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F. No.WL-6/193/2023-WL
Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
Wildlife Division

6th Floor, Vayu Wing,
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bagh Road, New Delhi – 110003.

Date: 4th January, 2024

To
Additional Chief Secretary/Principal Secretary,
Forest Departments,
All States/UTs

Sub: Guidelines for submission of proposals regarding 4G connectivity for seeking recommendations of the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wild Life – reg.

A large number of proposals are being received for the consideration of the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wild Life (SCNBWL) for erection of mobile towers and laying of Optical Fiber Cables inside National Parks, Sanctuaries, Tiger Reserves and Tiger Corridors. While providing connectivity to the people residing within or near the limits of these wildlife rich areas should be taken on priority, the protection and conservation of wildlife habitats should also not get affected within such installments. Most of these proposals of erection of 40 m high mobile towers for 4G connectivity mention requirement of area of approximately 0.0202 ha. Some of these proposals also require these wildlife habitats for approach roads, laying of underground optical fiber cables, supply of power gensets. There is also a possibility that the connectivity provided by the erection of mobile towers within National Parks, Sanctuaries, Tiger Reserves or Tiger corridors may be used by offenders of forest and wildlife laws.

2. In the Common Application Form submitted by the User Agency on PARIVESH for the query, ' *Whether any alternative site(s) examined or part thereof for the non-site-specific component?*', the reply given usually is that it is not applicable as the project or activity is site specific.

3. Several proposals were discussed in the 75th meeting of the SCNBWL held on 17.11.2023. Based on the discussions held, it has been decided that with respect to erection of mobile towers within National Parks, Sanctuaries, Tiger Reserves or Tiger corridors, the proposals for seeking recommendations of the SCNBWL should be accompanied with:

a. an undertaking from the concerned District Magistrate indicating non-availability of alternate revenue/ private lands;
b. drawings/sketch indicating the location of various components of the proposals within the required land;
c. a plan for movement of the equipments and men for erection of towers and

their maintenance;

d. plan for usage of solar power for operation of mobile towers; and
e. undertaking from the User Agency that the call data records of suspected persons for contravention of Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 shall be provided when requested by the officer not below the rank of Deputy Conservator of Forests having jurisdiction over the area.
f. Chief Wild Life Wardens comments on future impact on the Wild Life Management.

4. The core/critical tiger habitat, notified under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 should be avoided for installation of the tower.

5. To prevent overlapping of high radiation fields, new towers should not be installed within a radius of one kilometre of the existing towers. If new towers are required to be built, these should be erected with utmost care and precautions so as not to obstruct flight path of birds, and also not to increase the combined radiations from all towers in the area.

6. The location and frequencies of cell phone towers and other towers emitting EMR, should be made available in public domain. Location wise GIS mapping of all cell phone towers should be maintained which would inter alia help in monitoring the population of birds and bees in and around the mobile towers and also in and/or around protected areas.

This issues with the approval of competent authority.

Yours Faithfully,

4.1.24

Rakesh Kumar Jagenia
Deputy Inspector General of Forests (WL)
Email: digwl-mefcc@gov.in

Copy to:

1. Secretary, Department of Telecommunications, Ministry of Communications for informing all the service providers for necessary action
2. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Head of Forest Force, All States/UTs
3. Member Secretary, National Tiger Conservation Authority, New Delhi
4. Chief Wild Life Wardens of All States/UTs
5. Inspector General of Forests, Forest Conservation Division, MoEFCC, New Delhi
6. PSO to ADGF (WL)/PPS to IGF (WL), MoEFCC, New Delhi