



Office of
Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
(Head of Forest Force)

Himachal Pradesh Forest Department Headquarters, Talland, Shimla-171001

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Advisory to User Agencies regarding services of accredited Forest Clearance Consultant Organizations in Himachal Pradesh

The Himachal Pradesh Forest Department has operationalized a scheme for accreditation of Forest Clearance Consultant Organizations (FCCO) that will do hand holding of various User Agencies (UA) in preparation and submission of proposals for clearance under Forest (Conservation) Act 1980. The UAs may consider following points while availing services of FCCOs:

1. FCCOs are accredited through Quality Council of India based on a set of stringent criteria to ensure standards and quality of service. However, it is NOT MANDATORY for the UAs to avail the services of FCCOs and is purely voluntary.
2. QCI has a robust grievance redressal mechanism and standard operating procedures in place. In case any UA is not satisfied with the conduct or performance of FCCO engaged by them, the UA may take up the matter with QCI which can even withdraw the accreditation granted to the concerned FCCO and during inquiry process can suspend accreditation denying FCCO to do any further business.
3. QCI has been instructed by H.P. Forest Department to ensure that FCCOs charge only reasonable fees from UAs which should also be lower for Government Departments. The UAs shall make payment to the FCCO engaged by them and H.P. Forest Department shall have no liability of costs on account of services provided by FCCOs to the UAs.
4. The UAs are advised to engage, if desired, those FCCOs that have technically best experts like forest officers preferably those retired from posts equivalent to Divisional Forest Officers (DFO), Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF) and Range Forest Officers (Forest Ranger) as the preparation of proposal file requires boot on the ground demanding considerable travelling and meeting various Forest Department frontline field functionaries. Similarly, young students of subject relevant to forest clearance purpose within FCCOs also have the capability of intensive travelling and collecting information from even remotest locations in shortest possible time. UAs are advised to go through the list of experts of the accredited FCCOs. Help from QCI may also be taken in this regards by the UA.
5. The list of accredited FCCOs will be available on the websites of QCI (www.qcin.org) and H.P. Forest Department (www.hpforest.gov.in)

This advisory is issued in interest of all concerned.

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