



MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

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CAMPA: WHAT THE SUPREME COURT ORDER OF JULY 10TH 2009 MEANS

On July 10th, 2009, the Supreme Court passed an order on the CAMPA issue in response to an affidavit filed by the Ministry of Environment & Forests, along with a report by the Ad-Hoc CAMPA Committee and endorsed by the Central Empowered Committee (CEC). These orders have finally resolved a crucial matter that had lay frozen for almost 7 years. Since October 2002, about Rs.9,900 crore of principal amount and Rs.1,300 crore of interest amount has accumulated under the CAMPA account. This is money lying in banks and to be used for compensatory afforestation and other related ecological security-enhancing purposes.

Over the past few weeks, MoE&F, CEC, the Attorney General and the Amicus Curiae of the Supreme Court have been engaged in discussions to break the 7-year deadlock over utilization of CAMPA funds. The July 10th, 2009 Supreme Court order directs the following:

- That the State CAMPA guidelines prepared by the MoE&F for utilizing CAMPA funds should be notified and implemented. These guidelines envisage
 - (i) A state-level CAMPA Governing Body under the chairmanship of the CM;
 - (ii) A state-level CAMPA Steering Committee under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary; and
 - (iii) A state-level CAMPA Executive Committee under the chairmanship of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests.
- There will be a National CAMPA Advisory Council under the chairmanship of the Union Minister of Environment & Forests for monitoring, technical assistance and evaluation.
- That as an *interim* arrangement to get CAMPA going, 10% of the accumulated principal amount will be released per year (for the next five years) by the Ad-Hoc CAMPA Authority set up by the Supreme Court Order of May 2006 under the chairmanship of DG-Forests to State CAMPAs. This money will be used for projects identified by the State CAMPA that form part of the state forest department's Annual Plan of Operations (APOs). The State CAMPA guidelines approved by the Supreme Court seek to promote
 - (i) conservation, protection, regeneration and management of existing forests;
 - (ii) conservation, protection and management of wildlife and its habitat within and outside protected areas including the consolidation of the protected areas;
 - (iii) compensatory afforestation;
 - (iv) environmental services including provision of goods such as non-timber forest products, fuel, fodder and water; and
 - (v) research, training and capacity building.

The Ad-Hoc CAMPA, as the name suggests, is a purely *temporary* arrangement. It will liquidate itself once all systems in states are in place and CAMPA has become fully functional in the framework contained in the Supreme Court Orders of July 10th, 2009. The CEC has already approached the Supreme Court for liquidating the Ad-Hoc CAMPA. The Supreme Court has ordered that the CEC submit progress reports once every six months. It is reasonable to assume that with the Centre and states working together cohesively to implement the Supreme Court orders of July 10th, 2009, the Ad-Hoc CAMPA will wind up within the next six to twelve months and State CAMPAs will take over completely.