



विभु नायर, आई.ए.एस.

सचिव

Vibhu Nayar, I.A.S
Secretary

पीएम जनमन

प्रधान मंत्री जनजाति आदिवासी
न्याय महा अभियान

भारत सरकार
जनजातीय कार्य मंत्रालय
नई दिल्ली
Government of India
Ministry of Tribal Affairs
New Delhi

D.O. No. 17014/01/2024-FRA (E-27276)

Dated: 22.10.2025

Dear Chief Secretaries,

As you are aware, the responsibility for implementing the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (FRA) lies with the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has periodically undertaken comprehensive reviews of its implementation. It has been observed that there is an urgent need to further accelerate progress across all States and UTs, with a particular focus on the management of IFRs, recognition of Habitat Rights for PVTGs, Community Forest Rights (CFRs), and Community Forest Resource Rights (CFRRs). These rights are vital for conserving ecosystems, strengthening livelihoods, and fostering community-led forest governance. In this regard, I would like to seek your kind attention towards certain key issues that require concerted action at the State level. These are as detailed below: -

2. Prioritize CFR& CFRR recognition: - States may prioritize the expeditious disposal of pending claims, especially those relating to Community Forest Rights and Community Forest Resource Rights. Under the Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DA-JGUA), State Tribal Welfare Departments and District Administrations may be asked to prepare a **FRA Atlas** estimating the Potential areas where FRA community rights can be vested along with district-level Action Plan to achieve it, following the commendable examples, amongst others, set by Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh. This will help Districts and Blocks in proceeding with recognition in a systematic manner. Towards this, Ministry has issued SOP for guidance, shared Survey of India's digital boundaries of revenue villages and forest and use cases which can be leveraged to prepare and publish the Atlas. These efforts, if anchored through State and District FRA Cells (funded under DAJGUA), will further help institutionalize a systematic and transparent approach of vesting of CFR Rights. FRA cells can be used as District/sub division level PMU of the State TWD which can assist in convergence of all schemes to tribal beneficiaries and also coordinate with FRA committees for timely decision making on the claims etc. The

detailed SOP for FRA cells have also been shared with States and it is expected that these will be set up and made operational by 15th October 2025.

3. Disposal of Pendency - Particular attention may also be paid to disposing of claims that have remained pending at the District Level for over a year, with due diligence to ensure that rejections, if any, are accompanied by clear, reasoned, and speaking orders communicated to claimants. For monitoring the pendency it is important to have **state level dashboards** in your State/UT. Ministry has agreed to fund the portals under DAJGUA and have been encouraging States/UTs to digitise the process to enable better monitoring at all levels. Further it is also important to digitise/geo map the area already vested with forest rights which would help in mitigating the land disputes and also avoid duplicate claims over same piece of land.

It has also come to notice that several claims are rejected on technical grounds, such as the absence of satellite imagery, GIS/GPS mapping, or difficulties faced by Sub-Divisional Level Committees in establishing possession of forest land through such methods. In this context, it is important to reiterate that **Rule 12A of FRA** clearly envisages **satellite imagery and other technological inputs as supplementary**, not substitute forms of evidence largely because of technical limitations of image scale and the fact that Satellite imagery may suggest occupation but remains agnostic of identity of the occupant and thus becomes self-limiting. States may therefore, ensure that the rights of claimants are not unfairly denied and instead **satellite imagery can be made available to gram sabhas** so that it is combined with participatory mapping and ground-level evidences as detailed in Rules to enable a transparent decision making on the claims.

4. MFP- On the matter of Minor Forest Produce, it may be noted that the provisions of FRA have an overriding effect over other Acts/ Rules related to it. Section 2(i) of the Act defines the term “minor forest produce” to include “all non-timber produces of plant origin, including bamboo, brush wood, stumps, cane, tussar, cocoons, honey, wax, lac, tendu or kendu leaves, medicinal plants and herbs, roots, tubers, and the like” accordingly **State policies and Rules need to be in alignment with this definition.**

Vide the Section 2 (c) and Rule 2(1) (d) the forest right holders or their cooperatives/federations are allowed to sell MFPs to anyone or to undertake individual or collective processing, value addition, marketing, for livelihood within and outside forest area by using locally appropriate means of transport. The **transit permit Rules are also required to be amended** to ensure that the forest right holders or committee as decided by Gram sabha are permitted to issue Transit

permit. States like Maharashtra have evolved mechanisms for facilitating forest dwelling communities to auction their MFP and the same approach can be adopted and improvised by others. Therefore, **State Governments are required to play a facilitating role** by building capacities for sustainable harvest, forming federations of forest right holders so that the rights of forest dwelling communities and Gram sabha are upheld in true spirit of FRA 2006.

5. Protection against Forced Relocation -The Act under Section 4(2) has enumerated certain safeguards which are required to be satisfied before creation of inviolate areas for wildlife conservations, accordingly, the State/UT Governments needs to ensure that the **rights of** the forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers, residing in **National Parks and Sanctuaries are recognized first** before any exercise for modification of their rights or their resettlement, if necessary, is undertaken and **no member** of the forest dwelling Scheduled Tribe or other traditional forest dweller **is relocated** from such areas without the settlement of their rights and completion of all other actions required under Section 4(2) of the Act. A mechanism for ensuring that rights are vested and whenever modified, then compensated, may be evolved in the State. A regular review of the matter at your level will help safeguarding the rights of forest-dwelling communities and help in implementation of this provision of FRA in letter and spirit.

6. Recording of Rights - As per Rule 12A (9) and as clarified vide letter no 23011/06/2014-FRA dated 03.032014, on completion of the process of settlement of rights and issue of titles as specified in Annexure II,III and IV of these rules, the Revenue and the Forest departments shall prepare a final map of the forest land so vested and the concerned authorities shall incorporate the forest rights so vested in the revenue and forest records, as the case may be, within the specified period of record updation under the relevant State laws or within a period of three months, whichever is earlier. Without being on official records, patta holders often face exclusion from government benefits and schemes and thus it is important that the right holders are issued Record of rights as per State Revenue code/law in a time bound manner.

7. Timelines for appeal - As per the provisions of the Rule 6(2), there is provision of appeal against the decision of Gram Sabha to Sub Division level Committee and similarly as per Rule 6 (4) appeal can be made against the decision of Sub Divisional Committee to the District level Committee which finally vests the rights to the eligible person. There is a need to create awareness about this department may be

asked to add this element of appellate process in their all ongoing campaigns on FRA.

8. Correction of Rights - If it is discovered that there are administrative errors in the title and it requires corrections due to errors, The state may provide that such corrections can be made by the District Level Committee (DLC) upon receiving an application from the claimant along with the corresponding resolution from the Gram Sabha. This correction process is purely administrative and does not amount to cancelling or withdrawing any recognized rights. Further, if any part of the claim has not been adjudicated the claimant may apply afresh as a fresh claim.

9. Habitat Rights Recognition for PVTGs:- In total, despite 75 identified PVTGs across 18 states, habitat rights recognition remains at an early stage with only few PVTGs (of Odisha, Chattisgarh, MP) getting formal protection for their traditional habitats. The recognition of habitat rights for PVTGs is fundamental for preserving the physical territory, traditional livelihoods, and culture. Ministry on 23rd March 2015 has clarified the definition of habitat to include community tenures of habitat and habitation and can be recognized over customary territories used by the PVTG for habitation, livelihoods, social, economic, spiritual, sacred, religious and other purposes. FRA vide Rule 12 B(1) has mandated the DLC to be proactive and draw out a detailed plan for vesting of Habitat Right in consultation with the traditional institutions of PVTGs. Accordingly, a road map may be prepared for the PVTGs of your state.


10. Post Recognition Support: - There is a need to provide meaningful post-recognition support through convergence of government schemes, as envisaged under Rule 16 of FRA. For this, DA-JGUA may be used as a vehicle for such convergence. Initiatives such saturating title holders with Aadhaar, extending Kisan Credit Card (KCC) and PMKISAN coverage and facilitating access to bank loans under the RBI's Priority Sector Lending scheme for FRA beneficiaries can significantly help translate into tangible improvements in livelihoods. A road map on this would be ideal and will help us in achieving the goals of Vikasit Bharat.

11. It has been observed that **SLMC meetings are not being held regularly which is in a way taking away the focus** from alignment of state policies with the FRA, integrating forest rights into Government Welfare Schemes and developmental initiatives for tribal upliftment. Therefore, to strengthen institutional mechanisms, you may kindly convene regular meetings of the State Level Monitoring Committee (SLMC) at least once every quarter. These forums can play a decisive role in addressing ground-level challenges, resolving grievances, and monitoring the timely

disposal of claims. Furthermore, you may direct district administrations that after recognition of rights, proper demarcation and boundary mapping of CFR claims through GIS has to be ensured, with prompt incorporation into official records to secure tenure and reduce future conflicts

12. The above measures, if implemented in earnest, will go a long way in strengthening the effective implementation of FRA, and in securing the rights and entitlements of forest-dwelling communities. I shall be grateful for your personal attention to the matter and therefore, request you to review the implementation of FRA in your State/UT and take all necessary steps to address all the concerns

Your sincerely,


(Vibhu Nayar)

Chief Secretaries (All FRA Implementing States)