

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Aliganj, Jor Bag Road,
New Delhi - 110003.

Dated: 23rd December, 2022

To

The Addl. Chief Secretaries/Principal Secretaries (Forests),
All States/ Union Territory Administrations.

S u b : Repair/Maintenance/Replacement/Upgradation works in the Pipeline Network installed prior to Forest (Conservation) Act 1980- reg.

Sir,

I am directed to refer to the above mentioned subject and to inform that the issue related to Repair/Maintenance/Replacement/Upgradation works in the Pipeline Network installed prior to coming in force of the Forest (Conservation) Act 1980, was considered by the Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) in its meeting held on 07.11.2022. The detailed minutes of the said FAC meeting may be perused at www.parivesh.nic.in.

2. The Ministry had issued guidelines dated 6.09.2021 and 9.11.2020 allowing repair and maintenance of transmission lines and roads, constructed prior to 1980 with the prior permission of the State Forest Department. This Repair and maintenance has been restricted within the RoW of the road/transmission line without involving fresh breaking of forest land.

3. It has been noticed that with the passage of time, natural vegetation grows over the land covering the pipelines and the vegetation/ tree growth becomes similar to that of surrounding forests. The Committee was of the opinion that repair and maintenance of such lines may not be possible without breaking of forest land and, accordingly, during the repair and maintenance of such pipelines, disturbance would be caused to the surrounding vegetation and fauna due to breaking of forest land and clearing of vegetation/ trees.

4. Based on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, and approval of the same by the competent authority of the MoEF&CC, New Delhi, the following is clarified:

- i. Repair/maintenance/upgradation and widening of such hydrocarbon pipelines may not be possible without breaking of forest land, which may result into felling of trees as well as damage

to the surrounding vegetation and fauna due to breaking of forest land. Therefore, such works should be undertaken with the prior approval of the Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

- ii. To deal with the emergency situations, which may arise due to leakages, damage due to accident or other such reasons, quick action and remedial measures for repairing the damaged pipelines may be undertaken, where no felling of trees is involved and with the prior permission of the DCF concerned subject to following:
 - a. The permission shall be granted for a short period only which will not exceed the period of three months.
 - b. The damage caused to flora, fauna of the surrounding forest will be compensated by the user agency, and the forest land will be restored to its original state at the cost of user agency.
 - c. To ensure minimum disturbance to the wildlife, the repair work shall be done during the day time only.
 - d. All infrastructural facilities, including setting up of labour camps, shall be established out the forest area.
 - e. Relevant rules, regulations, standards and guidelines issued by OISD (Oil Industry Safety Directorate) and PNGRB (Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board) under Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas; and PESO (Petroleum and Explosive Safety Organisation) under DPIIT shall be strictly followed and monitored at the appropriate level.
 - f. Any other condition, which the local Forest Department may stipulate in the interest of conservation and protection of flora and fauna of the area.

This issues with the approval of the Competent Authority of the Ministry.

Yours faithfully

Sd/
(Charan Jeet Singh)
Scientist 'D'

Copy to:

1. The PCCF, All States/ Union Territories Administration.
2. The Regional Officer, All Integrated Regional Office of MoEF&CC
3. The Nodal Officer, O/o the PCCF, All States/ Union Territories Administration.
4. Monitoring Cell of FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi

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5. Guard file