Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
(Forest Conservation Division)
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Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Aliganj, Jor Bagh Road,
New Delhi: 110003
Dated: September, 2025

To

The Addl. Chief Secretaries of Forests/Principal Secretary (Forests),
All States Governments and Union territory Administrations

Sub: Strengthening the office of the Nodal Officer (VSSA) by establishing a Project Management Unit under the Nodal officer for effective implementation of provisions of the Van (Sarnakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023 - reg.

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to refer to the above mentioned subject and to say that under the statutory framework of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiyam, 1980, Rules and Guidelines framed thereunder, Compensatory Afforestation, in lieu of diversion of forest land, is mandated to be undertaken, either on non-forest land or on degraded forest land to offset the loss of forest cover. However, It has been observed that identification of suitable land for Compensatory Afforestation continues to be a major challenge. This is resulting in significant delays, not only in the approval process but also in the timely execution of developmental projects.

2. To address challenges in identifying land for compensatory afforestation, enabling provisions for creation of land banks have been incorporated in the *Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023*.

3. In this regard, it is necessary to facilitate and assist the User Agencies in identifying degraded forest lands for compensatory afforestation. Accordingly, the State Forest Departments may establish a dedicated Project Management Unit (PMU) under the Nodal Officer at the State level. The PMU shall assist in identifying land parcels for the creation of land banks, support User Agencies in locating degraded forest lands for compensatory afforestation, and provide guidance in the preparation and submission of proposals. The financial requirements for establishing the PMU may be met from the State CAMPA funds.

5. In view of the above, I am directed to request the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations to establish a dedicated PMU under the Nodal Officer to support the creation of land banks and to facilitate User Agencies in identifying degraded forest lands for compensatory afforestation. Necessary proposals in this regard may be submitted to the National Authority, CAMPA as part of the Annual Plan of Operations.

This issues with the approval of the Competent Authority.

Yours faithfully,

Digitally signed by
Charan Jeet Singh
Date: 27-09-2025
22:07:50

(Charan Jeet Singh)
Scientist 'E'

Copy to:

1. Secretary, Ministry of Mines /Coal /Steel/ Power/ Railways/ MoRT&H/ Defence/MHA
2. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & HoFF, all States Governments and Union territory Administrations
3. Dy Director General of Forests (Central) All Regional Offices of the MoEF&CC
4. Nodal Officers, dealing with the matters related to the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, all States Governments and Union territory Administrations

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PSO to Secy, EF&CC/ Sr. PPS to DGF&SS/PPS to Addl. DGF(FC)