

Environment Ministry amends forest conservation norms for land diversion of over 40 hectares

Synopsis

Earlier, for every proposal that involved more than 40 hectares of forest land, the conservator of forests of the forest circle in question had to carry out a field inspection -- in addition to the verification by the divisional forest officer (DFO) concerned.



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New Delhi: The [Environment Ministry](#) has amended [forest conservation norms](#) by removing the mandatory requirement of having a nodal officer conduct a field inspection for every project involving more than 100 hectares of [forest land diversion](#).

SECTIONS

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India forest land diversion rules (Image for representation)

conservator of forests to do such an examination.

Earlier, for every proposal that involved more than 40 hectares of forest land, the conservator of forests of the forest circle in question had to carry out a field inspection -- in addition to the verification by the divisional forest officer (DFO) concerned.


Similarly, for a project involving more than 100 hectares of forest land, apart from the DFO's verification, a field inspection had to be carried out by the nodal officer, who would be holding the rank of chief conservator of forests or above.

The amendment to the sub-rule (12) in rule 9 of the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023, formerly known as the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, was notified on Wednesday.




Rule 9 pertains to the processing of proposals for forest land diversion that require prior approval of the central government.

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Now, the sub-rule (12) in rule 9 says, "In addition to every proposal verified in the field by the divisional forest officer concerned, field inspection shall be simultaneously undertaken for every proposal that involves more than 40 hectares of forest land by the conservator of forests or chief conservator of forests or regional chief conservator of forests holding charge of the concerned forest circle."

The Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Rules, 2023, define a nodal officer as "any officer not below the rank of chief conservator of forests, authorised by the state government or Union territory administration, as the case may be, or the senior most officer in the Forest Department of the concerned Union territory, if there is no post of chief conservator of forests or above in the Department, for the purpose of implementation of the Adhiniyam and rules thereof and to deal with and to make correspondence with the central government, in the matter of forest conservation."

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