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GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
FOREST DEPARTMENT

Rc.No.13397/96-V.1,
Dated:3-4-1996.

Office of the Prl.Chief Conservator
of Forests, Aranya Bhavan, A.P.,
Hyderabad.

Sri M.Kamal Naidu, IFS.,
Prl.Chief Conservator of Forests.

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CIRCULAR NO.3/96-V.1.

Sub:- Thinnings in teak plantations - Circular
instructions - issued - Regarding.

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The World Bank teak who have virited some of the teak thinning areas in the state have commented that thinnings in teak plantations are not done properly. And they have stated that, thinnings may taken up only in such plantations which can give better economics, and where they are silviculturally appropriate. Therefore, the following instructions are issued in this regard.

Thinning is a felling made in an immature stand for the purpose of improving the growth and form of the trees that remain, without permanently breaking the canopy.

Thinning as we know are of two types:

- 1) Mechanical thinning, and 2. Silvicultural selective thinnings.

Mechanical thinning is a thinning in which the trees to be cut are selected by some rule-of-thumb, as such as alternate/diagonal rows, alternate trone in alternate rows, or every second, third, fourth line or a minimum spacing guaged by the standard yardstick.

Generally the first two thinnings carried-out are mechanical thinnings. However, the periodicity varies from place to place depending upon the site quality. Generally thinnings in teak plantations are carried out in the 7th and 14th year or 8th and 14th year.

While, Silvicultural/Selective thinning if a method of thinning directed to obtain and/or maintain selective composition of crop, with all diameter classes adequately represented, and also to enable put on diameter increment in trees.

Silvicultural thinnings are monthly carried out in the 20th, 35th and 50th years of planting and their intensity varies between A to E grades.

The objections of thinning are:

- (a) To reduce the number of trees growing on a site so that those remaining have more growing space and less root competition. Thus assisting in their subsequent developm in volume.

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- (c) To reduce the risk of disease by removing diseased, dying, moribund and dead trees and to remove other trees which are harmful to the crop etc., whips and wolf trees.
- (d) To ensure a reasonable equal distribution of final crop through out the area.

Teak is a strong light demanding species. It does not tolerate congestion and shade and requires plenty of light and growing space which should be provided through careful manipulation of overhead canopy and growing space. Thus, warranting regular thinnings. The periodicity and intensity of thinning depend on the growth rate and site quality.

Thinning is a very technical operation based on scientific concepts of forestry. This job is more often left in the hands of inexperienced and untrained personnel leading to irreparable damage to the eco-system. Judicious application by trained and experienced staff would yield good results both silvicultural as well as economical. But the thrust has to be on improvement of the stand rather than on the economic returns. This can be achieved by proper selection of the droas for thinning combined with proper application of the appropriate thinning regime through trained and experienced staff. This activity required a very professional application.

It is often observed that thinnings especially in the plantations are carried out in the most routine manner. No proper inspections are made before taking up the thinning work. In course, most often it is found that understocked plantations and at times even failed plantations are thinned and the expenditure booked. The rates prescribed for the first and second mechanical thinnings are based on area basis. The over enthusiastic staff often in their hurry to achieve the financial and physical targets resort no thinnings in fail understocked plantations thereby defeating the very purpose of thinning and also resulting in uneconomic returns.

Hence, in future all the Conservators of Forests/ Divisional Forest Officers are requested to inspect the plantations due for thinning before the marking is done, and at none the need and desirability of thinning in any given plantation, keeping in view the stock position and possibility of getting intermediate yields both physical and financial.

No failed plantation (with less than 30% of stock) should be taken up for thinnings.

Silvicultural principles should alone be the criteria for taking up of any thinnings.

No officer below the rank of an Asst. Conservator of Forests/Senior Range Officer shall be entrusted with marking for Silvicultural thinnings.

Sd/-M.Kamal Naidu,
Prl.Chief Conservator of Forests.

To
All Conservators of Forests for onward communication.

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