

Case study: Lafarge entered the North Indian hilly state of Himachal Pradesh and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the State Government in March 2007 for developing a cement project with a capacity of 3 million tonnes in the State. Following its review of the case, including a site visit in June 2010, the National Environment Appellate Authority (NEAA) quashed the Environment Clearance granted by the Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF). The company is challenging the judgement of the NEAA at the High Court.

Concerns about the project

- The proposed project will severely compromise the environment

What is Lafarge's position?

- The project was extensively reviewed by expert committees appointed by the Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF) and subsequently, in June 2009, the Environment Clearance (EC) was granted.
- The EC contains 45 specific and 12 general conditions covering all environmental aspects and earmarks Rs. 900 million (€15 million) as "capital costs + recurring cost per annum" for pollution control devices over the life of the plant.
- Prior to granting the Environment Clearance the concerned Ministry (MoEF) had ensured that all statutory formalities were carried out.
- The plant site was approved by the State Site Appraisal Committee in April 2008, the mining lease was granted in July/August 2008, a 5 hour long public hearing was conducted in December 2008 followed by a site visit of a sub-committee of the Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) in May 2009, which culminated in the grant of EC in June 2009.
- There was a two-year long process to obtain the EC, which included expert observations contained in the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA), the views of the State officials exchanged with the sub-committee of the EAC and observations of this sub-committee itself.