

Indira Paryavaran Bhavan,
Jor Bagh Road,
New Delhi-110003
Dated 01 September, 2014

Office Memorandum

Sub: Consideration of Projects for environmental clearance based on Comprehensive Environmental Pollution Index (CEPI) - Keeping in abeyance the Moratorium in respect of Coal Mining expansion projects in Chandrapur Critically Polluted Area (CPA).

Ministry of Environment and Forests vide Office Memorandum of even no. dated 13.1.2010 had imposed a moratorium up to 31.8.2010 on consideration of projects for environmental clearance to be located in 43 critically polluted areas/industrial clusters identified by Central Pollution Control Board. The details of the industrial clusters/areas were further specified in the Office Memorandum dated 15.3.2010. It was envisaged that during the period of moratorium, time bound actions plan will be prepared by the respective SPCBs/PCCs for improving the environmental quality in these industrial clusters/areas. The action plans so prepared would be finalized by CPCB. The period of moratorium was extended beyond 31.8.2010 from time to time.

2. The status of preparation of action plans was reviewed in the Ministry of Environment, and Forests from time to time, based on the inputs received from Central Pollution Control Board. In accordance with the information received from the Central Pollution Control Board that the respective SPCBs and the local stakeholders had initiated work on implementation of the submitted action plans in respect of the industrial areas/clusters namely (i) Tarapur (Maharashtra) (ii) Pattencherru - Bollaram (Andhra Pradesh), (iii) Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu), (iv) Vapi (Gujarat) (v) Mandi-Govindgarh (Punjab), (vi) Agra (Uttar Pradesh), (vii) Aurangabad (Maharashtra), (viii) Bhavnagar (Gujarat), (ix) Cuddalore (Tamil Nadu), (x) Dombivalli (Maharashtra), (xi) Ludhiana (Punjab), (xii) Navi Mumbai (Maharashtra), (xiii) Varanasi-Mirzapur (Uttar Pradesh), (xiv) Angul-Talchar (Orissa), (xv) Faridabad (Haryana), (xvi) Ghaziabad (Uttar Pradesh), (xvii) Indore (Madhya Pradesh), (xviii) Junagadh (Gujarat), (xix) Noida (Uttar Pradesh), (xx) Panipat (Haryana), (xxi) Bhadravati (Karnataka), (xxii) Mangalore (Karnataka), (xxiii) Greater Kochi (Kerala) (xxiv) Singrauli (Madhya Pradesh Part and Uttar Pradesh Part), (xxv) Ib Valley (Orissa), (xxvi), Jharsuguda (Orissa), the Ministry of Environment and Forests lifted the moratorium on consideration of projects for environmental clearance in the above mentioned 26 industrial clusters/areas vide O.M. of even no. dated 26th October, 2010, 15th February, 2011, 31st March, 2011, 23rd May, 2011 and 5th July, 2011. In the remaining 17 identified industrial clusters, the moratorium was extended upto 31st March, 2012 and thereafter it was extended till further orders vide OM of even no. dated 30.03.2012

3. Vide O.M. of even number dated 17.9.2013, the moratorium was further lifted from 10 clusters/areas namely Bhiwadi (Rajasthan), Dhanbad (Jharkhand), Manali (Tamil Nadu), Ahmedabad (Gujarat), Korba (Chattisgarh), Asansole (West Bengal), Haldia (West Bengal), Howrah (West Bengal), Vishakapatnam (Andhra Pradesh) and Kanpur (UP) subject to the certain conditions.

4. Ministry of Coal has been representing that since coal mining is a site specific activity which is only possible in coal bearing areas, with a view to facilitating increase in coal production in the country, which is critical for power generation, coal mining projects may be allowed in Chandrapur Critically Polluted Area subject to stipulations as may be prescribed by the MoEF&CC.

5. The matter has been examined in this Ministry. As per the latest re-assessment of CEPI score for Chandrapur CPA done by CPCB in 2013, while the composition of index on account of air and water indices are 'severe', it is 'critical' in terms of land index. The major sources of surface water and ground water pollution, in order of potential pollution as conveyed by CPCB are: Paper industries clubbed with Caustic Soda plants; untreated domestic effluents from Chandrapur and Ballarpur towns; Some of the chemical industries; Coal mines and Accidental discharges, if any.

6. The long term and short term action plans have been formulated by Maharashtra Pollution Control Board in consultation with National Level Technical Review Committee and CPCB for addressing the issues contained in action plans including control of pollution from mining. Major thrusts are given for control of water pollution from paper industries, chemical industries and untreated sewage. The implementation of action plans is in progress.

7. It is noted that while the CEPI Score is still high in Chandrapur CPA, coal mining activities are site specific depending upon availability of coal. Coal mining activities do not seem to be major contributor to the pollution load in the area. The action plans include inter-alia plans to address pollution from mining. Taking into account all issues in totality, it has been decided that the existing moratorium imposed in Chandrapur Critically Polluted Area may be kept in abeyance temporarily for expansion projects of existing coal mining in the area. The moratorium for such projects may be kept in abeyance for a period of one year after which the position may be reviewed by re-assessment of CEPI score and review of status of implementation of action plans. This decision is subject to following stipulations:

- i. All project proposals for expansion of existing coal mines will be considered at the level of this Ministry.
- ii. There is no additional mine lease area involved.
- iii. There is no change in mining method (underground to opencast).
- iv. Application for the expansion project shall include a certified report of the Regional Office of the MoEF on the issues of compliance of EC conditions stipulated for the existing project for which EC for the expansion is being sought and necessary action taken there upon by the EAC, in terms of the MoEF Circular No. J-11011/618/2010-IA.II (1) dated 30.5.2012.
- v. The EAC shall examine the measures required to be implemented by the project proponent under the Action Plans prepared by the Maharashtra State Pollution Control Board and status of their implementation. Maharashtra SPCB while recommending the proposal shall ensure that the same is in line with the overall approved action plans of Chandrapur Critically Polluted area. In such cases, the EAC shall also examine the monitoring data furnished by the project proponent of the environmental quality of the study area/CPA in which the project falls and after due diligence, decide if any additional mitigative measures are required for the expansion.

- vi. The proponents will take utmost precautionary measures during transportation of coal and shall use only mechanically covered trucks if transportation is allowed by road.
- vii. The implementation of action plans of Chandrapur CPA to be reviewed by the Chairman, Maharashtra SPCB on quarterly basis and report sent to CPCB by the 7th day of the month succeeding the end of quarter.
- viii. Monitoring in Chandrapur CPAs to be done by CPCB through a third party on annual basis for computing CEPI. The monitoring to be done during December-February and the report sent to the Ministry by April.
- ix. Central Institute of Mining and Fuel Research (CIMFR), Dhanbad will make an assessment of mercury in coal in Chandrapur area and submit report to the Ministry within six months.
- x. Industrial wastewater from workshop, mine water and groundwater shall be monitored regularly and conform to the standards prescribed under the Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986.
- xi. Dispensation provided under OM dated 12.12.2012, 7.1.2014, 30.5.2014 and 28.7.2014 shall not be available for such projects.

This issues with the approval of Competent Authority.


(Dr. Manoranjan Hota)
Director

To

- i. All the Officers of IA Division
- ii. Chairpersons r Member Secretaries of all the SEIAAs/SEACs
- iii. Chairman, CPCB
- iv. Chairpersons/Member Secretaries of all SPCBs /UTPCCs.

Copy to:

- i. PS to MEF
- ii. PPS to Secretary (E&F)
- iii. PPS to AS (SS)
- iv. Website, MoEF
- v. Guard File