

Copy of letter No.F.No.8-227/87-FC dated 18th June, 2004 from Shri Pankay Asthana, Asstt. Inspector General of Forests, Government of India, Ministry of Environment & Forests (FC Division), Paryavaran Bhawan, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003 to the Principal Secretary (Forests)/ Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, all States / UTs. Office of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Rajasthan, Jaipur endorsement No. F.16(Circular)2004/FP/PCCF/7699-7848 dated 12 July, 2004

Sub.: Diversion of forest land for non-forest purpose under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980- preparation and implementation of Catchment Area Treatment (CAT) Plan-reg.

Sir,

The Ministry of Environment & Forests has been stipulating the condition of preparation and implementation of Catchment Area Treatment Plan in cases related to diversion of forest land for medium and major irrigation projects and for hydro-electric power projects. The Catchment Area Treatment Plan is an essential document as it portrays the ecological health of the catchment area and various soil & moisture conservation and water management programmes required to arrest soil erosion, to improve free drainage in the area and to rejuvenate the degraded eco system in the catchment. However, it has been observed that the Catchment Area Treatment Plan have not made significant impact on the ecology of the area, at many places as it is not focused on site specific treatment. It is therefore, suggested that while formulating the Catchment Area Treatment Plan following aspects should also be considered.

1. In the dense area major concentration should be on soil & water conservation including water harvesting for which various water harvesting structures like check dams, gully plugging, gabion dams, contour trenches and vegetative structures should be made.
2. In the open forest besides taking up soil & water conservation measures plantation of local indigenous tree and shrub species should be done. In higher altitudes Devdar can be planted but plantation of Chir should be avoided.
3. A lot of pressure of the cattle is on revenue forest/civil soyam forest and these forest form an important component of the catchment. The CAT plan should therefore, include a component of fodder development on the civil soyam forest or on revenue/private lands in order to meet the requirement of fodder/small timber/firewood and in turn reduce pressure on Reserve Forest for the purpose.
4. Plantation of rare/medicinal species should also be taken up.
5. The CAT Plan should invariably have a component for socio-economic component like supply of gas connection to the project affected families. This component should be implemented through Van Panchayats or Joint Forest Management Committees.
6. The infrastructure component like construction of building vehicles, salaries of staff etc. should constitute a very small percentage of the CAT plan as the main emphasis is of soil & water conservation and ecological improvement of the area. Wherever development/ procurement of infrastructure is required it should be site specific and should be supported by proper justification.
7. It is very essential that proper and regular monitoring is carried out for effective implementation of the CAT Plan. The Chief Project Officer of the user agency must be associated in implementation as well as monitoring of the progress of CAT plan. The monitoring on monthly basis should be done by the concerned Conservator of Forests where respective DFO and representative of User Agency should participate. Monitoring on quarterly basis should be carried out by a committee of the following officials.

Committee for monitoring of the CAT plan.

PCCF	-	Chairman
Secretary (Agriculture) or his representative	-	Member
Secretary (Animal Husbandry) or his representative	-	Member
Project Officer-User Agency	-	Member
Respective Conservator of Forests	-	Member
Nodal Officer	-	Member Secretary