha total forest area in the 3582.723 ha mining lease area out of which approval under the FCA, 1980 had already been taken for an area of 1298.663 ha forest land and instant forest diversion proposal comprises an area of 229.348 ha. Therefore, the status of balance 348.46 ha Recorded forest (RF/PF) land is required to be submitted along with the status of revenue forest land if any located within the lease.
- xviii. DSS analysis revealed that the proposed CA patches namely RF-55, RF-56 and PF-751 are having encroachment in the form of Agriculture land. Therefore, the revised CA patches free from all sorts of encroachment & encumbrances shall be uploaded/provided.
- xix. As DSS analysis (**copy enclosed**), the proposed CA patches namely RF-579, PF-165, RF-377, PF 123 & PF 125, RF 562 & RF 564 and PF-775 are having presence of Moderately Dense Forest as per the ISFR-2021. Hence, these CA patches do not appear to be in consonance with the guidelines issued by the Ministry in this regard. Therefore the State Govt. shall revisit these CA areas and submit revised CA patches along with relevant details/schemes/kml files.

Accordingly, it is requested to furnish the above mentioned information to this Ministry for further consideration of the proposal.

Encl: As Above

Signed by

Suneet Bhardwaj

Date: 05-07-2023 15:40:19

Yours sincerely,

Sd/-

(Suneet Bhardwaj)

Assistant 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;

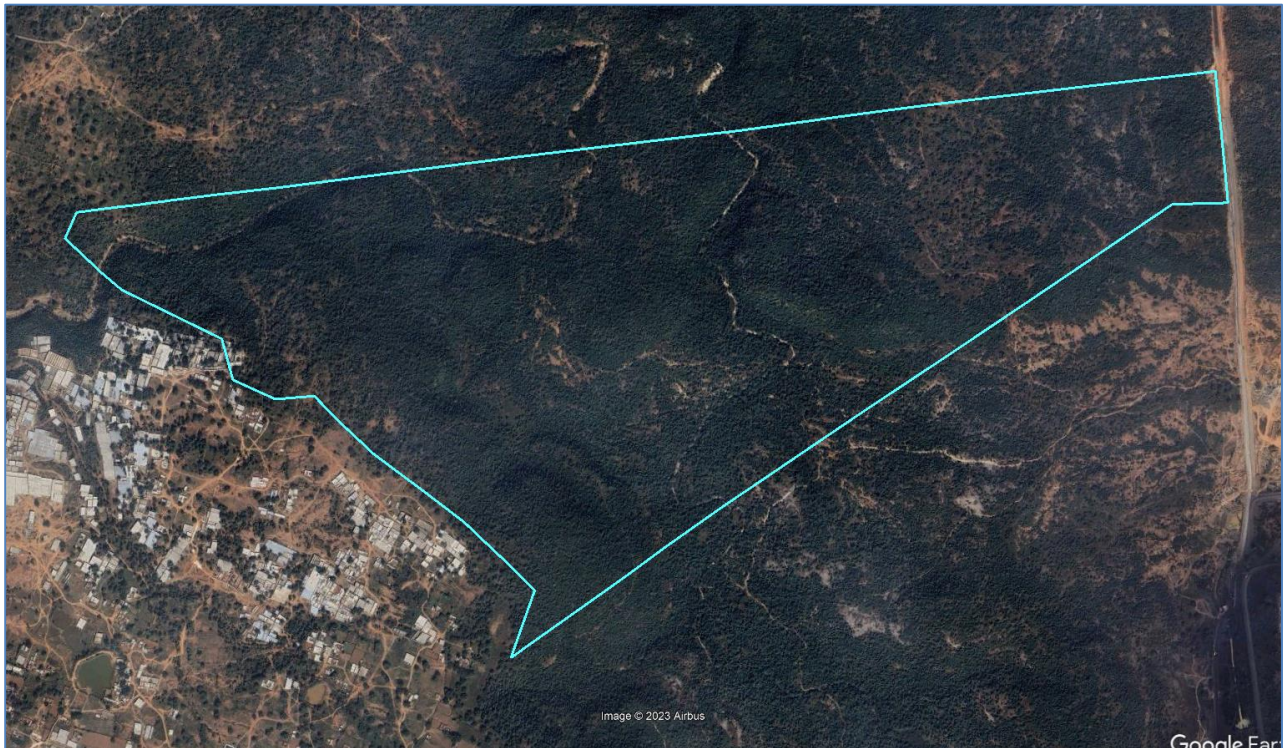
I/47834/2023

5. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF & CC, New Delhi for uploading on PARIVESH portal.

Google imagery showing the Mining lease, approved forest land & proposed forest land for diversion



Proposed 244.536 forest land for diversion



Proposal: Proposal for diversion of 229.348 ha forest land in compartment No. RF-272, 273 & 274 of Waidhan Range for the extension of Nigahi Open-cast Coal Mining Project by M/s Northern Coalfield Limited under Singrauli Forest Division, Singrauli District of Madhya Pradesh State (Online No. FP/MP/MIN/140863/2021)

Summary of DSS Analysis Report:

I. In Case of Land proposed for Diversion:

1. Proposed forest area for diversion falls under Sidhi district of Madhya Pradesh State.
2. Calculated area of Shape file/ KML file of Forest land proposed for diversion is found 229.348 Ha (software calculated). However, the user agency has not uploaded the KML file as per the component wise break-up given in PART-I form of the PARIVESH.
3. There is no wildlife sanctuary, National park, Tiger reserve and Tiger reserve is located within 10 KM buffer distance from the forest patches proposed for diversion. However, the State Govt. in Part-II form has mentioned that as per working plan of this division the applied area comes inside the elephant corridor.
4. High resolution satellite imagery shows that the construction of a building has been carried out after the year 2018 within the proposed forest land for diversion.
5. Google imagery shows that the two tributary/ seasonal nallah are also flowing through the proposed forest land for diversion.
6. The user agency has uploaded the KML file of Mining lease boundary and its total area is found 3582.723 ha instead of 564.323 ha as mentioned in the online Part-I form.
7. Out of 3582.723 ha area of the mining lease, total area of the forest land is found 1876.471 ha and out of this 1876.471 ha forest land, the user agency has taken approval under the FCA, 1980 for an area of 1298.663 ha forest land and submitted an instant forest diversion proposal for an area of 229.348 ha. Hence, the status of balance 348.46 ha Recorded forest (RF/PF) land is not available in the proposal. Moreover, the State Govt. may also be requested to provide the status of revenue forest land located in the lease.
8. The instant proposal falls under Not-Inviolate or Not-In high conservation zone (NHCV) category as per the DSS Rule-1 & 2.
9. **Forest Cover in the instant project:** Out of total 229 Ha (DSS calculated) forest area of instant project, 42 ha of land is characterized with Very Dense Forest, 144 ha of land is characterized with Moderately Dense Forest and 43 ha. of land as Open forest in terms of forest classes (as per the ISFR 2021) based on the interpretation of satellite data period 2019.
10. Forest Types details: 5B/C1 c Dry Peninsular Sal Forest: 189 ha, 5B/C2 Northern Dry Mixed Deciduous Forest: 31 Ha and Non-Forest: 10 ha.

II. In Case of Compensatory Afforestation Land:

1. Compensatory afforestation has been proposed over forest land (twice in extent to the forest land proposed to be diverted) in 16 patches comprising an area of 557 Ha (DSS Calculated) located in Sidhi District. However, the State Govt. reported an area of 500 ha for CA.
2. In terms of standards followed in ISFR 2021 (interpretation of satellite data period 2019) regarding density classes is given below:

S.No	PF/RF	Range	Compt. No	State Govt. Area (ha.)	Software Area (ha)	DSS Area (ha)	VDF	MDF	OF	Scrub	NF
1	RF	Bargawan	RF 583	30	30.020	30	0	0	5	0	25
2	RF	Bargawan	RF 579	54	60.717	60	0	6	11	0	43

3	RF	Bargawan	RF 246	20	20.012	20	0	0	8	0	12
4	PF	Gorbi	PF 152	53	53.019	53	0	0	8	0	45
5	PF	Gorbi	PF 165	19	30.883	32	0	13	16	0	3
6	RF	Chitrangi	RF 55	10	9.975	9	3	3	0	0	3
7	RF	East Sarai	RF 377	18	25.488	25	0	7	13	0	5
8	RF	East Sarai	RF 373	26	26.829	27	0	1	26	0	0
9	PF	Gorbi	PF 123 PF 125	29	35.915	37	0	8	14	0	15
10	RF	Mada	RF 562 RF 564	40	54.996	55	0	15	15	0	25
11	RF	Chitrangi	RF 56	46	49.943	50	17	13	0	0	20
12	PF	Jiyavan	PF 751	20	25.004	25	0	5	17	0	3
13	PF	Jiyavan	PF 775	25	25.019	25	0	7	6	0	12
14	RF	Mada	RF 515	30	29.984	30	0	0	11	0	19
15	RF	Mada	RF 573	50	49.919	50	0	0	22	0	28
16	RF	Mada	RF 571	30	29.924	29	0	0	5	24	0
		Total		500	557.647	557	20	78	177	24	258

- Forest Cover in CA land:** Out of total 557 ha (DSS Calculated) forest land proposed for CA, 20 ha of land is characterized with Very Dense Forest, 78 Ha of land is having Moderately Dense Forest, 177 ha area of land as Open Forest, 24 ha is Scrub and 258 ha. of land as Non Forest (land devoid of tree cover) in terms of forest classes (as per the ISFR 2021) based on the interpretation of satellite data period 2019.
- It is learnt that the proposed CA patches namely RF-55, RF-56 and PF-751 are having encroachment of Agriculture land. Therefore, the State Govt. may be requested to revise these CA patches and provide the CA site free from encroachment.

Submitted please.

Prashant Tiwari
STA, DSS Cell (FC)
23.06.2023

Decision Support System (DSS):

Decision Rule no. 1:

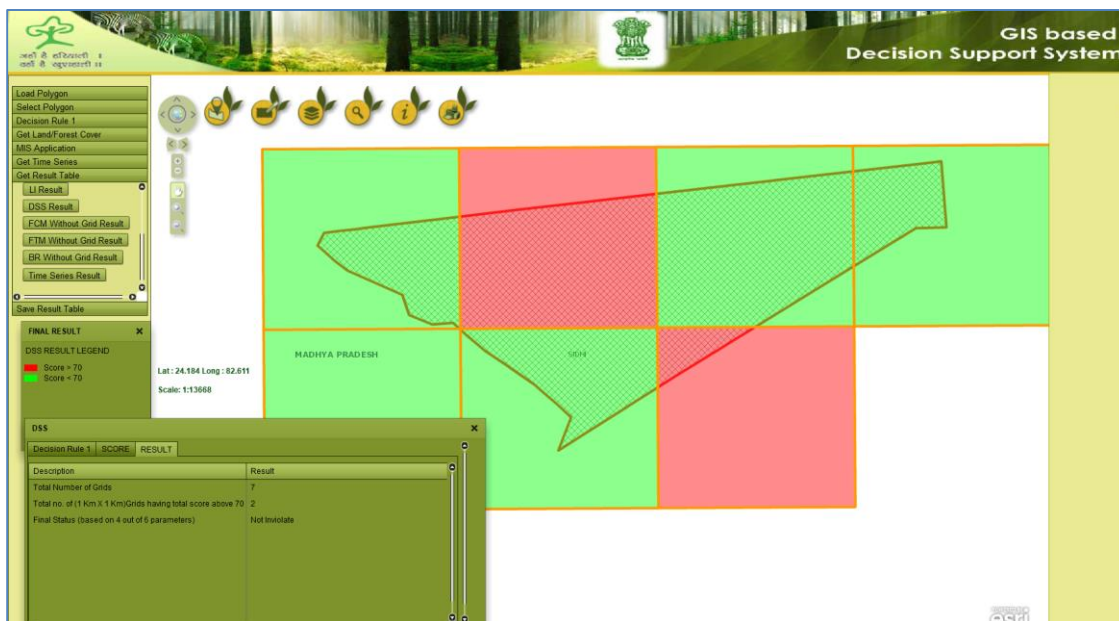
Whether forms part of:

- I. Hydrological Layer:
 - a. Major River: **N/A**
 - b. Wetland (Area more than 10 ha.): **N/A**
 - c. Water bodies (irrigation/Hydropower/water storage): **N/A**
- II. Very Dense Forest patch (>1 sq km): **N/A**
- III. Remnant Forest Type: **N/A**
- IV. Protected area/Tiger Reserves/Tiger corridors: **N/A**
- V. Wild life Species: **N/A**

Decision Rule no.2:

Without 50% Rule:

GRIDID	SCOREFCM	SCOREFTM	SCOREBR	SCORELANDSCAPE	AGGREGATESCORE
1536000	62.65	60.87	76.46	47.45	61.86
1536001	79.21	79.81	78.01	46.27	70.83
1536002	70.77	77.52	85.39	43.31	69.25
1536003	50.05	58.44	76.34	40.73	56.39
1538290	73.72	78.97	86.95	43.88	70.88
1538289	55.55	40.48	76.94	46.77	54.94
1538288	32.91	14.29	75.05	48.87	42.78



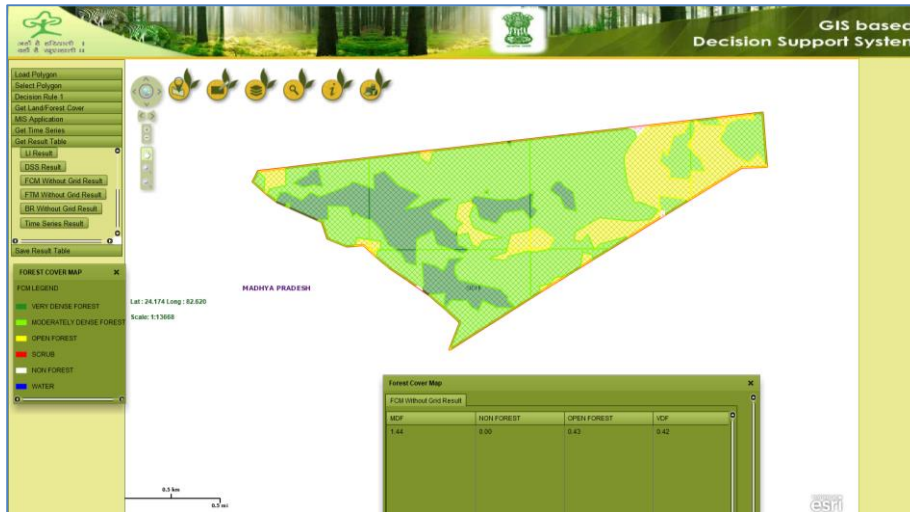
DESCRIPTION	RESULT
Total Number of Grids	7
Total no. of (1 Km X 1 Km)Grids having total score above 70	2
Final Status (based on 4 out of 6 parameters)	Not-Inviolat

Final Result: Not-Inviolat (Based on Decision Rule 1 & 2)

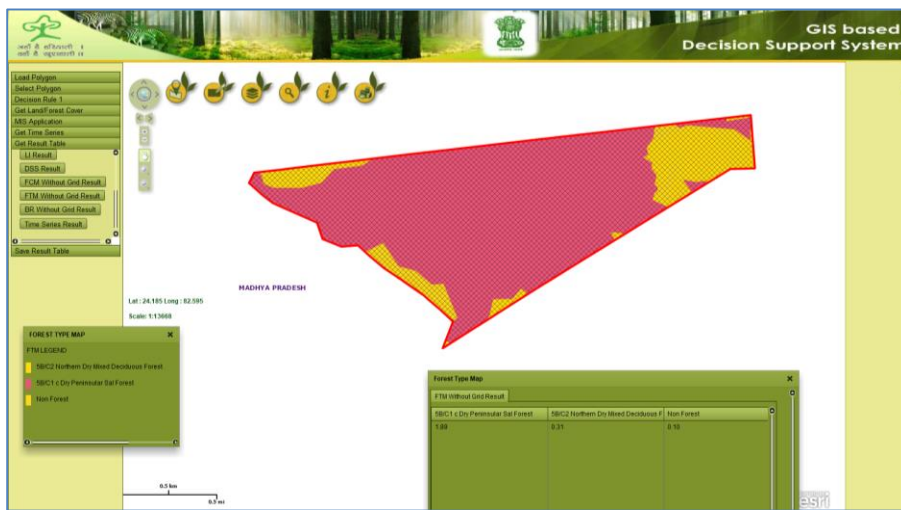
Forest Cover Map:

In terms of standards followed in ISFR 2021 (interpretation of satellite data period 2019) regarding density classes:

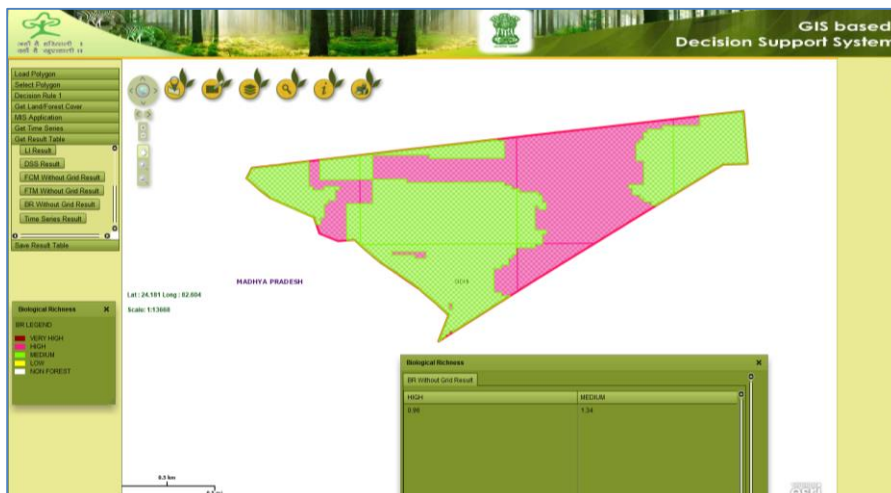
- I. Very Dense Forest (Canopy density 70% & above): 42 ha.
- II. Moderately dense Forest (canopy density 40-70%): 144 ha.
- III. Open Forest (canopy density 10-40%): 43 ha.
- IV. Non-forest: 0.00 Ha



Forest Type Map: 5B/C1 c Dry Peninsular Sal Forest: 189 ha, 5B/C2 Northern Dry Mixed Deciduous Forest: 31 Ha and Non-Forest: 10 ha.



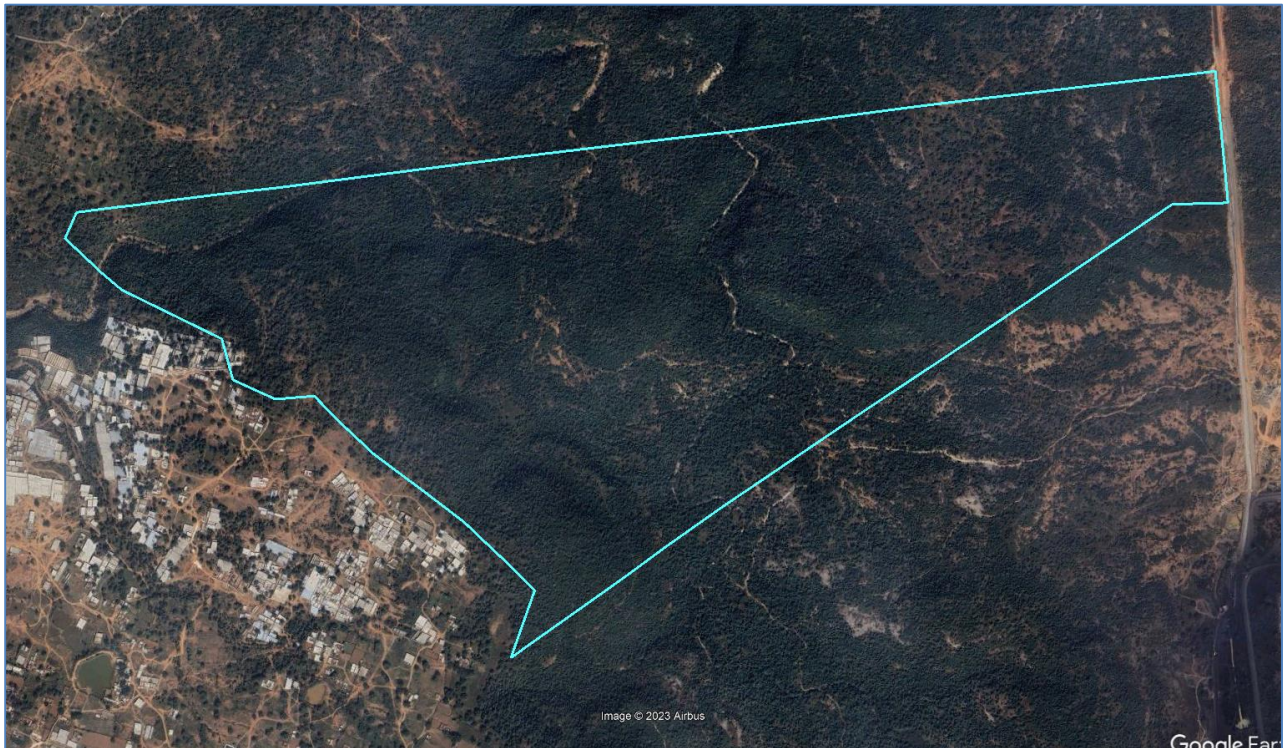
Biological Richness: High: 96 ha and Medium: 134 ha



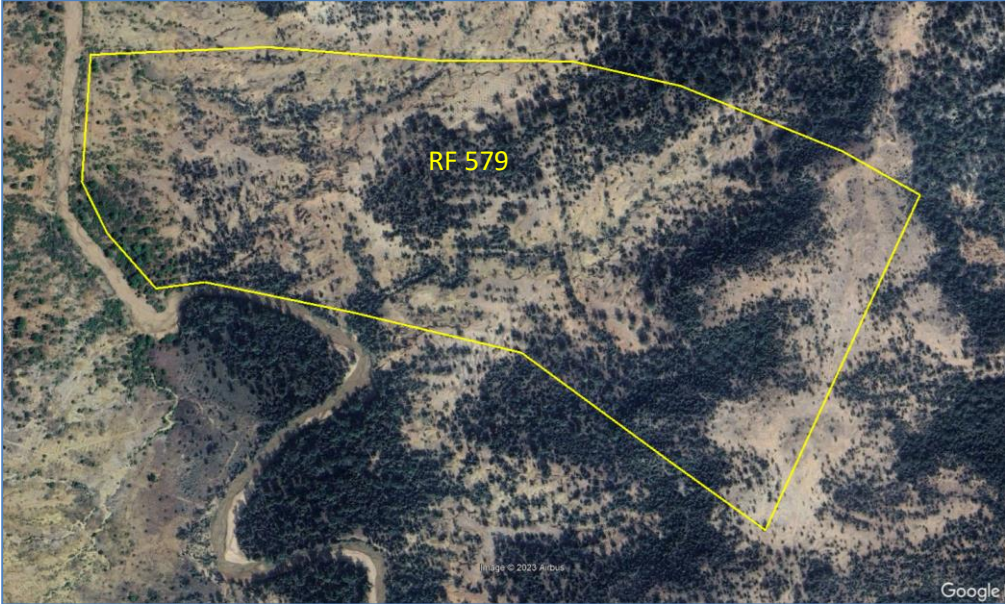
Google imagery showing the Mining lease, approved forest land & proposed forest land for diversion

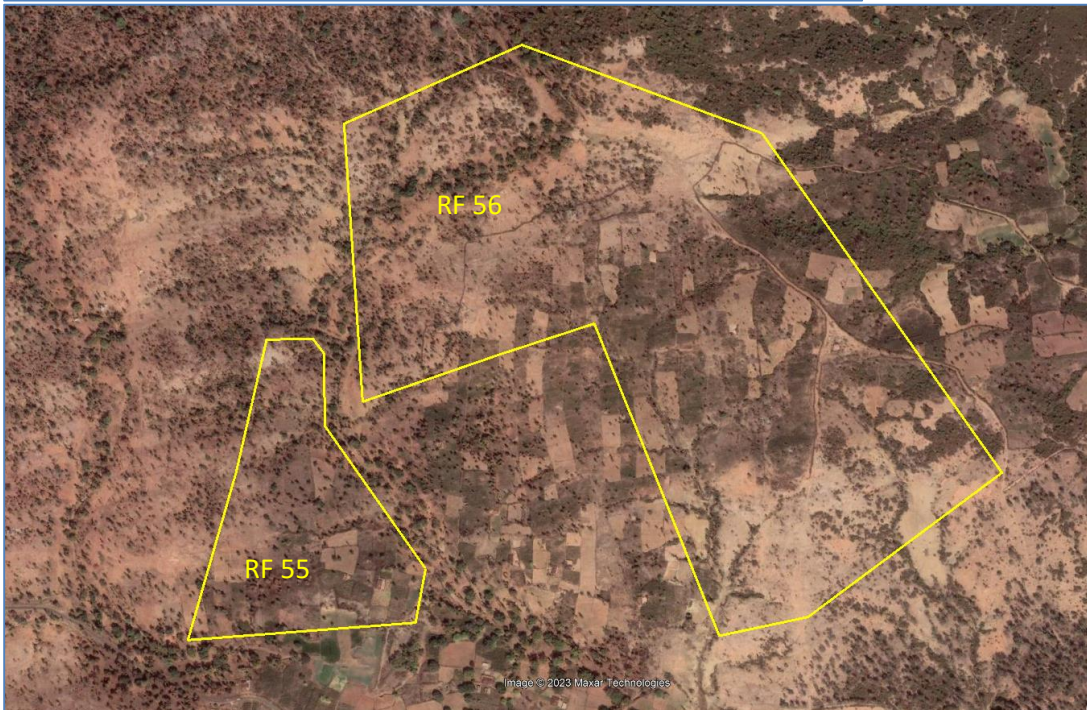
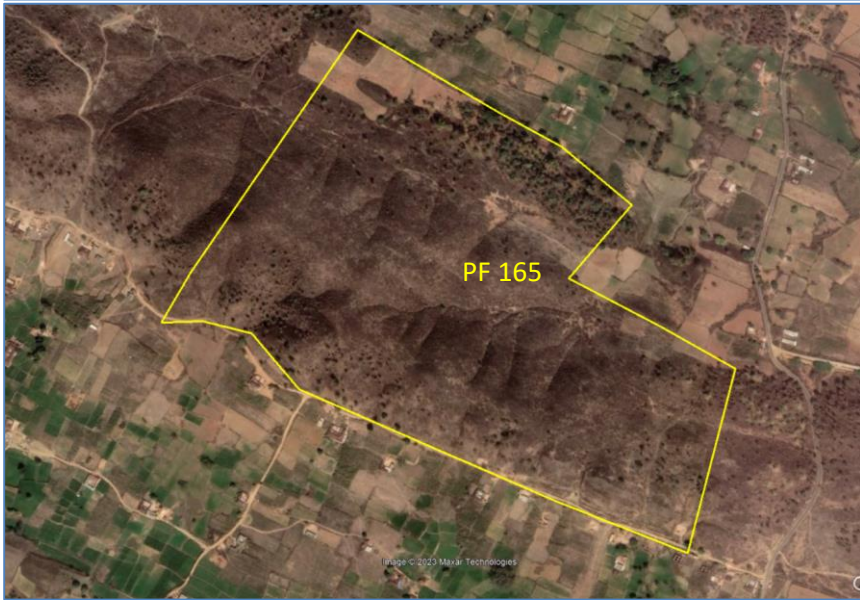
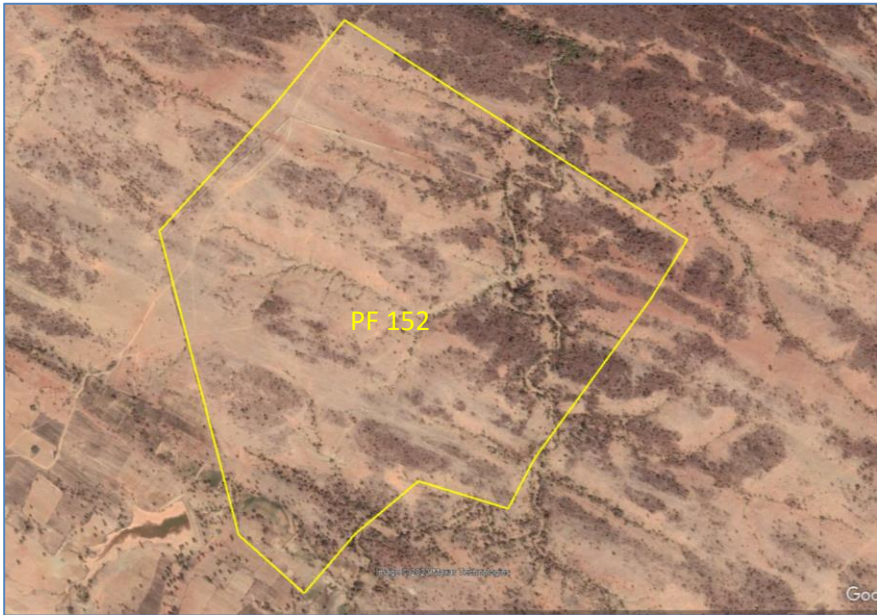


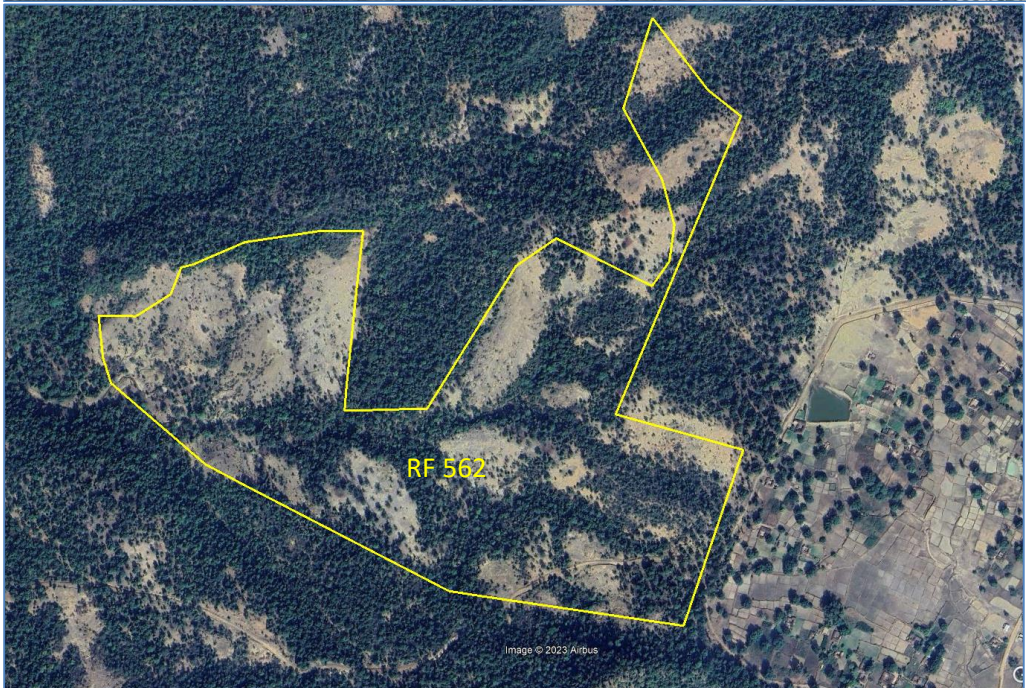
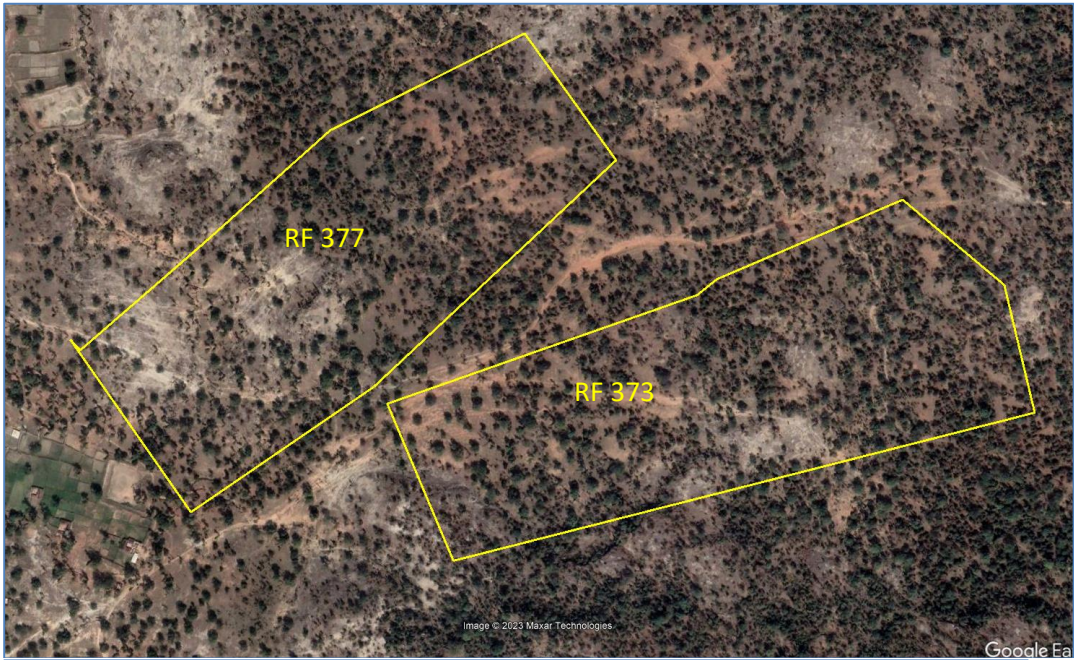
Proposed 244.536 forest land for diversion



Google imagery showing the forest land proposed for CA







Encroachment of agriculture

