

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 373
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28.11.2024

Implementation of Green Credits Programme

373. SMT. KIRAN CHOUDHARY:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of issue of green credits under the Green Credits Programme for the last one year,
- (b) whether any targets have been set for such issuance;
- (c) if so, the details thereof, and
- (d) the details of methodologies and guidelines followed before issuing green credits?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

- (a) to (d). The Central Government has notified Green Credit Rules, 2023 on 12th October 2023 under the Environment Protection Act, 1986 to encourage voluntary environmental positive actions resulting in issuance of Green Credits. To begin with, voluntary tree plantation and eco-restoration activities are envisaged on degraded land under the control and management of Forest Departments.

The Ministry has published Notification for Methodology for calculation of green credit in respect of tree plantation on 22nd February 2024 (Annexure - I). Further, the detailed modalities for taking up tree plantation under Green Credit Programme including issuance of green credits have been brought out by the Ministry on 22nd February 2024 vide O.M. No. HSM-12/24/2023(pt2)-Part(1) (Annexure - II).

No Green Credits have been issued under the Green Credit Programme in the last one year.



भारत का राजपत्र The Gazette of India

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EXTRAORDINARY

भाग II—खण्ड 3—उप-खण्ड (ii)
PART II—Section 3—Sub-section (ii)

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पर्यावरण, वन और जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय

अधिसूचना

नई दिल्ली, 22 फरवरी, 2024

का.आ. 884(अ).—केंद्रीय सरकार, पर्यावरण (संरक्षण) अधिनियम, 1986 (1986 का 29) की धारा 3, 6, 25 के अधीन भारत के राजपत्र, असाधारण, भाग II, खंड 3, उप खंड (ii) में तारीख 12 अक्टूबर, 2023 की अधिसूचना संख्या का.आ. 4458 (अ) द्वारा प्रकाशित ग्रीन क्रेडिट नियम, 2023 (जिसे इसमें इसके पश्चात् उक्त नियम रूप में कहा गया है) बनाए थे;

और, उक्त नियमों के नियम 5 में उपबंध है कि केंद्रीय सरकार, प्रशासक की सिफारिश पर, उक्त नियमों के अधीन की गई किसी भी क्रियाकलाप के संबंध में ग्रीन क्रेडिट की गणना के लिए कार्यप्रणाली को अधिसूचित करेगी;

अतः अब, केंद्रीय सरकार, ग्रीन क्रेडिट नियम, 2023 के नियम 5 के उप-नियम (1) के अनुसरण में, प्रशासक की सिफारिश पर, वृक्षारोपण के संबंध में ग्रीन क्रेडिट की गणना के लिए निम्नलिखित पद्धति को अधिसूचित करती है, अर्थात्: -

1. प्रत्येक राज्य और संघ राज्यक्षेत्र के वन विभाग अपने प्रशासनिक नियंत्रण और प्रबंधन के अधीन खुले वन और झाड़ीदार भूमि, बंजर भूमि और जलग्रहण क्षेत्रों सहित अवक्रमित भूमि क्षेत्र की अभिज्ञात करेंगे, जिन्हें वृक्षारोपण के लिए उपलब्ध कराया जाएगा जिसमें उक्त नियमों के अधीन ग्रीन क्रेडिट के सृजन के प्रयोजनों के लिए देश भर में हरित आवरण की वृद्धि करने के लिए क्रियाकलापों को बढ़ावा दिया जा सके।

2. पैरा 1 के अधीन वृक्षारोपण के लिए पहचान किए गए भूमि क्षेत्र को सभी ऋणधारों से मुक्त होना चाहिए और इसका आकार पांच हेक्टेयर या उससे अधिक होना चाहिए।
3. ग्रीन क्रेडिट के सृजन के प्रयोजनों के लिए वृक्षारोपण करने का इच्छुक कोई भी व्यक्ति या संस्था प्रशासक को आवेदन कर सकती है।
4. पैरा 3 के अधीन आवेदन प्राप्त होने पर, प्रशासक पैरा 1 में निर्दिष्ट किसी भी भूमि की पहचान करेगा और आवेदक को सौंपेगा और उसे उक्त नियमों के अधीन ग्रीन क्रेडिट के सृजन के लिए वृक्षारोपण करने हेतु एक प्रस्ताव प्रस्तुत करने के लिए कहेगा।
5. पैरा 4 के अधीन प्रस्ताव प्राप्त होने पर, प्रशासक एक डिमांड नोट तैयार करेगा और उसे आवेदक को जारी करेगा, जिसमें वृक्षारोपण की लागत और प्रशासनिक व्यय, यदि कोई हो, को डिमांड नोट में निर्दिष्ट अवधि के भीतर प्रशासक को भुगतान किया जाना सम्मिलित होगा।
6. आवेदक बैंक ड्राफ्ट या भुगतान के ऐसे अन्य साधनों, जो प्रशासक द्वारा तय किया जाए, के माध्यम से डिमांड नोट में निर्दिष्ट अवधि से पहले प्रशासक को राशि का भुगतान करेगा।
7. पैरा 6 के अधीन राशि के भुगतान पर, प्रशासक वन विभाग को प्रबंधन योजना या कार्य योजना के अनुरूप वृक्षारोपण करने का निदेश देगा और भुगतान की तारीख से दो वर्ष की अवधि के भीतर वृक्षारोपण कार्य पूरा किया जाएगा।
8. वृक्षारोपण पूरा होने पर, वन विभाग इस संबंध में प्रशासक को एक रिपोर्ट प्रस्तुत करेगा और आवेदक को वृक्षारोपण पूरा होने का प्रमाण पत्र जारी करेगा।
9. पैरा 8 के अधीन रिपोर्ट प्राप्त होने पर, प्रशासक, वृक्षारोपण के मूल्यांकन और सत्यापन के पश्चात्, उक्त नियमों के अधीन निर्दिष्ट भूमि क्षेत्र में लगाए गए वृक्षों की कुल संख्या और वृक्षारोपण क्रियाकलाप के पूरा होने की रिपोर्ट और प्रमाणन के आधार पर ग्रीन क्रेडिट सृजित कर सकता है और आवेदक को जारी कर सकता है।
10. ग्रीन क्रेडिट की गणना संबंधित वन विभाग द्वारा वृक्षारोपण के पूरा होने के संबंध में किए गए प्रमाणन के पश्चात्, स्थानीय वृक्ष-जलवायु और मिट्टी की स्थितियों के आधार पर प्रति हेक्टेयर 1100 वृक्षों के न्यूनतम घनत्व के अधीन ऐसे भूमि क्षेत्र पर वृक्षारोपण के माध्यम से उगाए गए प्रति वृक्ष के लिए एक ग्रीन क्रेडिट की दर से की जाएगी।
11. उक्त नियमों के अधीन सृजित ग्रीन क्रेडिट का आदान-प्रदान वन (संरक्षण एवं संवर्धन) अधिनियम, 1980 (1980 का 69), यथास्थिति, के अधीन गैर-वानिकी प्रयोजनों के लिए वन भूमि के अपवर्तन के मामले में प्रतिपूरक वनीकरण के अनुपालन को पूरा करने के लिए किया जा सकता है।
12. उक्त नियमों के अधीन वृक्षारोपण के बदले में सृजित ग्रीन क्रेडिट का उपयोग पर्यावरण, सामाजिक और शासन नेतृत्व संकेतक के अधीन या तत्समय प्रवृत्त किसी भी विधि के अधीन बनाए गए नियमों के अधीन कॉर्पोरेट सामाजिक उत्तरदायित्व के अंतर्गत रिपोर्टिंग के लिए किया जा सकता है।

[फा. सं. एचएसएम-12/24/2023-एचएसएम (पीटी 2)-पार्ट (1)]

नमिता प्रसाद, संयुक्त सचिव

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

NOTIFICATION

New Delhi, the 22nd February, 2024

S.O. 884(E).— Whereas, the Central Government made the Green Credit Rules, 2023 (hereinafter referred to as the said Rules) under section 3, 6, 25 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 (29 of 1986) vide notification number S.O. 4458(E), dated the 12th October, 2023 published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 3, Sub Section (ii);

AND WHEREAS, rule 5 of the said Rules provides that the Central Government shall, on the recommendation of the Administrator, notify the methodology for calculating the green credit in respect of any activity undertaken under the said Rules;

NOW, THEREFORE, in pursuance of sub-rule (1) of rule 5 of the Green Credit Rules, 2023, the Central Government, on the recommendation of the Administrator, hereby notifies the following methodology, for calculation of green credit in respect of tree plantation, namely: -

1. The Forest Department of every State and Union territory shall identify degraded land parcels, including open forest and scrub land, wasteland and catchment areas, under their administrative control and management, which shall be made available for tree plantation to promote activities for increasing the green cover across the country for the purposes of generation of Green Credit under the said Rules.
2. The land parcel identified for plantation under paragraph 1 must be free from all encumbrances and must have size of five hectares or above.
3. Any person or entity desirous of undertaking tree plantation for the purposes of generation of Green Credit may apply to the Administrator.
4. On receipt of the application under paragraph 3, the Administrator shall identify any land referred to in paragraph 1 and assign the same to the applicant and require him to submit a proposal for undertaking tree plantation for generation of Green Credit in lieu thereof under the said Rules.
5. On receipt of the proposal under paragraph 4, the Administrator shall prepare and issue a demand note to the applicant which shall include the cost of tree plantation and administrative expenses, if any, to be paid to the Administrator within a period specified in the demand note.
6. The applicant shall pay the amount to the Administrator on or before the period specified in the demand note through a bank draft or such other means of payment as may be decided by the Administrator.
7. On the payment of the amount under paragraph 6, the Administrator shall direct the Forest Department to carry out tree plantation in line with the management plan or working plan and shall be completed within a period of two years from the date of payment.
8. On completion of tree plantation, the Forest Department shall submit a report in this regard to the Administrator and issue a certificate of completion of tree plantation to the applicant.
9. On receipt of the report under paragraph 8, the Administrator, after evaluation and verification of the tree plantation activity may generate and issue Green Credit to the applicant under the said Rules, based on the total number of trees planted in assigned land parcel and on the report and certification of completion of tree plantation activity.
10. The Green Credit shall be calculated at the rate of one Green Credit per tree grown through the tree plantation on such land parcel, subject to minimum density of 1100 trees per hectare, based on the local silvi-climatic and soil conditions, on the certification of completion of tree plantation provided by the Forest Department concerned.
11. The Green Credit generated under the said Rules, may be exchanged for meeting the compliance of the compensatory afforestation in case of diversion of forest land for non-forestry purposes under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 (69 of 1980), as applicable.
12. The Green Credit generated in lieu of tree plantation under the said Rules may be used for reporting under environmental, social and governance leadership indicator or under corporate social responsibility under the applicable rules made under any law for the time being in force.

[F. No. HSM-12/24/2023-HSM(pt2)-Part(1)]

NAMEETA PRASAD, Jt. Secy.

F. No. HSM-12/24/2023-HSM(pt2)-Part(1), E-220847
Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
Hazardous Substances Management Division

3rd Floor, Prithvi Block
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan
Jor Bagh Road
New Delhi - 110003
Dated: 22nd February, 2024

Office Memorandum

Subject: Modality for taking up Tree Plantation under Green Credit Programme - regarding

1. Introduction:

1.1 The Green Credit Rules have been notified by the Government of India on 12th October 2023 under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. The Green Credit Programme (GCP) encourages industries, companies and other entities to meet their existing obligations or other obligations under any law for the time being in force, and encourage other persons and entities, to undertake voluntary environmental measures *inter-alia* "tree plantation", resulting in award of Green Credits.

1.2 To begin with, tree plantation may be undertaken on degraded land under the control and management of Forest Departments. In this regard, notification for Methodology for Tree Plantation based Green Credit has been published in official gazette.

1.3 In view of the above, the following modality, for taking up tree plantation on degraded forest land under the Green Credit Programme, is prescribed.

2. Modality:

2.1 Registration of Implementing Agency:

Forest Departments/ Forest Development Corporations of States and UTs applicant shall be the Implementing Agency (IA) for mplementing Tree Plantation based Green Credit Programme. A State Nodal officer (SNO) of the rank of Principal Chief Conservator of Forests/Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests) for the State/UT shall be appointed by each IA, who shall be responsible for overall coordination and monitoring of Tree Plantation based Green Credit Programme in the state/UT. Implementing Officer (IO) shall be registered by each IA for each Forest Division. Registration of IA, SNO and IO shall be done through

GCP Portal by providing details like name of State/UT, district, division, name of officer, designation, office address, bank account details, etc.

2.2 Criteria for selection of land:

2.2.1 Type of land:

Degraded land parcels under the control and management of Forest Department of the States and UTs shall be eligible for GCP. Only such land parcels and areas suitable for plantation, shall be registered as plantation block in the GCP Portal.

2.2.2 Density of tree plantation:

Plantation block with potential of planting minimum 1100 trees per hectare, taking into account on the local silvi-climatic and soil conditions, shall be selected for registration.

2.2.3 Size of plantation blocks:

Every plantation block shall be a compact area having a minimum size of 5 hectares.

2.2.4 Other conditions:

Plantation block shall be free from all types of encumbrances and plantation to be undertaken in line with management plan/working plan.

2.3 Registration of plantation block:

After selection of land for plantation as above, registration of plantation block shall be done through self-certification on the portal by the IA. Each plantation block shall be registered separately with unique ID.

2.4 Registration of Entity/ Green Credit Applicant (GCA):

Government Institutions (like PWD, CPWD, Irrigation department, etc.), Public Sector Undertakings (State and Central), Non-Government Organisations, Private Companies/Organisations/entities, Philanthropists, Individuals, Group of Individuals registered under Societies Registration Act will qualify as GCA under tree plantation based GCP. Registration of GCA shall be done by providing required details like name & address, proof of identity, contact details, registration details, etc. on the GCP portal.

2.5 Selection of land for the plantation by GCA:

Registered GCAs desirous to apply for Green Credits (GCs) shall request for the allocation of land parcel for plantation from the plantation block registered on the portal.

2.6 Preparation of demand note:

Estimate in INR with provision for plantation and its maintenance (advance work in 1st year and maintenance till 10th year considering cost of escalation) shall be prepared as per Schedule of Rates by the concerned IO. All necessary provisions shall be made while preparing estimate to make the plantation successful.

Plantation estimate with details of Technical and Administrative sanction/approval and other necessary information shall be provided on GCP portal for scrutiny and approval of SNO. After approval of SNO, the Administrator will further scrutinize the estimate from technical point of view and by including administrative cost for monitoring and verification (10% of estimated cost) and a demand note will be generated on the portal (Mechanism of utilization of the administrative cost shall be developed by Administrator separately). Thereafter, entity shall make the payment in the bank account of the Administrator through NEFT/RTGS. After making payment, the IA shall formally allot land parcel/plantation block to the GCA. Preparation of estimate as well as payment shall be done within the stipulated time as specified by the Administrator.

2.7 Plantation and its maintenance:

Plantation works shall be started immediately after receipt of payment from the entity. It shall be the responsibility of the IA to ensure completion of plantation within two years after receipt of payment. All details of plantation and maintenance works along with item-wise expenditure, as prescribed by the Administrator, shall be provided on the portal by IA and IO.

2.8 Issuance of Green Credits (GCs):

As advance works are carried out and seedlings are sourced in the first year and plantation is carried out in the second year, Green Credits will be awarded two years after receipt of payment from the entity. GCs will be awarded to the entity by the Administrator based on total number of trees planted in selected blocks and plantation completion certificate generated online by IA. GCs will be allocated to the entity at the rate of one GC per tree in a standard format through the GCP portal.

3. Monitoring and Audit of Plantation:

Plantation records/details shall be maintained online in a standard format as prescribed by the Administrator. Intensive monitoring by the field officers of the Implementing Agency shall be carried out and reporting shall be done in a prescribed format on the portal to ensure that there is no violation of prevailing methodology, guidelines, rules, etc. under GCP. A monitoring committee of 3-members under the chairmanship of IO, including Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF) and the entity/GCA as its members shall be constituted. Monitoring committee shall submit half yearly monitoring reports on the GCP portal, as prescribed by the Administrator. Third party shall be engaged for independent monitoring. Separate guidelines shall be issued for accreditation/empanelment of verifiers for verification/monitoring of plantation. The GCP portal will track the

progress and proper records shall be maintained in public domain.

4. Accounting and audit:

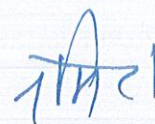
Separate savings account in a nationalized bank for the Administrator, SNO, IO and concerned Range Forest Officer shall be opened and maintained for Green Credit Programme. After receipt of payment from GCA, the Administrator will release the funds to SNO to complete the advance works of plantation. Subsequent release of fund to the SNO will be done in installments, as per the progress of the plantation work. Separate guidelines will be developed for fund flow mechanism, fund disbursement, financial and accounting procedures, record keeping process, auditing, etc.

5. Advantages of GCs:

5.1 The plantation taken under GCP, may be exchanged for compliance of Compensatory Afforestation (CA) in case of diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes under Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980, as applicable.

5.2 GCs earned may be used for reporting under ESG leadership indicator or under CSR, as per applicable rules.

This issues with approval of the Competent Authority.



(Nameeta Prasad)

Joint Secretary to Government of India

Email: nameeta.prasad@gov.in

Tel. No.: 011-20819324

To,

The Chief Secretary,
All State/UT Governments

Copy to:

1. Sr. PPS to Secretary/PPS to DGF&SS/PPS to Addl. DGF(FC)
2. Principal Secretary (Forests), All States/UTs

3. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF), all State/UTs;
4. AS/JS, In-Charge GCP
5. DG, ICFRE
6. IGF, NAEB
7. PPS to CEO, NCAMPA/ADG (FC), MoEF&CC, New Delhi;
8. NIC, MoEF&CC with a request to upload a copy on MoEFCC website.