



GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
DIRECTORATE OF FORESTS
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No: 2822 /SEC/2M-10 (ESSAR)

Dated: 13/09/2022.

REVISED Joint Site Inspection report of Chief Conservator of Forests, South-East Circle, WB with DFO's and other field officers of Burdwan and Durgapur Forest Division in respect of proposal for diversion of 17.6962 ha. of Forest Land in favour of Essar Oil and Exploration and Production Limited.

This patch of forest in Paschim Bardhaman is still very dense and is rich in Biodiversity. These patch of forests is the remnant of the dense forests that existed before intensive anthropogenic activities started taking place in the landscape. The JFMCs are sincerely watchful towards the forests and they are very much benefitted from forestry operations which are done regularly and ensures their active involvement in forest and wildlife protection. Elephants take shelter in this patch of forests at times during their movement and in recent times with increase in movement of elephants towards Bardhaman, elephants are guided towards these existing patch of forests only to avoid their movement in densely populated human habitations and to avoid any untoward incidence. If these patch of greenery is tampered with, Human Elephant Conflict shall rise beyond control during their occasional visits. Predominant crop is Sal along with its associates and diversified medicinal plants Akanda (*Calatropis gigantina*), Asamlata (*Chromolaena odorata*), Atari (*Combretum roxburgali sprengii*), Bainchi (*Flacourtia jangomas Lour Raeusch*), Kurchi (*Holarrhena antidysenterica Wall*), Nishinda (*Vitex negunda Linn*), Satamuli (*Asparagus racemosa Wild*), Shialkanta (*Mimos rubicaulis Lamk*), Kalmegh (*Addrographis paniculata*), Latapalash (*Butea superba Roxb*)} have naturally flourished as undergrowth / climbers. Apart from that the proposed forest area is teeming with many Wild animals as follows:

| Name | Scientific Name | Status under Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 |
|------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Indian Grey Wolf | <i>Canis lupus pallipes</i> | Schedule-I |
| Jackal | <i>Canis aureus</i> | Schedule-II Part-II (2B) |
| Hyaena | <i>Hyaena hyaena</i> | Schedule-III Part (12) |
| Wild Boar (pig) | <i>Sus scrofa</i> | Schedule-III (19) |
| Indian Porcupine | <i>Hystrix indica</i> | Schedule-IV (4) |
| Common Fox | <i>Vulpes bengalensis</i> | Schedule-II(1B) |
| Pangolin | <i>Manis crassicaudata</i> | Schedule-I (28) |
| Civets | <i>Viverridae spp</i> | Schedule-II, Part-II (1A) |
| Mongoose | <i>Herpestes spp</i> | Schedule-IV (6A) |
| Common langur | <i>Presbytis entellus</i> | Schedule-II Part-I (4A) |

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| Common Hare/ Black Naped Hare | <i>Caprolagus hispidus</i> | Schedule-IV (4) |
| Jungle Cat | <i>Felis chaus</i> | Schedule-II Part-II 2(C) |
| Indian Cobra | <i>Naga specis</i> | Schedule-II Part-II (11) |
| King Cobra | Ophiophagus Hannah) | Schedule-II Part-II (12) |
| Russel's viper | <i>Vipera ruselli (Daboia russelii)</i> | Schedule-II Part-II (14) |
| Indian Python | Genus <i>Python</i> | Schedule-I (14A) |
| Peafowl | <i>Pavo cristatus</i> | Schedule- I Part-III (11) |
| Grey Francolin/ Partridges | Phasianidae | Schedule-IV (51) |
| Boter/Quails | Rhasianidae | Schedule-IV (57) |
| Monitor Lizard | <i>Varanus spp.</i> | Schedule-II, Part-II (15) |

Etc.

05 Nos of the proposed project sites namely EDD-351 and EDD-365 under Durgapur Division and EDI 336, EDI 345, EDI 347 under Burdwan Division were jointly re-visited by undersigned along with DFOs, ADFO and other field staffs of Burdwan and Durgapur Forest Divisions and project proponents on 02-09-2022. All the sites were thoroughly inspected and following observations were made.

Project Proposals under Durgapur Forest Division submitted by ESSAR

| Division | Pad Name | Range | Mouza | Tree Count in Well Pad | Tree Count is approach Road | Total Number of Trees | Area proposed for Diversion (Well pad + Approach road+pipeline) | Remarks |
|----------|----------|-------|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|---|--|
| Durgapur | EDD-366 | | Gopedanga | 636 | 6 | 642 | 0.745 | The Gopedanga forest area is significant from the point of view of biodiversity in Durgapur Division (Pachim Bardhaman District). Because of the water harvesting structure created, the area provides a suitable habitat for small wild animals and existence of such wild lives is easily found. The area is both ecologically/geologically fragile as well as it includes fragile lateritic terrain because of which the attention of the team of Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA) drawn who visited on 21/05/2022 for possible Soil and Moisture Conservation work. This area in Gopedanga is the last |
| | EDD-321 | | Chak Bishnupur, Bargaria, Gopedanga | 347 | 6 | 353 | 0.662 | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|---------|-----------|-----------|-----|-----|-------------|---------------|---|
| | | Ukhra | | | | | | refuge of some Schedule-I animals in Pachim Bardhaman District. Recent study on a teeming Indian Grey wolf population in the area has been published. Such forests serve as Habitat connectivity of small wild population & a healthy ecological corridor. Hence, Not Recommended . |
| | EDD-351 | | Bargaria | 321 | 6 | 327 | 0.4575 | |
| | EDD-365 | | Gopedanga | 453 | 8 | 461 | 0.5147 | Recommended |
| | EDD-248 | | Bargaria | 0 | 13 | 13 | 0.0975 | The area has been selected for construction of road headed to the project site (outside forest). A portion of the road plan may be modified and a 2 meter diversion towards the left should be done to avoid the felling of old and irreplaceable Sal trees (Ten Numbers). Recommended with compliance of above mentioned observation. |
| | EDC-241 | | Parulia | 60 | 192 | 252 | 0.9595 | Recommended |
| | EDC-441 | Banshia | | | | 0.3775 | Recommended | |
| | EDC-364 | Gopedanga | | | | 0.225 | Recommended | |
| Proposed for felling of Total Trees : | | | | | | 2048 | 4.0387 | |

Project Proposals under Burdwan Forest Division submitted by ESSAR

| Division | Pad Name | Range | Mouza | Tree Count in Well Pad | Tree Count in approach Road | Total Number of Trees | Area proposed for Diversion (Well pad + Approach road+ pipeline) | Remarks |
|----------|------------------------|----------|-----------|------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--|---|
| Burdwan | EDI-336 (60m x 60m) | Durgapur | Bishtupur | 369 | 20 | 389 | 0.425 | The forest road already exists leads to the Shyam Rupa Temple which is visited by many Hindu & tribal pilgrims throughout the year and specially during Durgapuja Festival. The place also witnesses the presence of several old sites having presence of God Idols and ancient scriptures. The temple & its adjacent 'Ashram' has some legends and religious sentiment. In the year of 2017-2018 a Bengal nature trail "Shibpur to Deul" was declared for trekkers & nature enthusiasts particularly because of the diverse nature of the forest and peculiar undulating terrain (Ref: PCCF/HoFF/WB's memo no. 8620/CS/2M-1020/13dt. 17/11/2017 & 1264/WBSFDA/Ecotourism/2017 dt. 08/12/2017. The nature trail is a work in progress in Deul. A portion of the forest area at Deul has been declared as a Conservation Reserve at the same Mouza Bistupur vide Govt. Notification number 1555-FR/0/11M-14/16 dt. 19/05/2017. A part from that the terrain on the opposite side of the road is ecologically fragile and prone to erosion which has led to formation of series of gullies. Hence the project is <u>Not Recommended.</u> |
| | EDI-339 (60m x 60m) | | Bishtupur | 315 | 5 | 320 | 0.855 | |
| | EDH-356 (60m x 70m) | Akandara | 9 | 5 | 14 | 0.7735 | Recommended | |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|------------|------|-----|------|--------|---|
| EDN-360 (60m x 70m) | Bandra | 806 | 22 | 828 | 0.42 | Recommended |
| EDN-361 (60m x 60m) | Bandra | 622 | 15 | 637 | 0.435 | Recommended |
| EDE-326 (60m x 60m) | Bistupur | 101 | 34 | 135 | 0.4465 | Recommended |
| EDE-330 (70 m x 80m) | Bishtupur | 298 | 7 | 305 | 0.60 | Recommended |
| EDE-333 (60m x 70m) | Bishtupur | 156 | 120 | 276 | 0.794 | Recommended |
| EDI-338 (60m x 60m) | Bishtupur | 256 | 70 | 326 | 0.426 | Recommended |
| EDI-343 (80m x 80m) | Bishtupur | 415 | 151 | 566 | 1.0475 | Recommended |
| EDI-345 (80m x 80m) | Bishtupur | 1237 | 169 | 1406 | 1.0465 | The project site shall be deprived of 1406 no. of admixture of mature and young coppice Sal trees if the project is undertaken. Apart from that, the area also is seen to be very rich in crop density and in general bio-diversity with significant presence of Medicinal plants. MS cutting operations under CAMPA Scheme was done in the area in January, 2022 and the crop looks very promising. Such a large felling of young Sal trees along with associates like Mohul and Piyal is not desirable. The project is <u>Not recommended.</u> |
| EDN-348 (70m x 80m) | Keshabpur | 311 | 63 | 374 | 0.85 | Recommended |
| EDN-349 (60m x 70m) | Keshabpur | 99 | 30 | 129 | 0.7475 | Recommended |
| EDI-347 (80m x 70m) | Malandighi | 861 | 422 | 1283 | 0.8865 | The site shall be deprived of 1283 no. of mature Sal and associate trees if the project is undertaken. Apart from that, the area also is seen to be very rich in bio-diversity with significant presence of Medicinal plants. Such a large felling of Sal trees along with associates like Mohul, piyal etc is <u>Not Recommended.</u> |

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----|----|-------------|----------------|---|
| EDI-354 (60m x 70m) | Malandighi | 313 | 25 | 338 | 0.476 | The proposed project site is located close to State Highway and the opening of forest for creation of well pad and approach road is likely to make the existing forest area susceptible to future illegal Encroachments. Hence the diversion is Not Recommended in the interest of protection of existing forest and wildlife. |
| EDI-355 (70m x 80m) | Malandighi | 120 | 28 | 148 | 0.6875 | Recommended |
| EDN-362 (70m x 80m) | Rajkusum | 138 | 0 | 138 | 0.56 | Recommended |
| EDN-358 (60m x 60m) | Tilakchandra pur | 291 | 25 | 316 | 0.68 | Recommended |
| EDN-363 (60m x 70m) | Keshabpur | 478 | 3 | 481 | 0.42 | Recommended |
| EDN-132 & EDN-360 (Pipeline) | Bandra | 0 | 78 | 78 | 0.856 | This land is required for installation of pipeline as well as creation of approach road to a well pad in Non-Forest Area. Since no alternate approach land is available in Private land, the project is Recommended . |
| EDE-127 | Bishtupur & Saraswatiga nj | 0 | 5 | 5 | 0.1175 | This land is required for creation of approach road to a well pad in Non-Forest Area. Since no alternate approach land is available in Private land, the project is Recommended . |
| EDE-307 | Bishtupur | 0 | 62 | 62 | 0.1075 | This land is required for creation of approach road to a well pad in Non-Forest Area. Since no alternate approach land is available in Private land, the project is Recommended . |
| Total: | | | | 8554 | 13.6575 | |

The site recommended for the above mentioned Diversion proposal should be accompanied by an approved Wildlife Conservation Plan as well as Soil Moisture Conservation Plan due to the presence of rich Biodiversity and scheduled Wildlife species in the proposed diverted area and proneness of area to soil erosion and gully formation.

Divisional Forest Officer,
Durgapur Division

13-09-2022

Divisional Forest Officer,
Burdwan Division

APCCF & Chief Conservator of Forests
South-East Circle, West Bengal.

13/09/2022