

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bag Road, Aliganj,
New Delhi – 110003
Dated: As per E-sign

To,
The Principal Secretary (Forests),
Government of Maharashtra,
Mumbai.

Subject: Proposal for seeking prior approval of the Central Government under Section 2 (1) (ii) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 for renewal of mining lease over 80.77 ha forest land for Durgapur Open Cast Mine Project by M/s WCL in compartment No 400 and 401 of Chandrapur Forest Division, Chandrapur District of Maharashtra State. (Online No. FP/MH/MIN/6704/2014) - regarding.

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer the Government of Maharashtra letter No. FLD-2019/CR-310/F-10 dated 19.06.2024 on the above cited subject. In this regard, the following shortcomings have been observed in the information submitted by the State Govt.:

- i. Recommendation of the Nodal officer, Govt. of Maharashtra in Part-IV has not been submitted with the proposal.
- ii. The State Govt. in Part-II form mentioned the Canopy density of the proposed forest land for renewal of lease as Nil whereas good vegetation cover is visible through satellite imagery in the proposed land. Also the CCF in its site inspection report has mentioned that 45 no. of trees are marked for feeling. This needs clarification and the factual position needs submission.
- iii. The mining plan for 80.77 ha forest land for renewal submitted with the proposal is of year 2007. Therefore, the validity and the relevance of the same shall be examined and revised and updated mining plan along with progressive mine closure plan shall be submitted accordingly. The state shall

also ensure that the land use plan/component wise break up of the area in the proposal is commensurate with the approved mining plan. A comparative analysis of the same shall also be submitted.

- iv. Total area of the mining lease has not been found updated in the Part-I of the application form of the proposal.
- v. The State Govt. shall submit the status of Mine lease validity along with the relevant details.
- vi. Proposal for 80.77 ha of forest land has been approved by the MoEF&CC, New Delhi vide letter No. 8-123/2003-FC dated 08.11.2005 for 8 years i.e. till 2013. In this regard, date on which the mining was stopped in the 80.77 ha forest land along with present status of land needs submission.
- vii. Cost benefit analysis has been carried out on the old NPV rates. The same needs to be revisited and required to be submitted as per the format prescribed in the consolidated Handbook of Guidelines issued by the Ministry on dated 29.12.2023.
- viii. The details of mineral evacuation plan along with supporting maps/ KML file and involvement of forest land, if any, shall be intimated. The State Shall also clarify how the requirement of electricity & water will be met by the user agency.
- ix. The user agency has informed that the 80.77 ha forest land in the instant proposal will be utilized for dumping of overburden removed from the approved forest area of 121.58 ha forest land. However, reason behind such non-site specific utilization of proposed forest land under renewal has not been given. Further, instead of just furnishing mining, complete component details of the proposed forest land shall be updated in the Part-I form along with component wise KML file/ maps needs submission.
- x. Complete & updated compliance report of the approval granted by the Ministry vide its letter No 8-123/2003-FC dated 8/11/2005 has not been submitted with the proposal. The same requires submission.
- xi. It is observed that the user agency is obtaining the approvals under Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 of the forest land within the lease in piecemeal manner. The State Govt. may offer their comments in this regard.
- xii. It has been reported by the State Govt. that the user agency has obtained forest clearance vide various letter references of the Ministry and each of them is having different forest area within the Durgapur Mine. In this regard, a tabular data along with Map/ KML file showing the total Mining lease area, Forest land approved, validity of approvals granted under Van Adhiniyam, 1980 vis-à-vis validity of lease, Land surrendered & reclaimed under each

approval shall be submitted.

- xiii. The State Govt. shall inform whether the approval of safety zone has been obtained or otherwise.
- xiv. The user agency has not uploaded the component wise KML file along with KML file of the safety zone of the forest land proposed for renewal.
- xv. KML file of 162 ha degraded forest land earlier proposed for Compensatory afforestation (CA) shall be submitted.
- xvi. As per the DSS, the proposed forest land for diversion is located at a distance of 1.89 Km from the Tadoba-Indravati Tiger Reserve. Further, the proposed forest land is located at a distance of 5.68 Km from the Tadoba-Indravati Tiger Corridor. The comments of the CWLW in this regard shall be submitted.
- xvii. The user agency has reported that the 40.46 ha area was already handed over by the Govt. of Maharashtra vide order No FLD/3679/1453-F3 dated 23.05.1980. However, the legal status of land, details of the land along with KML file has not been given. A detailed report in this regard shall be submitted.
- xviii. The kml file of earlier approved CA along with the status of the CA plantation and status of uploading of CA details on e-Green watch portal shall be submitted.
- xix. The DFO has written that no violation is there since area is yet to be broken, however since it is a case of renewal the statement of DFO does not seem coherent. This needs clarification.
- xx. The mine is in proximity of buffer of Tadoba Tiger Reserve. Buffer of the a TR reserve is a legal entity and remains part of the ESZ. The status of ESZ and of tiger corridor shall be submitted.
- xxi. The details of the reclamation of mine and area handed over along with the status of vegetation on reclaimed area shall be submitted.
- xxii. The details of the non forest land involved in the mine shall be submitted.

It is therefore requested that the information on shortcomings, as indicated above, may be submitted for further consideration of the proposal.

Yours sincerely,

Signed by
Suneet Bhardwaj
Date: 02-08-2024 14:59:48

Sd/-
(Suneet Bhardwaj)
Assistant Inspector General of Forests

Copy to:

1. The PCCF (HoFF), Department of Forest, Government of Maharashtra, Nagpur;
2. The Dy. DGF (Central), Regional Office, MoEF&CC, Nagpur;
3. The Nodal Officer, Department of Forest, Government of Maharashtra, Nagpur;
4. User Agency;
5. Monitoring Cell, FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi for uploading on PARIVESH portal.