



**MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

**FURTHER TRANSPARENCY IN ENVIRONMENTAL AND FORESTRY CLEARANCES**

New Delhi, 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2009

The Ministry of Environment & Forests is pleased to announce further steps to increase the clarity and transparency of the Environmental and Forestry Clearance processes. The websites for Environmental and Forestry clearances have been made more accessible, user-friendly and easier to navigate. In addition, greater details on the status of pending projects have been provided, and the frequency of updating is being increased.

This is part of an ongoing initiative to make the work of the Ministry more professional, transparent and responsive. Further steps will be taken in this regard in the near future, which will include making the application process for Environmental and Forestry Clearances online.

We are also pleased to announce a significant reduction in the number of projects pending and awaiting Environmental Clearance/TORs with the Ministry from 700 on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2009 to 210 as on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2009.

The Ministry invites and welcomes any further suggestions to improve the process of Environmental and Forestry clearance, as part of its ongoing efforts to make the Ministry more professional and citizen-friendly.

**ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCES**

For increasing transparency, various steps have been undertaken from time to time including uploading of information on project status in public domain.

On 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2009 the Ministry had announced four conditions to be stipulated in all clearance letters issued henceforth to increase transparency and public accountability.

Now, to make the website on Environmental Clearance more user-friendly and to have easier navigation, it has been redesigned with the following features:

- a. The projects have been categorized based on their receipt in the Ministry (received before 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2009 and received after 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2009). The



list of pending projects received before 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2009 would be static in nature and would be updated on every Friday until liquidated.

- b. Before 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2009, 700 projects were awaiting EC/TORs. Due to various steps taken since then the pendency has been brought down to 210 projects as on 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2009.
- c. The status of projects received after 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2009 would be given elaborately with each projects having a unique File No. and complete chronological case history till a decision on grant of environmental clearance is taken. There will be necessary links to the TORs issued, public hearing details, Minutes of the EAC meeting concerned and final letter of approval or rejection issued. It is proposed to upload video proceedings of public hearing shortly. This list would also be updated on a fortnightly basis.
- d. For enhancing the transparency and to streamline the appraisal procedure, Circulars have been issued from time to time which cover the levels of decision making, processing of projects, avoidance of the use of Section 7(ii) of the Notification relating to exemption of public hearing, uploading of monitored data on website etc. These circulars have been uploaded on the redesigned web-page for information of all concerned.
- e. The other related information which could be viewed concerns the composition of Expert Committees, Dates and venue for the EAC meetings along with the agenda and the minutes of the meetings.

#### **FORESTRY CLEARANCE**

The status of all pending cases for clearance under the Forest Conservation Act (1980) is now available on the Ministry's website. The status of the same shall be updated on a weekly basis every Friday.

Given that the Query form used for clearance application is drafted in the same format as the one for Environmental clearances, a similar interface as the one used for environmental clearances will be used. This will also ensure uniformity of standards. The information displayed will be on a state-wide basis displaying details of sectors and categories.