

F. No. IA-Z-11013/145/2026-IA-II (NCM)
Government of India
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
(IA Division – Non-Coal Mining Sector)

Indira Paryavaran Bhawan,
Jor Bagh Road, Aliganj,
New Delhi – 110003

Date: 18th September, 2026

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Streamlining the procedure for utilization of sub-grade mineral generated only from mining projects holding valid Environmental Clearance (EC) – reg.

Ministry of Mines vide OM dated 31.07.2025 and 27.03.2026 requested this Ministry to allow the disposal/sale of sub-grade mineral generated during current year mining operations as well as legacy stock excavated during the previous years and stocked within the lease area. Accordingly, the matter was examined by Expert Appraisal Committee (Non-Coal Mining Sector) in its meetings held on 23–24 April, 2026, 29–30 June, 2026 and 17 July, 2026.

2. The Expert Appraisal Committee, inter-alia, observed that sub-grade mineral generally refers to mineralized material that contains the mineral of interest but whose grade is below the cut-off grade or marketable grade required for economic sale or processing at the time of extraction. Such material is not treated as waste and is usually stocked separately for possible future use. The utilization of sub-grade mineral generated during on-going mining operations as well as legacy would eventually promote scientific and sustainable mining practices by facilitating optimal utilization of mineral resources, improving mine safety and minimizing the need for fresh excavation. However, re-handling of legacy sub-grade may result in additional environmental concerns such as fugitive dust emissions and wastewater generation which may be suitably addressed by updation of existing Environmental Management Plan (EMP).

3. Based on the recommendations of the Expert Appraisal Committee (Non-Coal Mining Sector), the Ministry has decided that a Project Proponent holding a valid Environmental Clearance for a mineral mining project may utilize the sub-grade quality of the same mineral as per the procedure given below:

A. Ongoing Mining operations:-

Utilization of sub-grade mineral generated during the on-going mining operations within the existing EC capacity is permitted provided that the following conditions are fulfilled:

- i. Proposal of subgrade mineral utilization is included in existing approved mining plan;
- ii. Sub-grade mineral pertains to the same mineral for which EC has been granted;
- iii. Cumulative quantity of mineral, including sub-grade mineral, produced, transported, or utilized during the on-going mining period remains within the annual production capacity approved under the existing EC; and

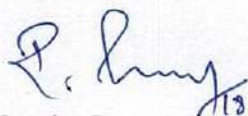
- iv. All other conditions stipulated in the EC, revised Mining Plan, and applicable statutory provisions are complied with.

B. Utilization of legacy sub-grade mineral

Utilization of legacy sub-grade mineral stocked within the lease area as per approved Mine Plan is permitted within the existing EC capacity **through an amendment in the existing EC**, subject to the submission of the following documents:

- i. Proposal of legacy subgrade mineral utilization is included in existing approved mining plan.
- ii. Sub-grade mineral pertains to the same mineral for which EC has been granted;
- iii. Cumulative quantity of mineral, including the legacy sub-grade mineral produced, transported, or utilized during the on-going mining period remains within the annual production capacity approved under the existing EC; and
- iv. Addendum EMP to mitigate the environmental concerns due to re-handling of legacy sub-grade mineral.

4. This issues with the approval of the Competent Authority.


(Sundar Ramanathan)
Scientist 'F'

To:

1. The Principal Secretaries, Environment Department of all the States/UTs
2. The Chairman/Member Secretaries of all the SEIAAs/SEACs
3. The Chairman/Member Secretary of CPCB
4. The Chairman/ Member Secretaries of all SPCBs/UTPCCs
5. All the officers of IA Division

Copy for information to:

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2. PS to Hon'ble Minister of State (EF&CC)
3. PPS to the Secretary (EF&CC)
4. PPS to the AS(AG)/ AS(AA)
5. PPS to the JS (RA)
6. Parivesh 2.0