

Minutes of the Meeting Held on 30th November, 2024 to review the levying of Tree Plantation Cost on the Project Proponents applying to SEIAA for Environment Clearance

1. The SEIAA had previously stipulated a condition on levy of Tree Plantation Cost to be deposited with the respective District Environment Society by the Project Proponents prior to grant of the Environment Clearance which is as follows:-

“Tree Plantation:- Tree Planting shall be carried out with minimum @100 trees per Ha. of lease area as per the approved cost norm for avenue plantations of the State Forest Department. The Project Proponent (lease holder) shall deposit Rs. 50000/-, with the respective District Environment Society for raising 100 plants of native species within 2 years in a suitable location adjoining to quarry.”

2. The raising of 100 trees per Ha and the cost of Rs.50000/- is based on the seedling cost of approved Plantation Cost Norms of 2021.The decision on the number of trees per Ha to be planted was decided by the previous authority.
3. However, the EIA Notification 2006 and subsequent amendments thereto do not prescribe any deposit of cost amount for plantation with the respective District Environment Society to be borne by the Project Proponent.
4. Further, the SEIAA has no proper regulatory regime in place for regulating the cost to be borne by PP for raising of 100 trees per Ha. Besides, the norm of 100 trees per Ha @ Rs.50000/- with the respective District Environment Society does not meet the present-day Plantation Cost Norms as reported by some of the DFOs. Again, the SEIAA does not have any monitoring mechanism or jurisdiction to know the actual raising of plantation for the said deposited amount. There is also no accountability or information with SEIAA whether the funds are being utilized properly for plantation or not. Hence, the condition on Tree Plantation in EC was revisited by the Authority.
5. Further, the MoEF & CC, GoI has published the Sustainable Sand Mining Guidelines, 2016, the Standard EC Condition at Sl.No.33-for Bio-Diversity protection that states:-

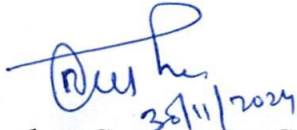
“Restoration of flora affected by mining should be done immediately. Plantation of Twice the number of trees destroyed by mining to be planted preferably of indigenous species. Each EC holder should plant and maintain for lease period at least 5 trees per hectare in area near lease”.

6. In case of non-coal mining projects, the standard EC condition as prescribed by Ministry states that “The density of the trees should be around 2500 saplings per Hectare”. The development of greenbelt is a part of EC stipulation being complied by PP in consultation with the State Forest Department/ Agriculture Department/ Rural development department/ Tribal Welfare Department/ Gram Panchayat. For this purpose, the EIA and EMP are prepared and budgetary provision is also made

as necessary. Therefore, the tree planting cost is neither prescribed nor is within the jurisdiction of the authority of SEIAA.

7. Hence, the authority resolved that the condition of "levy of Tree Plantation Cost to be deposited with the respective District Environment Society by the Project Proponents prior to grant of the Environment Clearance" is beyond the jurisdiction of the authority. Accordingly, the said condition stands withdrawn with effect from 30th November, 2024.

Signed by



Member Secretary, SEIAA



Member, SEIAA



Chairman, SEIAA