

Greening Efforts by Coal/Lignite PSUs during FY 2023-24

More than 50 lakh saplings to be planted in 2400 Ha

Special Focus by Coal Ministry for Adoption of Accredited Compensatory Afforestation

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Coal/Lignite PSUs under the Ministry of Coal have not only enhanced their production level over the years to meet the rising energy demand of the country, but have also shown matching sensitivity and care towards native environment by adopting various mitigation measures, including reclamation of mined out areas and extensive plantation in and around coalfields.

Under the aegis of Ministry of Coal, Coal/ Lignite PSUs have set ambitious goal of plantation over an area of more than 2400 ha through plantation of more than 50 lakh saplings in FY 2023-24. Coal/ Lignite PSUs are making consistent efforts to achieve the envisaged goal of plantation and they have already planted more than 19.5 lakhs saplings of native species on 1117 Ha of land as on August, 2023 through block plantation, avenue plantation, three tier plantations, high-tech cultivation and bamboo plantation. Coal/Lignite PSUs have envisaged to bring about 30,000 Ha of additional area in and around coalfields under plantation by 2030, thus enhancing the carbon sink significantly.



Plantation by SECL in Gevra Project, Korba, Chhattisgarh

Innovative plantation techniques such as Miyawaki method of plantation have been adopted by Coal/Lignite PSUs. Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) has taken such initiative by planting around 8000 fast growing saplings in a hectare. Miyawaki Method, a Japanese technique of plantation, is one of the most effective tree planting methods for creating dense forest cover quickly on degraded land.



Miyawaki Plantation technique adopted by MCL in Sundargarh district, Odisha

Plantation has been carried out on de-coaled areas which include diverted forest land as well as non-forest land. The plantation carried out on non-forest - backfilled as well as external overburden dumps, is best suitable for Accredited Compensatory Afforestation (ACA), a system of proactive afforestation to be used to obtain approval for non-forestry use of forest land. Under the guidance of Ministry of Coal, Coal/Lignite PSUs are making extensive efforts to identify non-forest afforested land for compensatory afforestation in future to promote ACA and expedite the Forest Clearance process. Coal/Lignite PSUs have identified about 2838 Ha afforested non-forest de-coaled land so far for compensatory afforestation as per the ACA guidelines.



ACA Land in Jamuna OCP, Anuppur, Madhya Pradesh

These efforts support India's NDC commitment towards creation of additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO₂ equivalent through additional forest and tree cover and India's long-term goal of reaching net-zero by 2070.

In addition, afforestation is a vital method for restoring damaged lands, including those affected by coal mining and other anthropogenic activities. It helps prevent soil erosion, stabilizes the climate, conserves wildlife and enhances air and water quality. Moreover, afforestation's global impact extends to mitigating climate change through carbon sequestration and fostering economic growth in regions. Its proven benefits make it an essential tool in achieving sustainable rehabilitation of degraded landscapes and promoting environmental well-being.

BY/RKP

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