

**Minutes of the 53<sup>rd</sup> meeting of Regional Empowered Committee (REC) of Integrated Regional Office (IRO), Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC), Govt. of India, Ranchi held on 05.08.2022.**

The 53<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Regional Empowered Committee (REC) of Integrated Regional Office, MoEF&CC, Ranchi was conducted on 05.08.2022 (Friday) through Video Conferencing. The following members of the Committee and representatives of User Agencies were present during the Video Conferencing:

1.	Shri Santosh Tewari, Deputy Director General Forest (Central), Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Integrated Regional Office, Ranchi	Chairperson
2.	Dr. Ashok K. Ghosh, Professors Colony, Sheopuri, P.O.Sastrinagar, Patna – 800023, Bihar	Non-official Member
3.	Shri Sudhir Kumar Sahu, G-18, People's Co-Operative Colony, Kankarbagh, Patna – 800020	Non-official Member
4.	Shri Arvinder Singh, Addl. PCCF-cum-Nodal Officer (FC), Deptt. Of Environment, Forests & Climate Change Government of Bihar.	Special Invitee
5.	Shri P.Upadhyay, Conservator of Forests (Adm.), O/o PCCF, Jharkhand State Forest Department, Government of Jharkhand.	Special Invitee
6.	Shri Shashi Shankar, Assistant Inspector General of Forests (Central), Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Integrated Regional Office, Ranchi.	Member Secretary
7.	Shri. Arvind Kumar Singh, Executive Engineer, NH Division, Bhagalpur.	User Agency
8.	Shri Saket Raushan, Executive Engineer, NH Division, Munger.	User Agency
9.	Shri Abhishek Kabra, Hindustan Polytex Industries Pvt. Limited, Jharkhand	User Agency

At the onset, the Member Secretary welcomed the Chairperson and all the members of the committee and other participants of the meeting. Thereafter, the





agenda items were examined and discussed by the committee members, the details of which are as follows:

**Agenda Item No.53.1 (Bihar)**

**Online/ IRO Proposal No: FP/BR/ROAD/129597/2021**

Diversion of 34.212 ha (31.37 ha before revision) forest land in favor of EE NH Division, Bhagalpur, RCD Bihar for rehabilitation and upgrading to 2 lanes with paved shoulders and strengthening of NH-80, Munger-Bariyapur-Sultanganj Section (Km 70.150 – Km 121.025) road in Munger & Bhagalpur district of Bihar.

Regional Empowered Committee examined and discussed the proposal seeking diversion of 34.212 ha (31.37 ha before revision) forest land in favour of NH Division for rehabilitation and upgrading to 2 lanes with paved shoulders and strengthening of NH-80, Munger-Bariyapur-Sultanganj Section (Km 70.150 – Km 121.025) road in Munger & Bhagalpur district of Bihar.

While examining the proposal, the committee took note of the fact that there are 5088 trees likely to be affected by the project and out of them 2784 trees are proposed for translocation and 2304 trees are proposed for felling. In a similar proposal by same user agency in the previous RECs meeting, the committee had demanded a comprehensive tree translocation plan along with the proposal when such a large number of trees are proposed for translocation, surprisingly same plan is missing in this proposal too. The representative of user agency tried to inform the committee of the translocation plan theoretically, but the same was highly obscure without any technical rationality.

Further, the extant proposal was examined for its rationality and the CA area too was examined by the committee. While examining the kml of the area proposed for diversion, it was found that the kml submitted is not overlapping the desired area of the diversion but is shifted by 20-25 meters throughout its course. The committee was disappointed on the fact that this very basic and perhaps the most fundamental component of the application was uploaded incorrectly by user agency and it remained unnoticed by all the processing authorities of state right from DFO to Nodal office. The committee demanded to Nodal Officer that such laxity should be avoided on all counts.

As per DSS analysis report, out of 69.264 ha of proposed CA land (software calculated), 44 ha is categorized as **Moderately Dense Forest**. So committee expresses doubt on its suitability. But the nodal officer apprised that the vegetation visible on google earth is shrubby and the area indeed is suitable for CA as per the suitability report submitted by the DFO concerned.

The committee enquired about the strip plantation plan, but the same was neither tried nor explored for inclusion in the project by the user agency.



Committee reminded the user agency towards their duty for environment protection too than project implementation only.

**Decision of REC:**

After detailed discussion on various aspects of the proposal, the Committee directed the State Forest Department/User Agency to submit the document/ clarification/ information on the following points:

- i.) The State Forest Department should closely examine the proposals and should only forward the application to central government if found complete and in proper order with all the relevant details.
- ii.) The KML file of the proposed area should be corrected and uploaded.
- iii.) Tree Translocation plan should be meticulously designed in consultation with forest department keeping past results in mind. Such comprehensive translocation plan must be submitted with the proposal.
- iv.) The User agency shall prepare and submit Roadside Plantation Scheme as per the IRC norms on the basis of available blank area in RoW to maintain greenery along the upgraded road. Such Plantation Scheme shall be implemented by the State Forest Department at the cost provided by User Agency through CAMPA.

**Agenda Item No.53.2 (Jharkhand)****Online/ IRO Proposal No: FP/JH/ROAD/50230/2020**

Diversion of 0.11 ha of forest land in favour of Hindustan Polytex Industries Pvt. Limited for construction of approach road in Seraikela district of Jharkhand..

Regional Empowered Committee discussed the proposal seeking diversion of 0.11 ha of forest land in favour of Hindustan Polytex Industries Pvt. Limited for construction of approach road in Seraikela district of Jharkhand. The salient points described in the fact-sheet of the project proposal and other relevant issues in context that were considered by the Committee.

The committee took cognizance that User Agency has violated Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 by using the proposed approach road without due permission under Act. During meeting, it was apprised that concerned DFO has already stopped all transportation and construction activities from immediate effect. In this regards, DFO has lodged case (Case No. 1283 dated 04.05.2022) against the User Agency in Adityapur PS of Saraikela district, Jharkhand.

As per Ministry's new guideline, it is needed to put proposal on REC in the case of violation of FC Act. The committee desired that a site inspection visit should be undertaken by IRO Ranchi to assess the factual position of the proposal. It therefore, deferred the proposal to next REC meeting to discuss it



along with the site inspection report for finalizing its stand before forwarding it to the ministry.

**Decision of REC:**

After detailed discussion on various aspects of the proposal, the REC Committee members desired that a site inspection should be done by IRO before placing it to next REC for discussion because in this proposal violation is involved.

The meeting then concluded with a vote of thanks by the chair.

*Approval conveyed through email on*

**09.08.2022**

**Dr.Ashok Ghosh**

*(Non-Official Member)*

*Approval conveyed through email on*

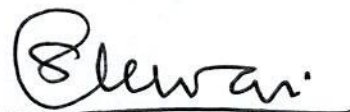
**09.08.2022**

**S.K.Sahu**

*(Non-Official Member)*

  
(Shashi Shankar)

*AIGF (C) Cum Member Secretary - REC  
IRO, MoEF&CC, Ranchi*

  
(Santosh Tewari)

*Dy.DGF (C) & Chairman - REC  
IRO, MoEF&CC, Ranchi*

Copy to:

1. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF), Deptt. of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Government of Bihar, Aranya Bhawan, Shahid Pir Ali Khan Path, Patna - 800 014 for further necessary action.
2. The Principal Secretary, Department of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Government of Bihar, Sichai Bhawan Secretariat, Patna - 800015.
3. The PCCF-cum-Nodal Officer (FC), Forests, Environment & Climate Change Department, Government of Jharkhand, Van Bhavan, Doranda, Ranchi.

  
(Shashi Shankar)

Assistant Inspector General of Forests