

**Government of India**  
**Ministry of Environment & Forests**  
**(FC Division)**

**Proceedings of the Forest Advisory Committee Meeting Held on**  
**11<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> July 2013**

Agenda Item no. 8:                      Diversion of 5056.50 ha of forest land in favour of M/s NHPC for construction of Dibang Multipurpose project (3000 MW) on Dibang River in Lower Dibang Valley of Lower Dibang District of Arunachal Pradesh.

The Committee discussed the above proposal of diversion of 5056.50 ha of forest land in favour of M/s NHPC for construction of Dibang Multipurpose project (3000 MW) on Dibang River in Lower Dibang Valley of Lower Dibang District of Arunachal Pradesh.

The committee observed as follows from the proposal of the State Government and site inspection report of the Regional Office, Shillong:-

1. Dibang Multipurpose Project (3000 MW) has been conceived on River Dibang which originates from snow covered southern flank of the Himalayas close to Tibet border at an altitude of more than 5000 metres.
2. The river emerges from the hills and enters the sloping plain area near Nizamghat in Arunachal Pradesh, from where the river flows for a distance of 50 Kilometres to meet the River Lohit.
3. The proposed project area involves diversion of huge forests i.e. 5056 ha of USF& Community forests. The vegetation falls in Eco Class I category having density varying from 0.1 to 0.7. As per enumeration list over a total of 3.55 lakh trees/pole will be affected by the project besides other NTFPs.
4. The total catchment area of Dibang river up to the confluence with Lohit River is 12015sq km, which falls within the Indian territory.
5. The proposal does not involve any violation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.
6. The area does not have importance from archaeological point of view.

7. An area of 10,113 ha of degraded forest land spread over 2243 ha in Dibang Forest Division, 2000 ha in Namsai Forest Division and 5870 ha in Anini Social Forestry Division have been identified for CA which is double of the area of forest land proposed to be diverted. However, Regional Office, Shillong has raised questions about suitability of many of the identified sites either due to inaccessibility of site or due to encroachment in the area or due to considerable density of vegetation.
8. The requirement of forest land as proposed by the user agency is unavoidable and barest minimum for the project.
9. State Government has reported that project area does not form part of any protected area. No rare or endangered species of flora and fauna has been reported to be found in the area. Total project area falls within 10 km radius of the nearest boundary point of the Mehao WLS is 170.56 ha only. Out of the total 170.56 ha, 33.658 ha is the forestland and the remaining 136.902 ha is the non-forest land. However, according to Regional Office, Shillong, as mentioned in its site inspection report, DFO Dibang Forest Division considers it as major habitat for scheduled flora & fauna and Chief Conservator of Forests, Eastern Arunachal Circle has not ruled out movement of wild animals including Schedule-I animals. Regional Office, Shillong has suggested for survey of wildlife species through the Wildlife Institute of India.
10. About 68 families from 5 villages will be displaced by this project. R&R Plan is being prepared by the National Productivity Council, Guwahati.
11. Requisite documents for compliance under the Scheduled Tribe & other Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, as per MoEF's guidelines dated 03.08.2009 and 05<sup>th</sup> February, 2013 has not been submitted.
12. The details of the catchment and command area along with the Treatment Plan has been elaborated in the Detailed Project Report i.e. Environmental Management Plan of Dibang Multipurpose Project (3000 MW). However, no documents are submitted alongwith the proposal to confirm that this management plan has been approved by the State Government.

13. As mentioned in the site inspection note of the Chief conservator of Forests, Eastern Arunachal Circle there are no records to show that the proposed area do not have any socio-cultural/religious values and no sacred grove exist in the proposed area.
14. The CA plan have not been properly planned and demarcated on ground as observed during site inspection.
15. As per Regional Office, Shillong, the site inspection report could not be completed and accordingly, the Addl. PCCF (Central), Shillong has requested for more information and demarcation of sample of forest area to be diverted and sample proposed C.A. on ground for inspection.
16. The project has not been given environmental clearance so far.

The Committee noted that the project involves huge forest area, having very good forest cover. Felling of more than 3.5 lakh trees most likely to have adverse impact on general eco-system of the area, recovery of which may be very difficult through any type of mitigative measures. Including Dibang HEP, there are several other HEP proposed in the same river valley. However, ~~yet~~ there is no study conducted to assess the cumulative impact of all these reservoirs and its upstream and downstream impacts. The Committee is of the opinion that ecological, environmental and social costs of diversion of such a vast tract of forest land, which is a major source of livelihood of the tribal population of the State, will far outweigh the benefits likely to accrue from the project. The Committee, therefore, recommended that approval for diversion of said land may not be accorded.

After discussion, the FAC recommended the proposal for rejection on the basis of above mentioned grounds.