



Forest Clearance Analysis for January - December, 2015

The Forest (Conservation) Act (FCA), 1980 outlines different procedures for clearances of projects that are above and below 40 Ha. CSE has compiled and analysed forest clearances granted for such projects in the year 2015. All data for the analysis has been obtained from the MoEF&CC's website on forest clearance (www.forestclearance.nic.in). As already known, forest clearance is a 2-stage process under the FC Act, 1980. Stage 2 Forest Clearance analysis from 1st January, 2015 to 31st December, 2015 is being provided below.

329 projects spreading over an area of 11525.59 Ha were awarded final approval by the MoEF&CC in 2015. Projects above 40Ha and those below 40Ha follow different trends. Their analysis has been provided separately.

Stage 2 Clearance: Projects above 40 Ha

State wise analysis: Highlights

- ✚ A total number of **56** projects (above 40ha) were awarded second stage clearances, i.e. final approval from the MoEF&CC. The total extent of forest land under these 56 projects is **10416.14 Ha**.
- ✚ The highest number of approved forest diversion cases was recorded in Madhya Pradesh, where 15 projects have been granted clearance, followed by Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh.
- ✚ Andhra Pradesh ranks on top in the extent of forest land approved with a total forest area of **2577.58Ha**, despite a smaller number of approved projects. Part of the reason is the controversial **bauxite mining project** in AP, which covers an area of **1212Ha** and was approved in August 2015.

A lot of uproar has been created over the bauxite mining clearance in Andhra Pradesh. Interestingly, it has taken 8 years for the project to receive the second stage clearance after it removed its 'in principle' approval in 2008. Ambiguities on the issuance of GO from the State Government to start mining remain.
- ✚ Madhya Pradesh ranks high in the number of cases owing to the significant number of 'forest village conversion' projects (7). The 'Forest Village Conversion' projects in fact, pertain to the relocation of villages from the Satpura Tiger Reserve, Hoshangabad.

Table 1: State wise forest land approved for diversion

State	No. of projects	Area Diverted (ha)
Andhra Pradesh	5	2577.58
Bihar	2	391.18
Chhattisgarh	9	1975.82
Gujarat	1	173.39
Himachal Pradesh	3	189.51
Jharkhand	2	196.55
Karnataka	1	98.02
Madhya Pradesh	15	1922.65
Maharashtra	5	637.89
Meghalaya	1	138.11
Orissa	5	1005.61
Rajasthan	3	265.37
Tamil Nadu	1	457.25
Tripura	1	172.85
Uttar Pradesh	2	214.32

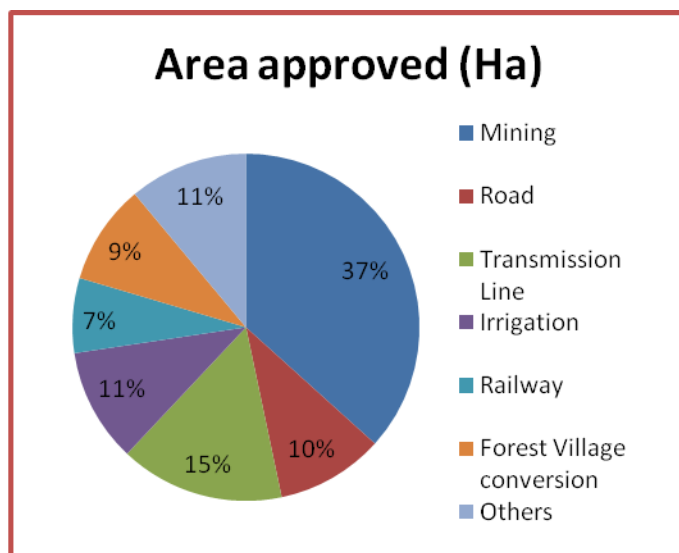
Sector Wise Analysis: Highlights

- ✚ Mining sector led the charts recording the highest number of cases as well as in terms of the extent of forest land approved for diversion with a total of **14** cases spanning over an area of **3794.54 Ha**.
- ✚ Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Orissa were the largest contributors to the mining clearances in forest areas.
- ✚ Approvals for Transmission Line also received a push with a total of **9** projects over an area of **1584.54 Ha** receiving second stage clearance.
- ✚ 4 big Transmission Line projects were approved in the state of Madhya Pradesh. These 4 projects cumulatively acquire an area of **612.29 Ha**.
- ✚ The Forest Department of Madhya Pradesh received approval for relocation of 7 villages from the Satpura Tiger Reserve in 2015. The total area allotted for relocation of these 7 villages is **966.19 Ha**.

Table 2: Sector wise Forest Diversion

Sector	No. of projects	Area Diverted (Ha)
Mining	14	3794.54
Road	6	1037.29
Transmission Line	9	1584.54
Irrigation	6	1096.7
Railway	4	721.38
Forest Village conversion	7	966.19
Others	9	1145.44

Figure 1: Percentage share of sectors in forest diversion 2015



'Others' includes projects like Defence, Wind Power, Industry, School, Defence, Drinking Water, etc. As there are very few such projects in different states, these categories have been clubbed into one.

Stage 2 Clearance: Projects below 40 Ha

State wise analysis: Highlights

✚ A total of **273** projects spreading over an area of **1064.45Ha** have received Stage 2 clearance i.e. final approval from the regional MoEF&CC offices in the year 2015.

✚ Chandigarh, MoEF&CC's regional office for the states of Punjab and Haryana, cleared the maximum number of projects in the country – **193** projects spanning over an area of **121.7Ha**, the average forest area per project being 0.6Ha. This is indicative of the fact that several small scale projects have been cleared by the office.

✚ **Madhya Pradesh**, which comes under the jurisdiction of the Bhopal office, received clearance for diversion of **508.94Ha** of forest land, the highest among all the states. Of the different types of projects that have contributed to Madhya Pradesh's highest share in forest land diverted, irrigation projects rank on top.

Table 3: State wise forest land approved for diversion

State	No. of projects	Area approved for diversion (ha)
Andhra Pradesh	3	34.5
Arunachal Pradesh	1	1.95
Bihar	3	7.45
Chattisgarh	1	32.36
Gujarat	32	230.66
Haryana	134	76.44
Jharkhand	2	9.52
Karnataka	4	8.963
Madhya Pradesh	24	508.94
Maharashtra	1	1.25
Orissa	4	11.88
Telangana	1	1.66
Chandigarh	1	0.37
Punjab	59	45.36
Manipur	3	93.1

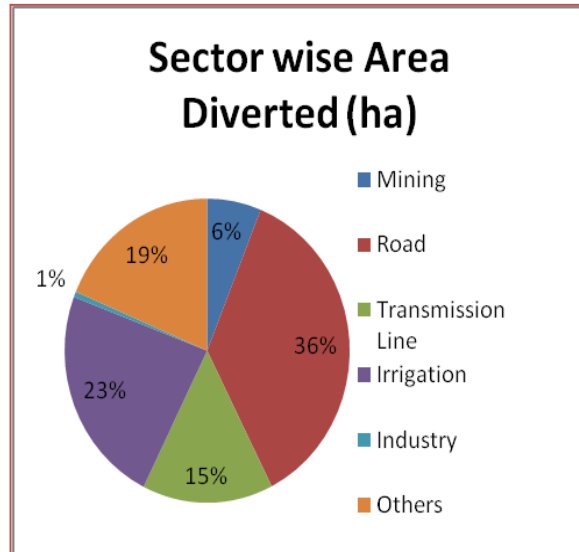
Sector Wise Analysis: Highlights

- ✚ The extent of forest land was highest for projects seeking clearance for building Roads. A total of **47** such projects over an area of **387.4Ha** were granted clearance in 2015.
- ✚ The **highest number of road projects** has been cleared in Haryana with 19 projects over an area of **41.86Ha**.
- ✚ Gujarat has granted **maximum diversion** of forest land for road among all the states with 11 projects over an area of **108.4Ha**.
- ✚ Irrigation has recorded the second highest extent of forest diversion with **249.08Ha** approved for diversion. Of this, Madhya Pradesh alone accounts for 236.28Ha.
- ✚ As opposed to larger projects where the share of mining sector is the highest, only 6 smaller mining projects over an area of 65.17Ha were approved in 2015.

Table 4: Sector wise forest diversion

Sector	No. of projects	Area diverted (ha)
Mining	6	65.17
Road	47	387.4
Transmission Line	36	157.96
Irrigation	12	249.08
Industry	14	6.17
Others	158	198.64

Figure 2: Percentage share of sectors in forest diversion



'Others' includes projects like Defence, Wind Power, Industry, School, Defence, Drinking Water, etc. As there are very few such projects in different states, these categories have been clubbed into one.