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CIRCULAR No. 8 / 2004 / PMU-I/2

Sub: - Forest Department - Convergence of CFM and Velugu - Collection of NTFP items not covered by GCC Agreement - Issue of permits -Certain guidelines - Issued - Regarding.

Ref: - G.O. Ms. No. 78, Environment, Forests, Science & Technology (For.III) Dept., Dt. 17-10-2003

Market support has been provided for certain NTFP and medicinal plants under Velugu Project. In terms of Government Order mentioned above, this activity is to be taken up only by the NTFP collectors who are also members of VSSs.

But it is observed more often that despite this prescription, collection of these items is done virtually by every one who may or may not have a stake over forest resources. This is likely to lead to unsustainable harvesting apart from leading to conflicts between VSS and non-VSS villages. But, the Forest Department is being brought into picture only for issue of transit permits. Sharing of information in this regard is grossly inadequate. These issues were discussed with the officers of the Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP) recently and the following arrangement has been made accordingly: -

1. Collection of these NTFP items including medicinal plants is to be confined to only those villagers of the villages where VSSs exist.
2. For each item of NTFP to be collected from the forests, a suitable date for commencement of collection and date for closure of collection have to be decided through consultative process by SERP / respective institutions involved in collection / procurement of these items duly involving officials of the Forest Department and of VSSs. This has to be notified in the respective villages.
3. Training programmes shall be conducted in all the villages by SERP in Collaboration with Forest Department on sustainable harvest practices.
4. Before commencement of collection, species wise quantities being collected and no. of permits required will be assessed by SERP, or its nominees and concerned Divisional Forest Officer informed for giving VSS wise required no. of permits.
5. Accordingly Divisional Forest Officers will keep the required no. of permits with the concerned VSSs before commencement of collection duly authorizing the chair person of the respective VSSs to issue permits when needed. As and when required, VSSs will in turn issue these permits for transporting the NTFP and medicinal plant products collected in favour of those who have purchased these products.
6. VSS wise details of collection will be recorded in the books of VSSs to document the

harvest and sale of the NTFP items.

7. Divisional Forest Officers are requested to contact the District Collectors and the Project Officers ITDA to discuss the subject to operationalise the modalities.

Sd/- **S.K. Das,**
Principal Chief Conservator of Forests.