

FAC is considering an iron ore mine and a coal mine for diversion of biodiversity rich forest areas

The Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) of the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC) in its meeting on 28 March 2019, is considering 3 proposals for diversion of forest areas¹. Besides a defence proposal, it involves an iron ore mine in Sal forest and elephant habitat in Chaibasa area of Jharkhand, and a Coal mine in dense forest in much talked about Singrauli area of Madhya Pradesh. Ideally, such rich areas should not be diverted because of policy environment against addition coal mining as well as diversion of elephant habitat result in elephant-man conflict.

Sr. No.	State	Area (ha.)	Area(%)	Proposals
1	Madhya Pradesh	988.904	72.06	2
2	Jharkhand	383.37	27.93	1
	Total	1372.274		

Total area being considered is 1372 ha. State-wise, the larger area of 988.904 ha is being considered in Madhya Pradesh.

It is matter of serious concern that these days Ministry is uploading agenda of FAC meeting only a day or two in advance.

Sector wise proposals

Sr. No.	Sector	Area (ha.)	Area%	Proposals
1	Mining	773.634	56.37	2
2	Defence	598.64	43.62	1
	Total	1372.274		

PS: MoEF&CC has added one more project, North Koel Dam in Jharkhand, at the last minute. This was recommended by FAC in October 2017 meeting. ERC has engaged with FAC on the proposal and FAC has imposed many conditions along with the recommendation. MoEE&CC issued the Stage-I approval dated 23.02.2018. Subsequently the project again appeared with FAC in November 2018 where certain

¹ <http://forestclearance.nic.in/AgendaDetail.aspx?id=216!dis1>

conditions were dropped and certain conditions were modified / revoked.² There are no documents available in public domain for the present consideration but it may be for some similar amendments.

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² http://forestsclearance.nic.in/writereaddata/FAC_Minutes/111126124712151FACMinutes.PDF