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CAMPA

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CAMPA

CAMPA manages the money paid when forest land is cleared for another use. It funds planting, forest repair, and wildlife work. **But can money ever fully restore an old forest?**



A newly planted sapling needs years of care. A plantation is one CAMPA activity, but it cannot fully replace an old natural forest. Photo: Indian Navy, GODL-India.

At a Glance

How CAMPA grew and works.

01
2001-02

A Supreme Court order began the ad-hoc arrangement.

02
2016

Parliament passed the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act.

03
30 Sep 2018

The Act and its rules took effect.

04
90 : 10

90% goes to the State fund and 10% to the National fund.

CAMPACompensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority.
CACompensatory afforestation. Planting at a replacement site.
NPVNet present value. A payment for forest benefits lost when land use changes.
APOAnnual Plan of Operation. A State’s plan of sites, activities, and costs.

What CAMPA Pays For

Must Know

CAMPA and forest diversion

- A road, mine, or power line may need forest land. The user agency first needs approval under the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980. It was earlier called the Forest (Conservation) Act.
- Approval may require payments and other conditions. **Payment does not itself permit forest clearing.**
- The agency pays for planting on other land. It also pays for lost forest benefits and approved site plans.
- The Environment Ministry explains these payments as compensation for lost forest and ecosystem services.

Three common payments

- **Compensatory afforestation (CA):** money for trees and long-term care at an approved replacement site.
- **Net present value (NPV):** a payment for forest benefits lost when land use changes. These include habitat, soil protection, and water regulation. A money value cannot capture them all.
- **Other levies:** an approval may require a wildlife plan, catchment treatment, or extra planting.
- Each payment has its own purpose. It is not one free-spending account.

How the legal system grew

- Supreme Court directions built an earlier, temporary arrangement for holding these payments.
- Parliament passed the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act in 2016. It set up National and State funds and authorities.
- The Act and the 2018 rules took effect on 30 September 2018. See the National CAMPA Act and Rules page.

Quick check 1. Paying CAMPA charges automatically gives a company permission to clear forest. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Funds, Plans, and Limits

Good to Know

Follow the money

- The flow is: user agency, State and National funds, approved annual plan, field work, audit.
- The funds sit in the Public Accounts of India and the States. They are not ordinary ministry grants.
- 90% of the collected amount goes to the State fund. The other 10% goes to the National fund.
- States prepare an Annual Plan of Operation (APO). The national authority reviews it. An approval is a plan to spend, not proof of finished work.

What spending is allowed?

- CA money follows the planting and care plan linked to a forest-diversion approval.
- The 2018 rules also allow natural regeneration, fire control, soil work, and wildlife habitat work. Some forest roads, staff facilities, and monitoring are allowed with limits.
- At least 80% of NPV money is for core forest and wildlife work. At most 20% is for related support.
- These percentages apply to the NPV part, not every rupee. The National CAMPA FAQ lists restricted uses.

Local land and rights matter

- Planting needs suitable land, water, species, and years of care. A row of saplings is only a start.
- Forest users may hold rights under the Forest Rights Act, 2006. CAMPA payments do not remove those rights. See The Forest Rights Act, 2006.
- Local species often fit a site better than one fast-growing species.
- Good monitoring checks survival and forest quality. Counting planting pits alone misses both.

> **Quick check 2.** The 2016 Act set up National and State CAMPA funds and authorities. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Evidence and Accountability

Great to Know

An Odisha audit shows the delivery gap

- In an Odisha audit published in 2024, the Comptroller and Auditor General checked older planting duties. See the CAG report.
- It found a 6,995.97-hectare shortfall against the due compensatory-afforestation target up to March 2020.
- The audit described land and work delays. This is an Odisha finding, not an all-India total.
- It shows why payments, approved plans, planted area, and surviving forest must be measured separately.

What can planting replace?

- A young plantation can give shade, absorb some carbon, and protect soil.
- An old forest has complex habitat, species, and local ties. These take much longer to form.
- Some losses may never be fully replaced at another site. Do not call hectares planted “forest restored” without evidence.
- Ask four questions: Where was land found? Which species grew? How many survived? Who uses the land?

Audit the outcome, not only the account

- A financial audit asks whether money was recorded and spent within rules.
- A field audit asks whether work happened at the right place and time.
- An ecological check asks whether trees survived and habitat improved. All three checks matter.

Think it through: why are there two separate problems, not one that the 2016 Act solved?

The 2016 Act fixed the legal problem. CAMPA finally had a statute instead of an ad-hoc Supreme Court arrangement. But a legal base does not fix how money is spent once collected. Later audits still found funds diverted to unrelated purchases, planting delayed by years, and money left undistributed. A sound law and sound day-to-day management are two different achievements.

Quick check 3. The National CAMPA Fund is part of the Consolidated Fund of India. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Quick check 4. All CAMPA money may be spent freely on any environment project. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Quick check 5. A hectare of planted trees always replaces a hectare of old natural forest. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Current Affairs

Current Affairs

Digital plans and field checks in 2026

- At its July 2026 meeting, National CAMPA discussed digital Annual Plans of Operation for 2026-27. See the government release.
- It also reviewed geographic monitoring and the audit of its 2024-25 accounts.

- Digital plans can improve tracking. They do not prove that trees survived or habitats recovered.
- For the wider planting push, see India's Afforestation and Plantation Campaigns.

> **Quick check 6.** A digital annual plan is useful, but field results still need checking. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Quick Q&A

What does CAMPA stand for?

Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority.

When did the Act and rules take effect?

30 September 2018.

What is the State and National fund split?

90% and 10%.

Which Account holds the funds?

The Public Account.

Does paying CAMPA charges allow clearing forest?

No. Approval conditions still apply.

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Practice MCQs

1. What is CAMPA's core purpose?

A. Regulating vehicle emissions in Indian cities

B. Managing funds for afforestation when forest land is diverted for non-forest use

C. Managing India's national parks and wildlife sanctuaries

D. Issuing environmental clearances for new industries

See answer ↓

2. CAMPA traces its origins to a 2002 Supreme Court order, but ran only as an ad-hoc body for over a decade. What finally gave it a statutory legal basis?

A. The Forest Conservation Act, 1980

B. The Environment Protection Act, 1986

C. The Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act, 2016

D. The Wildlife Protection Act, 1972

See answer ↓

3. The Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act, 2016 and its Rules came into force in which year, formally replacing the ad-hoc CAMPA?

A. 2016

B. 2020

C. 2022

D. 2018

See answer ↓

4. Under the CAF Act's structure, how are CAMPA funds organised?

A. A single national fund with no state-level component

B. Funds distributed directly to individual farmers, with no institutional fund

C. A two-tier structure: a National Fund and separate State Funds for each state/UT

D. Funds managed entirely by private forestry contractors

See answer ↓

5. A CAG audit of CAMPA funds in one state found money diverted to purchase items like iPhones, laptops, and refrigerators, instead of afforestation.

Which state was this?

A. Madhya Pradesh

B. Chhattisgarh

C. Uttarakhand

D. Odisha

See answer ↓

Answer Key

1. **B.** CAMPA manages compensatory afforestation funds, collected whenever forest land is diverted for mining, infrastructure, or other non-forest uses. ↑ Q1
2. **C.** The Supreme Court ordered a Compensatory Afforestation Fund on 30 October 2002. An ad hoc authority followed on 5 May 2006. The CAF Act, 2016 gave CAMPA a statutory base. ↑ Q2
3. **D.** The CAF Rules were notified in August 2018, and the Act and Rules came into force on 30 September 2018, when National CAMPA formally replaced the ad-hoc body. ↑ Q3
4. **C.** The Act creates a National Fund and a State Fund in each State and Union Territory. Both sit in the public account. A National Authority and State Authorities manage them. ↑ Q4
5. **C.** The CAG audit of Uttarakhand covers 2019 to 2022. It found Rs 13.86 crore went to items not allowed, including phones, laptops, fridges and coolers. The Supreme Court closed the matter on 19 March 2025. ↑ Q5

Quick-check answers

1. **False.** ↑ 1
2. **True.** ↑ 2
3. **False.** ↑ 3
4. **False.** ↑ 4
5. **False.** ↑ 5
6. **True.** ↑ 6

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