

F.No.25/24/2012-ESZ-RE
Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

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Dated: 10th April, 2017

To

The Additional Chief Secretary,
Department of Revenue and Forests,
Mantralaya, Madam Cama Road,
Hutatma Rajguru Square, Nariman Point,
Mumbai – 400032, Maharashtra.

Subject: Draft Development Plan for Matheran Eco-sensitive Zone-regarding comments of MEF&CC.

Sir,

The undersigned is directed to refer the letter No. TPS/1712/156/CR41/12/UD-12 dated 06.08.2016 from Joint Secretary, Urban Development Department enclosing of Draft Development Plan (Revised) for Matheran Eco Sensitive Zone (ESZ) for approval of Ministry.

2. As per the provisions of the Matheran ESZ notification of dated 04.02.2003, the Zonal Master Plan was to be prepared by the State Govt. within a period of two years from the date of publication of notification for approval of this Ministry. However, development plan has been furnished after 2003.

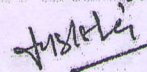
3. State has specified this plan as a development plan. While examining, it is observed to be a report, not a Zonal Master Plan/ sub master plan. However, this report has been examined in light of the provisions given in the notification dated 04.02.2003. Accordingly, following observations are made:

- i. A clear coloured map with geo-coordinates of Matheran ESZ and its buffer zone and villages falling in ESZ showing the land use features of 7-10 Km area around the buffer zone has not been made.
- ii. The provisions of Gaothan and Gaothan expansion, which should be integral part of Plan, have not been specified. It require special attention as per the stipulation of Notifications.
- iii. The Ministry's Notification mentions that the Zonal Master Plan shall provide for restoration of denuded areas, management of catchment areas, watershed management, groundwater management, soil and moisture conservation, provision for fuel wood, needs of local community and such other aspects of the ecology and environment that need attention. But the Plan document does not specify these provisions.
- iv. Separate Tourism Master Plan based on detailed carrying capacity of the Eco-sensitive Zone was required to be prepared by the State Government. There is no mention of this study and as such no tourism plan is drawn by the state. Tourism Master Plan so prepared shall also be part of zonal /development Master Plan.

- v. As per provisions of Notification, pending the preparation of and approval by the Ministry of Environment and Forests to the Zonal Master Plan and Sub-Zonal Master Plan for Eco-sensitive Zone, no new constructions should be allowed in the Matheran Municipal limits. However, MOEFCC has received a number of letters for township projects/Integrated Industrial area within Matheran buffer zone. These projects need to be examined again by the State as major changes in the landscape of Matheran Eco-sensitive zone are not permitted. Therefore, no major construction is allowed.
- vi. The activities under zonal master plan of ESZ area should be synchronized with the provisions of Western Ghat Notification which has recently published by the Ministry. Western ghats notification provide various prohibited/regulated activities. Therefore, the proposed Zonal Master Plan should clearly include prohibited activity in lines with Western Ghat notification. Major prohibited activities area; ban on mining, thermal power plants, setting up of Red Category industries, Construction of development projects/ townships beyond 50 hectares and built up area 1,50,000 sq. m and buildings construction with built up area upto 20,000 sq. m and above.

In view of above, it is to convey that the submitted report or development plan need to be transformed to comprehensive Zonal Master Plan on above observations.

Yours faithfully,



(Lalit Bokolia)
Additional Director'/Scientist (E)

Copy to:

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