



National Authority CAMPA organises National Workshop on Settlement and Digitisation of Forest Boundaries, in New Delhi; to accelerate GIS-based Forest Boundary Digitisation

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The National Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (National Authority CAMPA), under the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), organised a National Workshop on Settlement and Digitisation of Forest Boundaries, in New Delhi today.

The landmark national workshop brought together senior officials of the Union Government, States and Union Territories to chart a definitive course of action to accelerate GIS-based Forest Boundary Digitisation, for compliance with the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in the Lafarge Umiam Mining Pvt. Ltd. vs. Union of India & Ors. judgment dated 7th July 2011.

The above judgment directed all States/UTs to create and regularly update a GIS-based decision support database of geo-referenced forest land. Despite this unambiguous directive, a large number of States/UTs are yet to show meaningful progress even after more than fourteen years. Historically, forest boundaries have been recorded using traverse sketches and non-geo-referenced maps, leading to misclassification of forest areas, untraceable encroachments, overlapping claims under the Forest Rights Act, 2006, and difficulties in implementing the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

This initiative will enable accurate identification of all forest lands irrespective of their legal notification status, strengthen monitoring of forest diversions and compensatory afforestation sites. It will further protect customary and statutory rights, and ensure compliance with Supreme Court mandates and national forest policy — reinforcing transparency, accountability, and intergenerational equity in India's forest governance.

Key Highlights of the Workshop:

- A comprehensive **three-year technical and institutional framework** was presented, encompassing DGPS/CORS-based geo-referencing, integration of cadastral and revenue data, joint verification with Revenue Departments, dispute resolution, public consultation under the Forest Rights Act, 2006, and establishment of GIS Decision Support Systems in each State/UT.
- **CEO, CAMPA Odisha presented an exemplary model approach** detailing the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), documentation and notification protocols, and benefits of digitised forest boundaries. Odisha was commended as an early and comprehensive implementer. Multiple States and UTs presented case studies and time-bound action plans.
- **National Authority CAMPA will function as the apex body** for policy oversight, technical standardisation, empanelment of a National Technical Partner (from institutions such as FSI, IIRS Dehradun, BISAG-N, and NRSC Hyderabad), establishment of a centralised National GIS Repository, and monitoring and quality assurance.

- Each State/UT has been directed to prepare a **time-bound Action Plan** as part of the Annual Plan of Operations (APO) for FY 2026-27, supported by Net Present Value (NPV) funds under Rule 5(3)(g) of the CAF Rules, 2018, with a three-year implementation period.

The workshop was graced by Shri Sushil Kumar Awasthi, Director General of Forests & Special Secretary, MoEF&CC, as the Guest of Honour. The event was co-chaired by Shri Siddhanta Das, Hon'ble Chairman, Central Empowered Committee (CEC). The Welcome Address and keynote presentation on the need and objectives of the workshop were delivered by the Chief Executive Officer, National Authority CAMPA. The Additional Director General (Wildlife), MoEF&CC, IGF, MoEF&CC and the Chairman, CEC, also addressed the gathering.

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