F. No. HSM-12/135/2025-HSM, E-271623

Government of India

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

HSM Division

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2nd Floor, Agni Wing
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan
Jor Bagh Road
New Delhi – 110003
Dated: 01st September 2025

Office Memorandum

Subject: Modalities for taking up restoration of degraded forest land under Green Credit Programme- regarding

1. Introduction

The Green Credit Rules were notified by the Government of India on 12th October 2023 under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 to encourage industries, companies, individuals and other entities to undertake voluntary environmental measures resulting in award of Green Credits. Further, the Government of India has notified the revised methodology for calculating the Green Credit in respect of tree plantation activity vide notificationnumber G.S.R. 592(E) dated 29th August 2025 in supersession of the previous notification number S.O. 884(E), dated the 22nd February, 2024.

Modalities for taking up tree plantation under the Green Credit Programme was issued vide Office Memorandum dated 22nd February 2024. In supersession of the aforementioned Office Memorandum, this revised Office Memorandum specifying the modalities for undertaking restoration of degraded forest lands under the Green Credit Programme as mentioned under Para 10 of the aforementioned revised notification is being hereby issued.

2. Administrator:

The Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE), an autonomous body under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, shall act as the Administrator of the Green Credit Programme in terms of Rule 7(1) of the Green Credit Rules, 2023. The Administrator shall be responsible for issuing such guidelines, directions, and instructions under the said rules as may be necessary for the implementation of this Office Memorandum.

3. Nodal Agency and State Nodal Officer (SNO)

The Forest Departments/ Forest Development Corporations of States and UTs shall be the

Nodal Agency for the Green Credit Programme. A State Nodal officer (SNO) of the rank of Principal Chief Conservator of Forests/Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests shall be designated by the State/UT who shall be responsible for overall coordination and monitoring of restoration of degraded forest lands under the Green Credit Programme.

4. Divisional Nodal Officer (DNO)

The Divisional Forest Officer / Deputy Conservator of Forests in each forest division shall act as the Divisional Nodal Officer (DNO), responsible for facilitating the activities being undertaken by the Green Credit Applicant (GCA) under the Green Credit Programme.

5. Green Credit Applicant (GCA)

Any person or entity shall qualify as a Green Credit Applicant (GCA) for undertaking the restoration of degraded forest lands under Green Credit Programme. The GCA shall be responsible for directly implementing the restoration activities in the degraded forest lands under GCP to earn Green Credits for which all necessary access and facilitation shall be provided by the SNO and the DNO without any hindrance.

6. Selection of degraded forest land parcel

i. **Type of land:** Degraded land parcels under the control and management of the Forest Department of the States and UTs and suitable for restoration as uploaded by the state Forest department on the Green Credit Portal shall be eligible under the programme. The land parcels identified may be a part of Working Circles or such areas where the tree plantation or restoration activities are prescribed. The protected areas falling under Wildlife Sanctuaries, National Parks and Tiger Reserves shall not be eligible under the Green Credit Programme.

ii. **Size of the forest land parcel:** Every degraded forest land parcel identified and selected under GCP shall be a compact area having a minimum area of 5 Ha. The land parcel shall be free from all encumbrances.

7. **Restoration of degraded forest lands:** Under the Green Credit programme, plantation activities including various forest restoration activities could be taken up as per the approved Detailed Project Report (DPR) which may inter-alia include soil and moisture conservation measures, fencing, assisting natural regeneration, removal of invasive alien species, fire prevention, temporary nurseries, etc. Plantation of only native species including trees, shrubs, herbs and grasses as specified by the SNO/DNO shall be taken up under the Green Credit Programme. Ancillary infrastructure essential for the growth of the vegetation including bore wells, watch and ward shed etc. may also be taken up as part of restoration and plantation efforts as per the requirement for achieving the objectives of the approved DPR.

8. **Green Credit Programme Portal:**

The GCP portal, owned and managed by the GCP Administrator (ICFRE) under the Green Credit Rules, 2023, serves as a centralized digital platform for managing, monitoring, and implementing end-to-end processes under the GCP. It facilitates online registration, online payment, tracking, and awarding of Green Credits while providing key details about the programme including land parcel details and dashboards for all levels of users.

9. **Registration of users in the GCP Portal:**

i. The SNO shall register through the GCP Portal. The required information for registration shall include details such as the name of the State/UT, details of SNO (Name, designation, contact details, email id, mobile number etc.) as may be specified by the Administrator.

ii. Details of the DNO for each forest division shall be added by SNO in the portal by providing details such as the name of the forest division and details of the DNO (Name, Designation, contact details, email id, mobile number etc.).

iii. The GCA can submit the request for registration on the GCP portal by providing the details as specified by the Administrator which shall be examined and approved by the Administrator within 7 days.

10. **Registration of land parcel**

i. DNO shall identify eligible degraded forest land parcels after ground verification and thereafter upload the details of each land parcel including the respective kml file in the GCP Portal ensuring that no land parcel is less than 5 Ha.

ii. Each land parcel should be accompanied by details including area, geotagged location, kml file of the land parcel, existing Canopy Density, soil condition, forest type, geological and hydrological conditions, slope, terrain, etc.. The detailed photographs of the selected area, along with a drone video of the plot clearly showing the initial canopy density will be uploaded.

iii. The SNO shall verify the uploaded data of the land parcels and confirm that the land parcel selected is a degraded forest land parcel made available by the State Government/UT Administration under the GCP and shall thereafter submit the same online to the Administrator. This approval shall be treated as approval of the State Government/ UT Administration for inclusion of the said parcel of land under Green Credit Programme.

iv. The Administrator shall examine and scrutinize the land parcels uploaded on the GCP Portal and, upon satisfaction of their eligibility in accordance with the Green Credit Rules, 2023 and guidelines issued thereunder, shall accord approval. The land parcels so approved shall thereafter be made available for selection by Green Credit Applicants (GCAs) on the GCP Portal.

11. **Selection of land parcel by GCA and approval**

i. Registered GCAs seeking to avail of Green Credits shall select the land parcels registered on the Green Credit Programme portal.

ii. Once the GCA selects any land parcel, the Administrator shall issue an acknowledgement giving details of the land parcel selected by the GCA for undertaking plantation/ restoration activities as per extant rules and guidelines under the Green Credit Programme. A copy of the acknowledgement will be made available to the SNO and DNO.

iii. Based on the acknowledgement received from the Administrator, the GCA shall coordinate with the DNO for undertaking activities under the Green Credit Programme.

12. Development of Detailed Project Report (DPR)

i. The DNO will provide necessary support, access and all necessary technical guidance to the GCA for developing the DPR for undertaking plantation/ restoration activities.

ii. The DNO shall conduct a field visit jointly with the GCA to delineate the selected land parcel on the ground. Thereafter, the GCA shall be facilitated to demarcate the land using boundary pillars with proper signage, at its own expense. A template for the signage is annexed at ***Annexure I***

iii. Subsequently, the GCA shall prepare a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the restoration of the selected land parcels over a period of 10 years, in the format specified in ***Annexure-II.*** The DPR shall include, inter alia, restoration objectives and goals, along with baseline data on forest cover, forest density, regeneration status, and other relevant parameters. It shall outline the planned interventions on a year-wise basis and provide corresponding annual financial outlays for each proposed activity aimed at restoring the degraded forest lands and shall be prepared in consultation with the DNO.

13. Submission of Detailed Project Report

The completed DPR with the year-wise physical and financial outlays shall be uploaded by the GCA on the portal which shall be forwarded online to the DNO.

14. Approval of DPR

i. The DNO shall examine the DPR submitted by the GCA and forward it to the SNO for approval along with the comments, within 15 days of the receipt of the DPR by the DNO failing which it shall be deemed to have been approved by the DNO and shall get auto forwarded to the SNO.

ii. The SNO shall examine the DPR within 15 days based on the proposed plantation/restoration goals, the interventions planned and whether the proposal is complete as per the specified format (***Annexure-II***). If there are any modifications required in the DPR, the SNO may revert it back to the GCA for required modifications. The GCA shall, thereafter, resubmit the revised DPR directly to the SNO. The SNO shall ensure that any query regarding the essential details, if any, may be raised with the GCA in one go within 7 days of receipt of the DPR rather than through multiple queries.

iii. The SNO shall thereafter approve the DPR along with the comments. A copy of the approved DPR shall be provided on the GCP portal to the DNO and the GCA.

iv. If the DPR is not approved, the GCA shall be notified along with reasons for rejection, as applicable, within 15 days of the receipt of the DPR by the SNO.

15. Memorandum of Understanding:

i. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will be entered upon between the State/UT and the GCA in the format annexed at ***Annexure III***.

ii. The MoU shall not create any usufruct and ownership rights or commercial interest for the GCA.

16. Signing of MoU between DNO and GCA

a. After approval of the DPR by the SNO, the MoU, as per the format annexed at Annexure-III, shall be signed between the DNO (as Representative of State Forest Department) and the authorised representative of GCA. The signed MoU shall be uploaded by the DNO on the GCP portal.

17. Demand note generation and payment of administrative costs

a. After signing of the MoU, the DNO shall raise a demand note for deposit of 10% of the project cost as mentioned in the DPR and MoU, as administrative costs which shall be distributed equally between the Administrator and the concerned SNO in the designated account provided by the SNO. This amount shall be utilised for supervision, monitoring, technical support, and guidance to the GCAs. The SNO may allocate a part of the administrative costs to the DNO for implementation of GCP.

b. Thereafter, the entity shall make the online payment on the GCP portal towards the administrative costs through modes as may be specified by the Administrator.

18. Implementation of the forest restoration activities

i. After receipt of the acknowledgment of deposit of the administrative cost specified in section 17, the GCA shall directly take up, at its own cost, the forest restoration activities as per the approved DPR and the terms and conditions of the MoU and deploy the necessary manpower and resources for the purpose.

ii. The DNO shall provide access to the GCA to carry out the forest restoration activities in the selected degraded forest land parcel including setting up of necessary associated infrastructure and record the date of start of the restoration activities on the portal as per the MoU which shall be defined as the start date for the purpose of calculating the Green Credit under the GCP.

iii. Ancillary infrastructure essential for growth and maintenance of the vegetation including manpower and other infrastructure support as mentioned in the DPR such as fencing, watch and ward shed, temporary nurseries, etc.. may be taken

as per requirement and provisions of MoU and shall be facilitated by the DNO/SNO.

iv. The GCA shall submit an annual online report in the specified format as laid down by the Administrator on the forest restoration activities undertaken as per the approved DPR and upload it every six months on the GCP portal, by 31st of March and 31st of October, each year.

19. Submission of Green Credit Claims by the GCA.

i. The GCA will be eligible to submit claims for award of Green Credits after a minimum period of 5 years of the start of forest restoration activities, and upon achieving a minimum canopy density of 40 percent.

ii. The GCA shall submit a Claim Report for award of Green Credits to the Administrator. The Administrator shall specify the format for submission of the claim report which shall contain details of the forest restoration activities undertaken, along with the improvement in various indicators including forest cover change, status of vegetation, enumeration on the number of trees, photographs and video of the restored land parcel etc..

iii. The GCA shall be liable to pay the verification fee for verification of the claim report as may be specified by the Administrator as per the site conditions.

20. Verification, Calculation and issuance of Green Credits as per notification number G.S.R. 592(E) dated 29th August 2025

i. Green credits shall be issued to GCA after a minimum period of 5 years of the start of forest restoration activities, and upon achieving a minimum canopy density of 40 percent.

ii. The Administrator shall award Green Credits to the GCAs after assessment and verification of the land parcel by designated agencies within a period of 60 days from the date of payment of verification fee by the GCA .

iii. The designated agencies shall carry out the verification process preferably in the presence of the GCA or its authorized representatives who shall be informed before undertaking such an exercise.

iv. The Green Credits to be awarded will be based on the vegetation status, including the change in the canopy density, number of surviving trees etc., to be determined by the Administrator.

v. One Green Credit shall be awarded for each new tree of age more than 5 year within the restored degraded forest land allotted to the GCA and having a canopy density of 40% or more.

vi. The DNO shall be responsible for the maintenance of the land parcel for the remaining period, post issuance of the Green Credits. Accordingly, the GCA shall deposit the maintenance costs for the remaining period, as detailed in the DPR, with the Administrator. The maintenance cost will thereafter be transferred to the SNO by the Administrator. Separate guidelines shall be issued for the fund flow

mechanism, fund disbursement, financial and accounting procedures, record keeping process, auditing of maintenance cost.

vii. The date of start of maintenance of plantation by DNO shall be recorded on the GCP portal and no new claim for Green Credit shall be allowed on or after the recorded date, to prevent any double counting of Green Credits.

viii. The eligible Green Credits shall be issued to the GCA by the Administrator in accordance with the criteria laid down in paras (i) and (vi) only after receipt of the maintenance cost for the remaining period out of 10 years after deducting the period after which Green Credits has been claimed.

21. Utilisation of Green Credits

i. The Green Credits generated under the Green Credit Programme may be exchanged once, for one of the following purposes:

a. meeting the compliance of the compensatory afforestation in cases related to diversion of forest land for non-forestry purposes as laid down under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, and its rules and the guidelines framed thereunder;

b. meeting the requirements under Corporate Social Responsibility, as per the provisions of any law for the time being in force, based on cost incurred towards forest restoration activities;

c. meeting the requirement of plantation of trees to fulfill the obligations such as towards exploration/survey or for construction of infrastructure projects in compliance of the approval of the project being undertaken by the applicant person or entity as per the provisions of any law for the time being in force.

ii. Once the Green Credits are exchanged for purposes mentioned above, it shall be deemed to be extinguished to the extent of Green Credit exchanged and cannot be used again.

iii. The Green Credit generated in lieu of tree plantation under the said Rules may be used for reporting under environmental, social and governance leadership indicator as per the provisions of any law for the time being in force.

iv. The Green Credits issued for tree plantation under GCP shall be non-tradable.

v. The Green credits issued for the tree plantation under the GCP shall be non-transferable except between the holding company and its subsidiary companies as mentioned by the GCA on the GCP portal at the time of registration of the GCA.

However, this is to clarify that GC cannot be utilized to fulfill the site-specific tree plantation obligations related to implementation of any project/activity.

22. Transition to Revised Modalities

i. The Administrator shall stop further allotments of land parcels under the ongoing process with immediate effect until the new mechanism is fully implemented on the GCP portal.

ii. The implementation modalities for land parcels, where payment against the demand raised by the Administrator was deposited by the applicant and recorded in the GCP portal in accordance with the notification dated 22nd February 2024, and shall continue to be governed by that notification and the calculation of Green Credits and its usage shall be based on the criterion laid down in this notification.

23. Specified timelines:

Activity	Responsible Party	Specified Timeline
Approval of request of registration by GCA	Administrator	7 days
Verification of land parcel details uploaded by DNO	SNO	10 days
Approval /rejection of land parcel by SNO	SNO	15 days
Approval /rejection of land parcel by Administrator	Administrator	15 days
Issue of acknowledgement letter of selection of land parcel by GCA	Administrator	7 days
Scrutiny of DPR by DNO	DNO	15 days of receipt of DPR by the DNO
Raising of one time query regarding essential details with the GCA	SNO	7 days of receipt of DPR by the SNO
Intimation of rejection of DPR	SNO	15 days of receipt of DPR by SNO
Joint field visit by DNO and GCA to delineate the selected land parcel	DNO	10 days
Demarcation of the selected land parcel by the GCA	GCA	15 days
Preparation of Detailed Project Report	GCA	Within 30 days of completion of joint visit
Scrutiny and forwarding the DPR	DNO	Within 15 days of DPR submission
Examination and approval/revision of DPR	SNO	Within 15 days of receipt from DNO
MoU approval by competent forest authority	SNO	Within 15 days after DPR approval
Signing of MoU between DNO and GCA	DNO and GCA	Within 15 days of MoU approval

Generation of demand note and payment of admin costs	DNO & GCA	Within 15 days post MoU signing
Access to the land parcel for restoration of the land parcel by the GCA	DNO	Upon payment of administration costs.
Assessment and verification of the restored land parcel by the designated agencies	Administrator and designated agency	Within a period of 60 days from the date of payment of verification fee by the GCA .
Issuance of Green Credits	Administrator	Within 2 months of submission of verification report by designated agency and payment of maintenance cost for remaining period by GCA.

Annexure

i. Annexure I: Template for the signage to be displayed at the site.

ii. Annexure II: Indicative format for the Detailed Project Report (DPR).

iii. Annexure III: Indicative MoU between the District Nodal Officer and the participating GCA.

This issues with approval of the Competent Authority.

TKP

(Tarun Kumar Pithode)
Director
Email: tarun.pithode@mp.gov.in

To,

The Chief Secretary,
All State/UT Governments

Copy to:

1. Sr. PPS to Secretary/PPS to DGF&SS/PPS to Addl. DGF(FC/FP)
2. Principal Secretary (Forests), All States/UTs
3. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF), all State/UTs;
4. AS/JS, In-Charge GCP
5. DG, ICFRE
6. IG, FP Division, MoEFCC
7. NIC, MoEF&CC with a request to upload a copy on MoEFCC website.

ANNEXURE I

SIGNAGE

UNDER THE GREEN CREDIT PROGRAMME (GCP)

<State/UT Forest Department		**<Entity Logo>**

Name of site		Map of the land parcel with geo-coordinates
Parcel Number		
Name of Entity		
GCP Administrator	Indian Council of Forestry Research & Education	
Area	_____ Ha	
Beat:	Range:	
Division:	District:	
Date of start of restoration activities		
Initial canopy density	_____ percent	
Present canopy density	_____ percent	
Number of Green Credits issued		
Date of start of maintenance by DNO		
Programme	The Green Credit Programme	

ANNEXURE II

DETAILED PROJECT REPORT FORMAT

Executive Summary

Part A: General Information

This section shall capture the general details of the registered land parcel, Green Credit Applicant and its purpose of taking up tree plantation activities under GCP; and the relevant authorities.

1. **Land Parcel Details** *(Auto-populated from Administrator-approved records)*
    - Unique Land Parcel ID
    - Name of Land Parcel
    - District, Block, and Village
    - Circle, Division, Range
    - Shapefiles in format as specified by the Administrator
    - Area of Land Parcel
    - Date of issue of acknowledgement by the Administrator
2. **Green Credit Applicant (GCA) Details** *(Partially auto-populated, editable for contact info)*
    - Name of GCA (auto-populated from registration)
    - Legal Status (Individual / Entities)
    - Registration / Incorporation Number (PAN/CIN/GSTN etc.)
    - Address and Contact details
    - Contact Person/Authorised representative (Name, Designation), if applicable
    - Contact details of Contact Person/Authorised representative (Address, Email ID, Mobile Number), if applicable, and mobile/email id to be confirmed through OTP based authentication
3. **Nodal Officer Details** *(Auto-populated)*
    - State Nodal Officer (Name, Designation, Contact)
    - District Nodal Officer (Name, Designation, Contact)
4. **Purpose of DPR under Green Credit Programme** *(Multiple choice, selectable by GCA)*
    - Compensatory Afforestation compliance
    - Corporate Social Responsibility compliance
    - Reporting under Environment, Social and Governance leadership framework
    - Tree Plantation Compliance under statutory requirements
5. **Utilisation plan for Green Credits**
    - Number of GCs expected to be generated
    - Number of GCs to be used for purpose(s) identified above: Projects/Activities may be identified, if GC is to be used for tree plantation and compensatory afforestation compliance
6. **Date of Submission of DPR** *(System-generated date on submission)*

Part B: Site Characteristics & Baseline Information

This section shall provide essential baseline information of the land parcel to facilitate planning of interventions.

1. General Site Description *(Auto-populated wherever possible)*

- Land Use Category
- Legal Status of Land
- Topography (plain, undulating, hilly, slope %)
- Accessibility (nearest road, distance from habitation, approach route)
- Climatic Zone (auto-suggested based on location)
- Available inspection paths (may be auto-suggested based on inputs of DNO)

2. Soil Characteristics *(Auto-populated where possible)*

- Soil Type (sandy, clayey, loamy, lateritic, etc.)
- Soil Depth and Texture (field observation / auto-suggested from soil maps)
- Soil Moisture Regime (dry, moist, seasonal waterlogged, etc.)
- Soil pH / fertility status

3. Water Availability *(Auto-populated where possible)*

- Source of Water (natural streams, hand pumps, bore wells, tanks, etc.)
- Water Supply Lines existing in the land parcel, if available
- Distance to Nearest Water Source (may be auto-suggested based on inputs of DNO)
- Suitability for Soil and Moisture Conservation Works (to be identified by GCA)

4. Existing Vegetation

- Type of Vegetation (scrub, grassland, regenerating forest, degraded plantation, etc.)
- Dominant Species (local/native species)
- Canopy Density (%) – baseline assessment (Based on data of Drone survey as specified by the Administrator)
- Number of Trees of different species by Girth Class (0–10 cm, 10–30 cm, 30–60 cm, >60 cm) – baseline enumeration
- Presence of Invasive Species (yes/no; details if yes)

5. Existing Fauna (may be auto-suggested based on inputs of DNO)

6. Socio-Environmental Context (may be auto-suggested based on inputs of DNO)

- Proximity to Local Communities (distance, settlements nearby)
- Rights and Usage (if any rights are vested under FRA or customary use)
- Community Dependency (fuelwood, grazing, NTFP, etc.)
- Any Existing Restrictions (legal or customary)

Part C: Proposed Interventions & Zoning of Activities

This section shall specify the interventions proposed to be undertaken by the Green Credit Applicant (GCA) within the approved land parcel

1. Zoning of Activities: Upload of KML file by GCA depicting zones for different interventions (mandatory).

2. Proposed Interventions *(multiple selections permitted, with area allocation in hectares)*

- **Tree Plantation and Assisted Natural Regeneration**
  - Species proposed (drop-down of native species with suggestions based on location).
  - Number of seedlings per hectare.
  - Spacing pattern.
  - Nursery source (government / private) and its location. In case of temporary nurseries to be established in the selected land parcel, details thereof.
  - Maintenance plan
- **Soil and Moisture Conservation Works**
  - Type (contour trenching, check dam, gully plugging, percolation tank, etc.).
  - Zone of intervention (linked to map).
  - Purpose (moisture retention, groundwater recharge, erosion control).
- **Water Supply and Irrigation Support**
  - Proposed water source development, if any.
  - Supply line layout within land parcel, if any.
  - Storage / water harvesting structures, if any.
- **Protection Measures**
  - Fencing (type, length).
  - Fire lines / fire prevention works.
  - Watch and ward arrangements.
- **Biodiversity and Ecosystem Enrichment**
  - Inclusion of pollinator species.
  - NTFP yielding species.
  - Grasses, shrubs, medicinal plants.

3. Implementation Timeline

- Year-wise activity plan
- Milestones and deliverables with timelines

Part D: Performance Parameters and Monitoring Framework

This section shall specify the key performance indicators (KPIs) and monitoring arrangements for the project. The parameters shall be measurable, verifiable, and aligned with the Green Credit Rules, 2023, notifications, and guidelines issued thereunder.

1. Performance Parameters

The following parameters shall be mandatorily captured and reported:

- **Canopy Density Assessment**
  - Baseline canopy density to be recorded prior to commencement of activities.
  - Periodic assessment (annual) to track increase in canopy cover.
- **Tree Survival and Growth Monitoring**
  - Number of planted and naturally regenerated trees surviving.
  - Species-wise count, reported annually.
  - Growth assessment through **girth class distribution** at different heights (e.g., <10 cm, 10–30 cm, 30–60 cm, >60 cm DBH).
  - Year-on-year increase in girth classes as a key indicator of sustainability.
- **Soil and Moisture Conservation Impact:** Details of the functioning of structures such as contour trenches, bunds, and check dams, along with an assessment of water retention, erosion control, and groundwater recharge benefits through measurable indicators.
- **Biodiversity Indicators:** Captures the presence and survival of pollinator and non-timber forest produce (NTFP) species, as well as the diversity of undergrowth including shrubs, grasses, and medicinal plants, periodically.
- **Protection and Maintenance**
  - Status of fencing, fire lines, and watch & ward arrangements.
- **Expenditure**

2. Reporting Requirements

- **Progress Reports (PR) once every 6 months:** To be uploaded by the GCA through the portal, including activity completion status, expenditure, supporting photographs, and GIS-linked evidence. These inputs shall become part of Annual Monitoring Report.
- **Annual Monitoring Report (AMR):** To capture performance against canopy density, tree survival, girth class distribution, and other ecological indicators.
- **Comments by DNO:** The District Nodal Officer shall provide supportive observations on reports uploaded by the GCA, particularly regarding facilitation by State field staff.
- **Administrator Scrutiny:** Reports shall be reviewed by the SNO/Administrator for compliance with DPR and Green Credit Rules.

3. Monitoring Modalities

- Joint inspections by DNO and GCA
- Field verification by designated agencies empanelled by the Administrator, as specified.
- Use of satellite imagery, drones, and geo-tagged photographs to validate reported data.

Part E: Financial Outlay and Maintenance Provision

This section shall present the comprehensive financial outlay of the project, including establishment, maintenance, and long-term sustainability provisions.

1. Cost Estimates

- **Activity-wise Costing:** Each intervention proposed in the DPR (e.g., site preparation, plantation, soil & moisture conservation works, protection measures, maintenance activities) shall have a detailed cost estimate.
- **Ten-Year Horizon:** The DPR shall provide a consolidated **ten-year financial plan** covering establishment and maintenance costs, inclusive of all recurrent and periodic activities necessary for sustainability.
- **Inflation Adjustment:** Outlays shall factor in an annual inflation rate as specified by the Administrator to ensure adequacy of funds throughout the ten-year period.
- **Justification for deviation:** The GCA shall be provided reference Schedule of Rates applicable for the land parcel and any deviation from them in the proposed estimate.

2. Maintenance Provision

- **Mandatory Maintenance Fund:** The GCA shall earmark and deposit the maintenance cost, as specified by the Administrator, prior to issuance of Green Credits.
- **Coverage of Maintenance:** Maintenance includes watering, weeding, gap filling, soil and moisture conservation upkeep, fencing, fire protection, monitoring, and other measures essential for survival and growth of plantations.
- **Escrow / Deposit Mechanism:** Maintenance fund shall be deposited in a manner specified by the Administrator, ensuring transparent and accountable utilisation.

3. Phasing of Expenditure

- **Year-wise Outlay:** DPR shall include a **year-wise break-up of financial requirement for 10 years**, indicating establishment phase (Year 1–2), maintenance till issue of Green Credit (Year 3–X), and maintenance by DNO (Year X–10) with 'X' being the expected number of years after which claim report for issue of GCP is expected in the DPR.
- **Milestone-Linked Release:** Payments and credit recognition shall be tied to achievement of survival, growth, and performance parameters reported as specified in Part D subject to achieving of canopy density of 40%.

4. Compliance with Standards

- All estimates shall align with the Green Credit Rules, 2023, relevant notifications, and guidelines issued thereunder.
- Any modification in DPR financials, including on account of force majeure or administrative directions, shall require approval of the Administrator.

5. Expected generation of employment

- Nature of Job opportunities to be created and number of mandays and expected expenditure against each of such opportunity

- Manpower to be engaged locally may be indicated

Part F: Declarations and Undertakings

This section shall contain the binding commitments of the Green Credit Applicant (GCA) with respect to compliance, responsibility for execution, and adherence to the Green Credit Rules, 2023 and allied legislations.

1. Declaration by the GCA

The GCA shall submit a declaration as specified by the Administrator for complying conditions including, but not limited to:

i. All information furnished in this DPR is true, complete, and correct to the best of its knowledge and belief. Any misrepresentation or concealment of material facts shall render this DPR liable for rejection and cancellation of acknowledgment, without prejudice to any other legal action.

ii. The GCA shall abide by the provisions of the **Green Credit Rules, 2023**, notifications, and guidelines issued thereunder, as well as relevant provisions of the [**State Forest Acts]** and the **Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980**, wherever applicable.

iii. The GCA shall ensure deployment of adequate manpower, technical expertise, and financial resources for effective and timely execution of the activities specified in this DPR.

iv. The GCA shall deposit the mandatory maintenance fund, as specified by the Administrator, prior to issuance of Green Credits.

v. The GCA shall comply with the year-wise performance parameters, including survival rate, canopy density, and number of trees in specified girth classes, as detailed in Part D of this DPR.

vi. The GCA shall upload periodic progress reports on the GCP Portal in the formats specified, and cooperate with verification, evaluation, and monitoring as specified by the Administrator.

vii. The GCA agrees that it has no claim whatsoever or any right on land including usufruct.

viii. The GCA shall not undertake any commercial activity on the land or derive any commercial benefit directly/indirectly from the land parcel which is being used by the GCA except for the purpose mentioned in the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the State and the GCA.

Annexure-III

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MoU)
UNDER THE GREEN CREDIT PROGRAMME (GCP)

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is executed on this ___ day of _____ 2025 at _____ between:

The Green Credit Applicant (GCA): [Name of Green Credit Applicant], having its registered office at [Address], hereinafter referred to as the *"GCA"* (which expression shall, unless repugnant to the context, mean and include its successors, permitted assigns, and authorised representatives);

AND

The [State/ Union territories]: Represented by the Divisional Forest Officer / Deputy Conservator of Forests (hereinafter referred to as the *"DNO"*), having its office at [Address], acting as Divisional Nodal Officer under the Green Credit Programme, signing on behalf of the [State Government/UT Administration].

The *GCA* and the *[State/Union territories]*(through the DNO) are hereinafter collectively referred to as the "Parties."

1. Purpose

This MoU establishes a collaborative partnership between the State Forest Department and the GCA for undertaking restoration of degraded forest land parcels under the Green Credit Programme (GCP), in accordance with the Green Credit Rules, 2023, and guidelines issued thereunder.

2. Scope

a. This Memorandum of Understanding shall govern and regulate the obligations, rights, and responsibilities of the Parties for the restoration of degraded forest land parcel under the Green Credit Programme. The MoU shall apply exclusively to the degraded forest land parcel bearing Parcel Identification Number [_], measuring [____] hectares, situated at [Beat/Range/Division, District, State/UT], as more fully described in the Detailed Project Report (hereinafter "DPR").
b. The ambit of this MoU shall extend solely to those interventions expressly provided for in the DPR, as approved by the State Nodal Officer (SNO), including, without limitation, plantation of native species, soil and moisture conservation measures, eradication of invasive alien species, protection measures such as fencing, fire prevention and watch and ward, establishment of nurseries, and ancillary works directly connected with the restoration objectives.
c. Nothing contained in this MoU shall be construed as conferring upon the GCA any right, ownership, title, interest, leasehold, tenancy, or usufructuary rights over the said forest land or its produce either directly or indirectly, which shall continue to vest exclusively in the State/UT Forest Department.
d. The scope of this MoU shall not extend to any activity of a commercial, industrial, or non-forestry nature, nor shall it authorise the GCA to undertake any act inconsistent with the provisions of the Green Credit Rules, 2023, the Van (Sanrakshan Evam

Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, the Indian Forest Act, 1927, or applicable State Forest Act(s), or any rules, notifications, or guidelines issued thereunder.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

a) The Divisional Nodal Officer (DNO) shall:

i. Facilitate access to the land parcel for the GCA after signing of this MoU and payment of specified administrative costs for enabling the restoration of degraded forest land parcel under the Green Credit Programme.
ii. Provide technical support and facilitation for implementation of the forest restoration activities in the degraded forest land parcel.
iii. Coordinate with Forest staff at all levels to extend facilitation to the GCA.
iv. Coordinate with other State/UT departments, where support is required for DPR implementation.
v. Conduct joint inspections with GCA, record observations, and provide feedback on GCA's annual progress reports and shall assist in the filling up of the 6 monthly progress report.
vi. Take over plantation maintenance before issue of Green Credits to the GCA and on deposit of maintenance funds by the GCA.
vii. [Any other responsibility as per mutual agreement of SNO and GCA]

b) The Green Credit Applicant (GCA) shall:

i. Implement the afforestation and restoration activities in the degraded forest land parcel selected by the GCA under the Green Credit Programme as per the approved DPR.
ii. Bear all costs towards afforestation and restoration activities in the degraded forest land parcel as per the approved DPR, including administrative fees, verification charges, and maintenance costs.
iii. Engage and deploy the required manpower and allocate necessary budgetary resources for implementing the forest restoration plan as per the approved DPR.
iv. Submit annual progress and expenditure reports online through the GCP Portal by 30th April each year, including photographs, drone video footage, and survival of trees in the land parcel.
v. Facilitate third-party verification, audits, and inspections as specified by the Administrator.
vi. Comply with all applicable laws, programme guidelines, and directions issued by the State government/ UT Administration or the Administrator from time to time.
vii. Shall not claim any right, ownership, title, interest, leasehold, tenancy, or usufructuary rights over the said forest land parcel or its produce either directly or indirectly.
viii. [Any other responsibility as per mutual agreement of SNO and GCA]

4. Financial Arrangements

a) The entire project cost for forest restoration activities in the land parcel selected by the GCA, shall be borne by the GCA.
b) The GCA shall deposit 10% of the DPR project cost as administrative cost through the GCP Portal, as specified by the Administrator.
c) The GCA shall bear the verification fees for enabling the Administrator to undertake assessment and verification of the land parcel by designated agencies.

d) The GCA shall deposit the maintenance costs upfront, prior to issuance of Green Credits for the residual maintenance period.

5. Monitoring, Verification and Green Credit Claims

a) GCA may submit claims after 5 years of commencement of restoration activities and on achieving a minimum canopy density of 40% in the land parcel**,** as specified by the Administrator.
b) Verification shall be conducted by designated agencies, as specified by the Administrator.
c) One Green Credit shall be issued for each surviving tree older than 5 years within the restored parcel, or as specified by the Administrator.
d) Issuance of Green Credits shall be subject to deposit of maintenance costs by the GCA, as per the approved DPR for the residual maintenance period.

6. Termination and Withdrawal

a) **By GCA:**

i. The GCA may withdraw before issuance of Green Credits by giving **two months' written notice** to the DNO. In such cases, administrative fees shall be forfeited, and no claim for Green Credits shall be admissible.

b) **By State:**

i. The State, through the DNO with approval of the competent authority, may terminate this MoU in the following circumstances:

I. **Failure to implement the DPR:** Non-commencement of activities within the stipulated timelines, or persistent delays despite written reminders by the GCA.
II. **Non-satisfactory implementation of the DPR:** Failure to provide sufficient manpower, material, equipment, or funds necessary for effective implementation by the GCA.
III. **Non-submission of reports:** Repeated failure to submit annual progress and expenditure reports by the due date, or submission of incomplete/false information by the GCA.
IV. **Violation of laws/guidelines:** Breach of the Green Credit Rules, 2023, Guidelines and modalities notified by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) or the Administrator, violation of the provisions of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, the Indian Forest Act, 1927, State Forest Act, this MoU or any relevant Acts, Rules there under, by the GCA.
V. **Non-payment of costs:** Failure to deposit administrative cost, verification fee, or maintenance costs as specified by the Administrator by the GCA.
VI. **Misconduct or misuse:** Activities carried out beyond the approved DPR or against the purpose of this MoU.
VII. **Public purpose:** Where the land parcel is required for overriding public interest.

ii. In case of termination under sub-clauses (I)–(VI), the administrative costs shall be forfeited and any expenditure made by the GCA shall not be reimbursed.
iii. In case of termination under sub-clause (VII), the expenditure duly verified as incurred by the GCA shall be reimbursed to the GCA as decided by the Administrator.

7. Force Majeure

a. Neither Party shall be liable for any failure to perform, or delay in performance of, any of its obligations under this MoU if such failure or delay is caused by or arises from any event or circumstance beyond the reasonable control of the affected Party ("Force Majeure Event"), including but not limited to:

   i. Acts of God such as flood, drought, earthquake, cyclone, or other natural disasters;
   ii. Epidemics or pandemics;
   iii. Acts of war, armed conflict, civil commotion, insurrection, or terrorism;
   iv. Acts of Government, including changes in law, orders, or restrictions imposed by any authority having jurisdiction;
   v. Strikes, lockouts, or other labour disputes not arising out of any act or omission of the affected Party;

b. The Party affected by a Force Majeure Event shall, as soon as reasonably practicable, give written notice to the other Party of the occurrence of such event, the nature thereof, the expected duration, and the steps being taken to mitigate its effects.
c. The obligations of the affected Party under this MoU shall be suspended during the continuance of the Force Majeure Event, provided that such Party shall use all reasonable endeavours to mitigate the impact and resume performance at the earliest possible time.
d. Where implementation of the approved DPR is materially affected by a Force Majeure Event, the GCA may, in consultation with the DNO, submit a proposal for modification of the DPR. Such modification shall be duly recommended by the DNO and approved by the State Nodal Officer (SNO) in the manner specified by the Administrator, and the modified DPR shall thereafter be binding on both Parties.
e. If a Force Majeure Event continues for a period exceeding six (6) months and no mutually acceptable modification of the DPR is feasible, either Party may, upon written notice, seek review of the continuance of this MoU, including termination on mutually agreed terms, without liability to either Party.

8. Confidentiality

Both Parties agree to maintain confidentiality of proprietary and sensitive information shared under this MoU. Disclosure shall be made only with prior written consent or as specified by the Administrator or by law.

9. Dispute Resolution

Any dispute shall first be resolved amicably. If unresolved, it shall be referred to an officer not below the rank of Conservator of Forests authorized by the State Government, whose decision shall be final and binding.

10. Governing Framework and Interpretation

In case of any ambiguity, inconsistency or dispute regarding interpretation of the provisions of this MoU, the following shall prevail and be used for interpretation:

a) Green Credit Rules, 2023 and the notifications, guidelines and directions issued thereunder by the Government of India and the Administrator**;**
b) The provisions of Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, the Indian Forest Act, 1927, the State Forest Acts, other relevant Acts, rules and guidelines, issued thereunder; and
c) The relevant provisions of the [Name of applicable State Forest Act(s)] and subordinate legislations.
d) The decisions of the SNO, after hearing the parties concerned, shall be final and shall be communicated to the Administrator in writing by the SNO.

For the **State Forest Department**	For the **GCA**
Name: _____	Name: _____
Designation: _____	Designation: _____
Signature: _____	Signature: _____
Date: _____	Date: _____