

F. No. IA3-22/10/2022-IA.III [E 177258]
Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
(IA Division)

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan
Jor Bagh Road, Aliganj,
New Delhi – 110003

Dated: 8th June, 2022

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Standardizing the validity of baseline data and public consultation reports for submission of proposal within the validity period of Terms of Reference (ToR) under the provisions of EIA Notification, 2006 – regarding.

As per the provisions of EIA Notification, 2006, Terms of References (ToR) are being accorded to the various developmental projects listed in the schedule to the EIA Notification, 2006 except schedule 8(a) for undertaking EIA/EMP study. In this regard, Ministry issued Office Memorandum No. J-11013/41/2006-IA-II (I) (Part) dated 29th August 2017 stating that the validity period of ToR as three years for all the projects/activities and four years for River Valley and HEP Projects. This validity period could be further extended by a maximum period of one year, thereby making the outer limit for validity of ToR as four years for all projects/activities and five years for River Valley and HEP projects.

2. Further, in the above-mentioned O.M, it is also stated that the baseline data used for preparation of EIA/EMP reports may be collected at any stage, irrespective of the request for ToR or the issue thereof. However, such baseline data and the public consultation should not be older than three years, at the time of submission of the proposal, for grant of Environmental Clearance (EC), as per ToRs prescribed.

3. Thereafter, MoEF&CC also issued a gazette notification vide S.O.751 (E) dated 17/02/2020 stating that the Terms of Reference for the projects or activities except for River valley and Hydro-electric projects, issued by the concerned regulatory authority, shall have the validity of four years from the date of issue. In case of the River valley and Hydro-electric projects, the validity of ToR will be for five years.


4. Instances have been brought to the notice of this Ministry wherein the application for Environment Clearance are being submitted by the project proponent well within the validity period of the ToR but the baseline data is older than three years. In such situation, project proponent is required to start the entire process of baseline data collection *de novo*. Many a times, it is also observed that the delay in submission of EC proposal happens due to delay in rescheduling and conduct of public hearing for reasons beyond the control of project proponent.

5. In many such cases where proposals are submitted with baseline data older than three years, the EAC prescribes for revalidation of data with fresh baseline data of 15 days/1 month/ 1 season on a case to case basis.

6. The aforesaid matter has been examined in the Ministry. In order to address this issue in a practical manner and to bring uniformity in handling such proposals, the following standard procedures shall be followed with immediate effect:

- i. Baseline data used for preparation of EIA/EMP reports may be collected at any stage of the EC process or even before the grant of ToR.
- ii. Public consultation shall be conducted after the grant of ToR. The Public consultation conducted after the expiry of ToR shall not be accepted by the Regulatory Authority.
- iii. The baseline data and Public Hearing shall not be more than three years old at the time of submission of application for consideration of EC.
- iv. At the time of application for EC, in case baseline data is older than three years, but less than five years old in the case of River valley and HEP Projects, or less than four years old in the case of other projects, the same shall be considered, subject to the condition that it is revalidated with one season fresh non-monsoon data collected after three years of the initial baseline data.
- v. In case the proposal for EC along with EIA/EMP reports based on the ToRs prescribed is not submitted within the validity period of ToRs, and/or not complying with the above-mentioned criteria, the concerned Member Secretary shall not accept the proposal and process shall be initiated *de novo* by the PP.

7. This O.M. is issued in supersession of OM no. J-11013/41/2006-IA-II (I) (Part) dated 29th August 2017 and with the approval of the Competent Authority.


(Sundar Ramanathan)
Scientist E

To

1. Chairman, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).
2. Chairman of all the Expert Appraisal Committees
3. Chairperson/Member Secretaries of all the SEIAAs/SEACs
4. Chairpersons/Member Secretaries of all SPCBs/UTPCCs
5. All the Officers of I.A. Division

Copy for information to:

1. PS to Hon'ble Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change
2. PS to Hon'ble MoS (EF&CC)
3. PPS to Secretary (EF&CC)
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