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Government of India
Ministry of Environment & Forests
(I. A. Division)

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OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Sub: Compensatory plantation for laying the pipeline for transportation of oil and gas in non-forest area

The proposals regarding crude and product pipeline for transportation of oil and gas required environmental clearance under the EIA Notification, 1994. The Ministry has accorded environmental clearance to a number of project proponents for laying of pipelines for transportation of oil and gas.

2. The Environmental Impact Assessment Notification, 1994 has been superseded by the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification dated 14th September, 2006. The oil and gas transportation pipeline (crude and refinery/petrochemical products), passing through national parks/sanctuaries/coral reefs/ecologically sensitive areas including LNG terminal require environmental clearance under the EIA Notification, 2006.

3. The laying of pipeline at times involves cutting of trees on one or both its sides. For compensatory plantation, the Ministry has been stipulating following condition for compliance by the project proponent:

"The project authorities shall plant a minimum of 10 trees for every tree cut along the pipeline route in consultation with the local DFO (s). This will be in addition to the compensatory afforestation. The company shall develop a social forestry programme to benefit the project affected local people in consultation with the local DFO/village panchayat / NGO. Approval under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 shall also be obtained for forest area falling under the pipeline route before initiating construction of the pipeline in the forest area."

4. Instances have come to the notice of the Ministry that some of the companies have commissioned the pipeline project; however, there is a practical difficulty in implementation of the above condition due to non-availability of land along the pipeline route or in non-forest land for compensatory plantation.

5. The Ministry of Environment and Forests has reviewed the matter. It has been decided that in future, all such oil and gas pipeline projects will be permitted subject to the condition that there is a provision for compensatory plantation of adequate width along the pipeline route or in non-forest land in lieu of the trees to be cut.
6. This issues with the approval of the Competent Authority.


(Dr. P.L. Ahujara)
Director

Copy to:

- (i) PS to MEF
- (ii) PPS to Secretary (E&F),
- (iii) PPS to AS (JMM),
- (iv) PPS to Addl IGF(Forests)
- (v) PS to Adviser (NB)
- (vi) Website, MoEF
- (vii) Guard File