

सतीश कुमार
SATISH KUMAR



अध्यक्ष एवं मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी,
रेलवे बोर्ड
पदेन प्रमुख सचिव, भारत सरकार
रेल मंत्रालय,

CHAIRMAN & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
RAILWAY BOARD
EX OFFICIO PRINCIPAL SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
3rd May, 2025

D.O.No.2020/W-I/Genl./Forest&Wildlife

My Dear General Manager,

Sub: Simplification of Procedures from Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

Ref: MoEFCC's letter dated 27.11.2024, 17.12.2024 and Gazette Notification dated 17.03.2025.

Several important Policy reforms have been done by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC). Some important policy decision issued by MoEF&CC are as below:


| S.No. | Notification issued by MoEF&CC | Ref. No. | Annexure |
|-------|--|--|-----------|
| 1 | Clarification on the working permission in respect of railways projects | MoEF&CC Letter No.FC-11/147/2024-FC(I/88664/2024) | Annex I |
| 2 | Streamlining of the approval process with regards to compensatory afforestation in NFL/DFL issued vide letter dated 17.12.2024 | MoEF&CC Letter No.FC-11/158/2024-FC(I/90868/2024) dated 17.12.2024 | Annex II |
| 3 | Amendment of the provisions of EIA Notification 2006 to provide a standard operating procedure for extraction or sourcing or borrowing of ordinary earth for liner projects including Railways issued vide MoEF&CC's gazette notification dated 17.03.2025 | OM ref. No.IA3-12/03/2023 – IA.III[E 220190] dated 25.03.2024 | Annex III |

Copies of these letters are enclosed herewith. These reforms will help in resolving several issues in execution of Railway projects. Feedback also to be send regarding projects where action subsequent to these policy changes have been taken.

Further, the progress of works in FY 2025-26 should be monitored closely so that commissioning of projects as per targets is achieved.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,


(Satish Kumar)

General Managers,
All Indian Railways.

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan
Aliganj, Jor Bagh Road
New Delhi-110 003

Dated: November, 2024

To

Addl. Chief Secretaries (Forests)/Principal Secretary (Forests),
All State Government/UT Administrations

Sub: Clarification on the extent of preparatory works permissible under the provisions of working permission in respect of railways projects - reg.

Sir,

I am directed to refer to the Ministry of Railways, Government of India's DO No. 2020/W-1/Genl/Forest& Wildlife dated 15.11.2024 on the above subject requesting this Ministry to reconsider the definition of working permission in context of railway projects which involves, captive roads for transportation of materials and machinery, construction of bridges, tunnel works, etc.

It is to clarify that the definition of working permission included in the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023 is with an intent that preliminary or preparatory works before the final stages of completion of work can be carried out such as up to blacktopping or concretisation in road projects, laying of railway tracks in projects of laying railway lines, and charging of transmission lines in transmission projects. Divergent interpretation of the working permission by various authorities in the States/UTs is resulting into delay in the project commencement work or imposing conditions which are not applicable in such cases. Therefore, keeping in view the larger national interests involved and bring uniformity in the implementation of the provisions of the working permission, the matter was examined in the Ministry.

2. After careful, examination of the provisions of the working permission, as provided under rule (2) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023, the Central Government, in accordance with the provisions of section 3C of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, hereby clarifies the following:

- i. **Black topping of roads** : The roads only for captive use of railway, included in the diversion proposal submitted for prior approval under the Van (Sarnakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adiniyam, 1980, provide access to adit of tunnels, transportation of material and machineries and hence such captive road are ancillary to construction of railway projects and not for public use. Therefore, construction of such captive road with WBM (Water Bound Macadam) configuration may be allowed for access and

transportation of machineries during the working permission. However, in cases where WBM roads may not be useful due to the limitation poses by the topographical and edaphic factors, black topping of roads may be allowed on a case to case basis provided the road will be used only for captive purpose and transportation of machinery and materials.

- ii. **Concretization works in railway projects:** Laying of foundation, erection of pillars, construction of tunnels are preliminary or preparatory works for the construction of railway lines. As per definition of working permission, as far as railway projects, in particular, are concerned, it includes all preliminary and preparatory works other than laying of railway tracks, which is a final stage of commissioning and implementation of the project. Therefore, all preparatory works before laying of railway tracks will be allowed under the working permission.
- iii. **Laying of railways tracks:** Laying of railway tracks entails the completion of railway track works and hence can be undertaken only after obtaining the final approval under the Van (Sarnakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. However, preliminary works such construction of formation (track bed) for railway tracks, laying of track ballast may be considered under the regime of working permission.

3. In view of the above, I am directed to request the State Government/UT Administrations to take into consideration the above clarifications, while considering the working permission of railway projects, under the provisions of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvarshan) Rules, 2023.

4. This issues with the approval of the competent authority of the Ministry

Signed by Charan Jeet

Singh

Date: 27-11-2024 20:08:57

Yours faithfully

(Charan Jeet Singh)

Scientist E

Copy to:

1. Chairman, Railway Board, Ministry of Railways, Government of India, Rail Bhawan, New Delhi - 01
2. PCCF & HoFF, all States/ Union territories Administrations
3. The Dy. DGF (Central), all Regional Offices of MoEF&CC
4. The Nodal Officer (Van Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan), all States/ Union territories Administration
5. Monitoring Cell of FC Division, MoEF&CC, New Delhi.

6. Guard File.

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Aliganj, Jor Bagh Road,
New Delhi: 110003

Dated: December, 2024

To

The Addl. Chief Secretaries of Forests/Principal Secretary (Forests),
All States Governments and Union territory Administrations

Sub: Streamlining of the approval process with regards to compensatory afforestation as envisaged in the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023 as amended on 20.09.2024 – reg.

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer to the above subject and to inform that based on the references received from the Ministry of Mines, and Ministry of Coal, the provisions related to raising of compensatory afforestation, as envisaged in the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023 as amended on 20.09.2024, have been reviewed by the Ministry and after due deliberations, the Central Government, in accordance with the provisions of section 3C of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 hereby issues the following clarifications:

- i. Provisions of Rule 14(1) of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023, provides that the non-forest land identified for raising Compensatory Afforestation (CA) is to be notified as Protected Forests before final approval (Stage-II) approval is granted by the Central Government. However, in cases where non-forest land identified for CA has been transferred and mutated in favour of the State Forest Department (SFD), the Central Government may accord final approval keeping in view the fact that provisions of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 become applicable on such lands being entered as forest in government record/record of rights.
- ii. In such cases, referred in para (i) above, the non-forest land forest land proposed for CA, shall be notified as Protected Forest under section 29 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927 of local forest Act before handing over of forest land to the User Agency by the State Government. The Nodal Officer, after notification of such non-forest lands, shall upload a copy of said notification on the PARIVESH portal.
- iii. For the purpose of rule 13(4)(a) of the States or Union territory Administrations, having forest area more than 33% of their total geographical area, concerned State Government/UT Administration may authorise a suitable officer to issue certificate of non-availability of the suitable non-forest land for raising CA.
- iv. As per the provisions of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Amendment Rules, 2024, projects of Central Government entities/CPSU and captive coal blocks of the State PSUs are eligible for raising CA over degraded forest land which will be double in extent of the forest land being diverted. Accordingly, the State Government/UT shall not insist for providing non-forest land as CA unless in cases wherein the Central Government

Agencies/CPSUs or State Government PSUs with captive coal blocks are forthcoming to provide non-forest land available with them as CA or the State Government/UT Administration is willing to provide non-forest land on such terms and condition which is agreed by the Central Government Agencies/CPSUs or State Government PSUs in case of captive coal blocks.

- v. With regards to the applicability of the provisions of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Amendment Rules, 2024 in respect of proposals of the Central Agencies/PSUs and captive coal blocks of the State PSUs which were granted 'in-principle' approval stipulating CA over non-forest land, the following clarification is given in this regard:

- a. Proposals, which were submitted by the States/UTs before notification of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Amendment Rules, 2024, along with the proposal of raising CA over degraded forest land (DFL) and were granted 'in-principle' approval stipulating CA over non-forest land (NFL), shall be allowed to submit compliance of 'in-principle' approval along with CA proposal over DFL in lieu of NFL. The Central Government will consider and grant final approval in such cases stipulating CA over DFL.
- b. Proposals, which were submitted by the States/UTs along with CA proposal over non-forest land and were granted 'in-principle' approval stipulating CA over non-forest land (NFL), can also be allowed to submit compliance of 'in-principle' approval along with CA proposal over DFL provided the non-forest land proposed for CA is not transferred and mutated in favour of the State Forest Department. In such cases, the Central Government or its Regional Office, based on the request of the State/UT Government or user agency, shall amend the condition of in-principle approval to raise CA over DFL on a case to case basis and subsequently the User Agency shall submit the compliance of in-principle for the obtaining the 'final' approval.

In view of the above, the State Government and Union territory Administrations are requested to take into consideration the guidelines mentioned hereinabove while considering the proposals submitted under section 2 of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980.

This issues with the approval of the competent authority.

Yours faithfully,

Signed by

Charan Jeet Singh

Date: 17-12-2024 13:56:41

(Charan Jeet Singh)
Scientist 'E'

Copy to:

1. Director, PMO, South Block, New Delhi
2. Secretary, Ministry of Mines /Coal /Steel/ Power/ Railways/ MoRT&H/ Defence/MHA
3. Secretary, Ministry of Defence, Government of India
4. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & HoFF, All States Governments and Union territory Administrations
5. Dy Director General of Forests (Central) All Regional Offices of the MoEF&CC

6. Nodal Officers, dealing with the matters related to the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, All States Governments and Union territory Administrations
7. Head, NIC, MoEFCC for aligning the PARIVESH 2.0 as per above

File No. IA3-12/3/2023-IA.III [E 220190]

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

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan
Jor Bagh Road, Aliganj,
New Delhi – 110003

Dated: 25th March, 2025

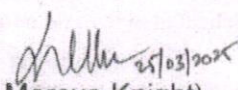
OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Notification dated 17/03/2025 issued regarding the standard operating procedure for extraction or sourcing or borrowing of ordinary earth for linear projects – regarding.

The Ministry was in receipt of a D.O. letter 17th October, 2024 from the Chairman Railway Board regarding clarification on exemption of Railway Projects from the requirement of Environment Clearances.

2. In this regard, the undersigned has been directed to inform that the Ministry has issued a Notification dated 17/03/2025 for amending the provisions of EIA Notification 2006 to provide a standard operating procedure for extraction or sourcing or borrowing of ordinary earth for linear projects including railways. The copy of the same has been enclosed herewith as ready reference.

3. This is issued with the approval of the Competent Authority.


(Dr. J. D. Marcus Knight)
Scientist E

Encl: As above.

To

Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, Railway Board
Ex- Officio Principal Secretary, Government of India
Ministry Of Railways
Rail Bhawan, Raisina Road
New Delhi- 110001

Copy for information to

1. PPS to Secretary, EF&CC
2. PPS to AS (AG)
3. PPS to JS (RA)

(7) सामान्य मिट्टी का निष्कर्षण, स्रोतन या खुदाई की निगरानी -

- (1) पर्यावरण, वन और जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, केंद्रीय सरकार रैखिक परियोजना के लिए सामान्य मिट्टी का उत्खनन, स्रोतन, खुदाई से पहले, उसके दौरान और बाद में आवधिक निगरानी करेगी ताकि यह सुनिश्चित किया जा सके कि इस परिशिष्ट में निर्धारित आवश्यक पर्यावरणीय सुरक्षा उपायों का ध्यान रखा गया है।
- (2) रैखिक परियोजना के लिए सामान्य मिट्टी के निष्कर्षण या स्रोतन या खनन की निगरानी तब तक की जाएगी जब तक कि निष्कर्षण पूरा नहीं हो जाता है।
- (3) केंद्रीय सरकार द्वारा इस संबंध में प्राधिकृत एक अधिकारी स्थल का निरीक्षण करेगा और उस स्थल को सही तरीके से पुनःविकसित किया जाना सुनिश्चित करने के पश्चात् एक समापन रिपोर्ट प्रदान करेगा।
- (4) समापन रिपोर्ट पूर्व और पश्चात् के फोटोग्राफों के साथ तुलनात्मक रूप से प्रस्तुत की जाएगी और उसके पश्चात्, परियोजना की निगरानी अपेक्षित नहीं होगी।

[फा.सं. आईए3-22/5/2024-आईए. III]

रजत अग्रवाल, संयुक्त सचिव

टिप्पण- मूल अधिसूचना भारत के राजपत्र में तारीख 14 सितंबर, 2006 के का.आ. 1533(अ) द्वारा प्रकाशित की गई थी और इस अधिसूचना में अंतिम संशोधन तारीख 29 जनवरी, 2025 के का.आ. 523(अ) द्वारा किया गया था।

MINISTRY OF ENIRONMENT, FORESTAND CLIMATE CHANGE

NOTIFICATION

New Delhi, the 17th March, 2025

S.O. 1223(E).—WHEREAS the Central Government in the erstwhile Ministry of Environment and Forests *vide* notification number S.O. 1533(E), dated the 14th September, 2006, published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 3, Sub-section (ii), (*hereinafter referred to as the said notification*) imposed certain restrictions on constructions of new projects or activities or expansion or modernisation of existing projects or activities and require prior environmental clearance before undertaking such projects or activities covered under the Schedule to the said notification;

AND WHEREAS the Central Government *vide* notification number S.O. 1224(E), dated the 28th March, 2020 amended the items 6 and 7 of Appendix-IX of the said notification, *inter alia*, to provide exemption from obtaining the prior environmental clearance for extraction or sourcing or borrowing of ordinary earth for linear projects such as roads, pipelines, etc., and for dredging and desilting of dams, reservoirs, weirs, barrages, river and canals for the purpose of their maintenance, upkeep and disaster management;

AND WHEREAS the National Green Tribunal, *vide* its order dated the 28th October, 2020 in O.A. No. 160 of 2020 titled Noble M. Paikada vs. Union of India, directed the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change to revisit the impugned notification dated the 28th March, 2020 within three months;

AND WHEREAS in compliance of the order of the National Green Tribunal, the Central Government in consultation with the Expert Appraisal Committee relating to the non-coal mining and river valley and hydro-electric projects, issued an Office Memorandum dated the 8th August, 2022 to clarify the applicability of the said notification for the excavation of ordinary earth from borrow area for linear projects and issued a standard operating procedure for borrow area identification, its operation, safety, environmental safeguards to be observed and redevelopment and *vide* another Office Memorandum dated the 12th July, 2023, issued a clarification regarding the exemption from the requirement of prior environmental clearance provided *vide* notification number S.O. 1224(E), dated the 28th March, 2020 for dredging and de-silting of dams, reservoirs, weirs, barrages, river and canals for the purpose of their maintenance, upkeep and disaster management;

AND WHEREAS the petitioner had filed a Civil Appeal No. 1628-1629/2021 titled Noble Paikada vs Union of India and Ors., before the Supreme Court and based on the hearings in the matter, the Central Government *vide* notification number S.O. 3840(E), dated the 30th August 2023 amended items 6 and 7 of Appendix-IX to the said notification, to the effect that the exemption provided therein shall be subject to the compliance of standard operating procedures and environmental safeguards issued in this regard from time to time and also issued an Office Memorandum dated the 21st August, 2023, with directions to the authorities concerned to enforce the standard

operating procedures and environmental safeguards covered in the Office Memoranda dated the 8th August, 2022 and 12th July, 2023.

AND WHEREAS the Supreme Court *vide* its judgment dated the 21st March 2024 in Civil Appeal Nos. 1628-1629 of 2021 titled Noble M. Paikada Vs Union of India has struck down item 6 of the Appendix-IX to the said notification, as amended from time to time, on the grounds that the term “linear projects” is not defined and is very vague and the process to be adopted for excavation has not been set out, thus, item 6 is a case of completely unguided and blanket exemption which is, *per se*, arbitrary and violative of article 14 of the Constitution of India;

AND WHEREAS in order to address all the issues and concerns raised by the Supreme Court, a draft notification for amending the said notification was published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part-II, Section 3, Sub-section (ii), *vide* number S.O.3099(E), dated the 2nd August, 2024, inviting objections and suggestions from all the persons likely to be affected thereby, within a period of sixty days from the date on which copies of the Gazette containing the said draft notification were made available to the Public;

AND WHEREAS the High Court of Kerala at Ernakulum in WP(C) No. 29810 of 2024 titled Sajeev Sebastian and Anr. Vs. Union of India and Ors., *vide* order dated the 5th September, 2024 directed the Central Government to publish the Malayalam version of the draft notification dated the 2nd August, 2024 which the Central Government in compliance of the order of the High Court has published the Malayalam translation of the draft notification for seeking public comments within a period of sixty days on the website of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change and PARIVESH website;

AND WHEREAS the objections and suggestions received in response to the said notifications within the specified period have been duly considered by the Central Government.

NOW, THEREFORE, in exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (1) and clause (v) of sub-section (2) of section 3 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 (29 of 1986), read with sub-rule (3) of rule 5 of the Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986, the Central Government hereby makes the following further amendments in the notification of the Government of India in the erstwhile Ministry of Environment and Forests, number S.O.1533(E), dated the 14th September, 2006, namely:—

In the said notification, in Appendix-IX,—

(a) for item 6 and the entries relating thereto, the following item and entries shall be substituted, namely:—

“6. Extraction or sourcing or borrowing of ordinary earth for the linear projects subject to the compliance of the conditions set out in Appendix XIV.”;

(b) after Appendix-XIII, the following Appendix shall be inserted, namely:—

‘Appendix-XIV

(See item 6 of Appendix-IX)

1. Definition of linear projects.— For the purpose of item 6 of Appendix-IX and this Appendix, “linear projects” means the projects of slurry pipelines, oil and gas transportation pipeline, highways or laying of railway lines, which require extraction or sourcing or borrowing of ordinary earth above the threshold of 20,000 cubic metre and does not require prior environment clearance under this notification.

2. Environmental safeguards for extraction or sourcing or borrowing of ordinary earth for linear projects.—

(1) All Linear projects shall follow the standard operating procedure set out in this Appendix.

(2) The Expert Appraisal Committee shall, while granting prior environment clearance for the projects requiring extraction or sourcing or borrowing of ordinary earth, include the environmental safeguards prescribed in this Appendix as part of the prior environmental clearance granted to them.

3. Standard operating procedure.—

(1) A Committee consisting of the following members (hereinafter referred to as the Committee) shall decide the quantum of ordinary earth that can be extracted, sourced or borrowed for a particular project based on the different criteria mentioned in paragraph (2) namely:—

(a) District Collector or District Magistrate or his authorised representative not below the rank of a district level Officer, in case the project is spread in more than one sub-division, or the Sub-Divisional Magistrate (if the project is restricted to one sub-division) —Chairman;

(b) District Forest Officer or his nominee —Member;

(c) an Officer of the State Pollution Control Board authorised by the Chairman of the State Pollution Control Board —Member;

(d) District Mines Officer or Assistant Director or Deputy Director or Geologist —Member-Secretary.

(2) The project proponent of the linear project, which requires extraction or sourcing, or borrowing of ordinary earth, shall make an application in the following Form to the Committee for the required quantity of ordinary earth.

FORM

PROFORMA FOR MAKING APPLICATION TO THE COMMITTEE

| | | |
|----|--|--|
| 1. | Details of the project— | |
| | (i) Name of the project | |
| | (ii) Name of the company/ organisation | |
| | (iii) Registered address | |
| 2. | Address for the correspondence— | |
| | (i) Name of the project proponent | |
| | (ii) Designation | |
| | (iii) Address | |
| | (iv) PIN code | |
| | (v) e-mail ID | |
| | (vi) Mobile No | |
| | (vii) Fax No. | |
| 3. | Type of the linear project | |
| 4. | Location of the linear project— | |
| | (i) Plot or Survey or Khasra number | |
| | (ii) Village | |
| | (iii) Tehsil | |
| | (iv) District | |
| | (v) State | |
| | (vi) PIN code | |
| | (vii) Latitudes and longitudes of the project or activity site | |
| | (viii) Survey of India Topo Sheet number | |
| | (ix) Copy of Topo Sheet | |
| 5. | If project is executed in multiple States/Union territory, details thereof— | |
| | (i) Number of States/Union territory in which project will be executed | |
| | (ii) details of all the States/Union Territory where the project is located | |
| 6. | Whether the project proposed to be located in border states: (Yes/No) if yes details thereof | |
| 7. | Location of the site(s) from where the borrow earth is to be extracted— | |
| | (i) Plot or Survey or Khasra number; Village Tehsil District State PIN code | |
| | (ii) Latitudes and longitudes of the site | |
| | (iii) Survey of India Topo Sheet number | |
| | (iv) Copy of Topo Sheet | |

| | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|------------------------------|--|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | (v) Distance in metre/kilometre | | | | | |
| 8. | Total ordinary earth requirement (in cubic metre— | | | | | |
| | Location | Type of material (sand/clay/ordinary earth) | Quantity per day (In tonnes) | Distance of the site of extraction from the project site where the material shall be used (in kms) | Mode of Transport | Method/ Equipment used for extraction |
| | Site 1 | | | | | |
| | Site 2 | | | | | |
| | Site 3 | | | | | |
| 9. | Total number of borrow pits | | | | | |
| 10. | Planned length of haul roads (m) | | | | | |
| 11. | Area of land earmarked for stockpile (sqm) | | | | | |
| 12. | Details of stacking arrangement along with safeguards | | | | | |
| 13. | If forest land involved: Yes/No | | | | | |
| | (i) Date of in-principle (Stage-I) approval; | | | | | |
| | (ii) Area diverted | | | | | |
| | (iii) If final (Stage-II) approval obtained and file number | | | | | |
| 14. | (i) Tree cutting, if any | | | | | |
| | (ii) No. of trees cut for the project (if forest land not involved); and | | | | | |
| | (iii) details of tree cutting and planting of trees | | | | | |
| 15. | (i) Present land use breakup in Ha | | | | | |
| | (ii) Agriculture area | | | | | |
| | (iii) Waste/barren area | | | | | |
| | (iv) Grazing/community area; | | | | | |
| | (v) Surface water bodies | | | | | |
| | (vi) Settlements | | | | | |
| | (v) Industrial | | | | | |
| | (vi) Forest | | | | | |
| | (vii) Mangroves | | | | | |
| | (viii) Marine area | | | | | |
| | (ix) Others (specify) | | | | | |
| | (x) Total | | | | | |
| 16. | Land ownership pattern (prior to the proposed extraction of borrow earth) in Hactare [Forest land; Private land; Government land; revenue land; other land; Total Land]— | | | | | |
| | (i) Owned or leased | | | | | |
| | (ii) If owned, details thereof (attach proof of ownership) | | | | | |
| | (iii) If leased, details thereof (attach agreement with owner as Annexure) | | | | | |

| | | |
|-----|--|-----------------------------|
| | (iv) Layout plan (attach drawings as Annexure) | |
| 17. | In case of linear project being located in Coastal Regulation Zone area— (i) Recommendation of State Coastal Zone Management Authority (ii) Copy of the Coastal Regulation Zone clearance for the linear project | |
| 18. | Details of reclamation: Total afforestation plan | |
| 19. | Ecological and environmental sensitivity (within 10 Km of site of borrow earth extraction)— | |
| | (i) Details of Ecological Sensitivity | |
| | Details of ecological sensitivity | Name |
| | | Distance from the site (Km) |
| | | Remarks |
| | Ecological sensitivity: (critically polluted area, severely polluted area, protected area, eco sensitive zones, wildlife corridors, etc.) | |
| | (ii) Name of the project proponent | |
| | Signature | |
| | Date | |

(3) The Committee shall examine the application on the criteria set out in paragraph 4 and shall inform the project proponent about the permissible quantity of ordinary earth which can be extracted from one or more identified sites within forty-five days from the date of receipt of the application.

4. Criteria for environmental safeguards.—

(1) General safeguards.— (a) The project proponent shall identify the borrow area locations in consultation with the individual owners in case of private lands and the Department concerned in case of Government lands after assessing suitability of the material.

(b) The borrow area shall not be from agricultural or cultivable land and it shall be preferably from barren land, silted ponds and other Government lands and in case the earth from those land is not available for any reason the earth from agricultural or cultivable land may be obtained only as a last option.

(c) If the Government's authorities are creating or developing ponds and water bodies especially in a water stressed or scarce area, then, in such cases, the borrowed earth of those ponds or water bodies can be used by the user agencies of highways sector for the purposes of embankments.

(2) The extraction or sourcing or borrowing of ordinary earth is to be avoided on the following areas.—

- (i) lands close to toe line;
- (ii) irrigated agricultural lands and in case of necessity for borrowing from such lands, the topsoil shall be preserved in stockpiles;
- (iii) grazing lands;
- (iv) up to one kilometre from environmentally sensitive areas such as reserve forests, protected forests, sanctuary, National parks, conservation reserve, wetlands
- (v) unstable hillsides;
- (vi) water-bodies;
- (vii) streams and seepage areas;
- (viii) areas supporting rare plants and animal species;
- (ix) areas with predominant soft rocks.

(3) The extraction or sourcing or borrowing of ordinary earth shall be in the following order.—

- (i) cut material available from other road construction projects nearby;

- (ii) from dredging operations of ponds, lakes, rivers and canals after approval from the competent authority;
- (iii) from barren land or land without tree cover outside the road right of way;
- (iv) by excavating land and creating new water tanks or ponds as choice of land owner and in concurrence of local authority;
- (v) from excavation of proposed culverts and reuse of cut materials within proposed right of way;
- (vi) use of fly-ash, inert solid waste from the secured landfills and use of construction and demolition waste;
- (vii) granulated sludge from wastewater treatment plants;
- (viii) from agricultural land subject to the condition that the productive top-soil is stored separately and its reuse for plantation and agriculture.

(4) Specification of area fixed for extraction.—

- (i) extraction or borrowing pits should be rectangular in shape with one side parallel to the centre line of the road;
- (ii) no extraction or borrowing pits should be dug within 5 m of the edge of the right of way, after making due allowance for future development;
- (iii) extraction or borrowing pits where other conditions permit, should be well drained to prevent the breeding of mosquitoes and to ensure efficient drainage, the bed level of the borrow pits should, as far as possible, slope down progressively towards the nearest cross drain, if any, and should not be lower than the bed of the cross drain.
- (iv) when it becomes necessary to borrow earth from temporarily acquired cultivable lands, the depth of the borrow pits should not exceed 1.5 m and the top soil to a depth of 150 mm should be stripped and stacked aside, thereafter, soil may be dug out to a further depth not exceeding 1350 mm and used in forming the embankment and the top soil should then be spread back on the land.
- (v) The Guidelines or Standard Operating Procedure as laid down in the extant construction codes or manuals regarding Borrow pits shall be adhered to.

(5) Site Specific Measures and environmental safeguards.—

- (i) A 150 mm topsoil will be stripped off from the borrow pit and this will be stored in stockpiles in a secured designated area for height not exceeding 2 m and side slopes not steeper than 1:2 (Vertical: Horizontal) and the top soil shall be re-used for plantation and cultivation etc.
- (ii) Borrowing of earth will be carried out up to a depth of 1.5 m from the existing ground level
- (iii) Borrowing of earth will not be done continuously throughout the stretch.
- (iv) Ridges of not less than 8 m widths will be left at intervals not exceeding 300 m.
- (v) Small drains will be cut through the ridges, if necessary, to facilitate drainage.
- (vi) At location where private owners desire their fields to be levelled, the borrowing shall be done to a depth of not more than 1.5 m or up to the level of surrounding fields.
- (vii) Borrow area near to any surface water body will be at least at a distance of 15 m from the toe of the bank or high flood level, whichever is maximum.
- (viii) Borrow pits located near settlements will be re-developed immediately after borrowing is completed. If spoils are dumped, that will be covered with a layer of stockpiled topsoil.
- (ix) Borrow pits along the alignment shall be discouraged. If unavoidable the borrow pit should be minimum 5 m distance away from the edge of the Right of Way.
- (x) Also, no pit shall be dug within the offset width from the toe of the embankment required as per the consideration of stability with a minimum width of 10 m.

5. Submission of information.—

The project proponent shall, from time to time, as may be required by the Central Government or the Committee furnish such information or report as it may direct.

6. Re-development of borrow areas.—

(1) The project proponent shall return the borrow pit sites to a safe and secure area, which the general public should be able to safely enter by securing borrow pits in a stable condition through rehabilitation process and by filling the borrow pit approximately to the road surface in a progressive manner

(2) The borrow areas will be rehabilitated by exercising suitable options as follows:—

(i) Borrow pits will be backfilled with rejected construction wastes (unserviceable materials) compacted and will be given a turfing or vegetative cover on the surface and where it is not possible, then excavation slope should be smoothened, and depression is filled in such a way that it looks more or less like the original ground surface.

(ii) during works execution, the project proponent shall ensure preservation of trees during piling of materials; spreading of stripping material to facilitate water percolation and allow natural vegetation growth; re-establishment of previous natural drainage flows; improvement of site appearance; digging of ditches to collect runoff; and plantation may be carried out wherever feasible or pit may be developed for water storage;

(iii) appropriate endemic plant species for the planting programme should be selected in consultation with the local Forest Department if the area is to be afforested and they should be regularly monitored, and mortality replacement be carried out as and when required;

(iv) The project proponent shall keep record of photographs of various stages i.e., before using materials from the location (pre-project), for the period borrowing activities (construction phase) and after rehabilitation (post development), to ascertain the pre and post borrowing status of the area.

7. Monitoring of extraction, sourcing or borrowing of ordinary earth.—

(1) The Central Government in the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change shall carry out periodic monitoring before, during, and after extraction, sourcing, borrowing of ordinary earth for the linear project to ensure that the necessary environmental safeguards have been put in place as set out in this Appendix.

(2) The extraction or sourcing or borrowing of ordinary earth for the linear project shall be monitored till the extraction is carried out.

(3) An officer authorised in this behalf by the Central Government shall inspect the site and provide a closure report after ensuring the site has been redeveloped satisfactorily.

(4) The closure report shall be submitted along with comparative pre and post photographs and thereafter, the monitoring of the project shall not be required.

[F. No. IA3-22/5/2024-IA.III]

RAJAT AGARWAL, Jt. Secy.

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