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15 December 2013, Dharamjaigarh - An elephant was electrocuted in Ongna village after it came into contact with a live wire in a field.

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ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

A case study on human-elephant conflict within Hasdeo-Arand and Mandraigarh coalfields in Chhattisgarh

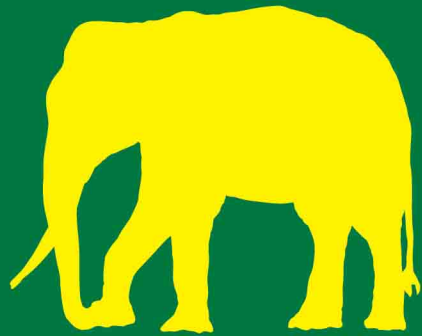


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House damaged by wild elephants in Dharamjalgarh.
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ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

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Elephant killed due to electrocution in Dharamjaigarh.

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Executive

Summary

Human-elephant conflict (HEC) in Chhattisgarh started with 18 elephants migrating in the late 80s from the neighbouring states of Odisha and Jharkhand and over the years the migration increased! The estimation of elephant population in 2012 stands at 247.ⁱⁱ When the elephants in search of new habitats come into contact with human populations who have no experience of how to protect themselves and their property from wild elephants, severe damage is common.

The human-elephant conflict issue has become increasingly severe in Chhattisgarh - 198 human lives have been lost due to elephant conflict between 2005-06 and 2012-13. Street protests in condemnation of the forest department's failure to manage the issue are common. The state assembly has seen several questions raised on the issue, and there have been demands voiced by different sections for an "elephant corridor" or similar refuge that will keep elephants away from crops and villages. The conflict reached such a level that in 2010, the state government doubled the compensation amount for human deaths due to elephants.

To answer the question on, "why the conflict is so high in Chhattisgarh?", one needs to look at the neighbouring central Indian states of Jharkhand and Odisha as well. These three states together hold less than 10% of India's elephants, but on an average, they alone account for approximately 65% of human casualty due to elephant conflict in a year. Mining, especially coal and iron ore mining are the two biggest threats to elephant habitats in these three states.

The Chhattisgarh government has thus far ignored the recommendations made by both independent research institutions such as Wildlife Trust of India or by Project Elephant to secure certain forest regions in Korba and Dharamjaigarh forest divisions for elephant conservation, choosing instead to side with mining interests and open up these areas for coal mining. This is ensuring a continuing escalation of human- elephant conflict in the region.

Human-elephant conflict in Chhattisgarh has resulted in 198 human deaths between 2005-06 and 2012-13.

This report is an attempt to capture the current conflict scenario in Chhattisgarh and also look at wildlife presence in and around the proposed coal expansion areas, especially the Hasdeo-Arand and Mandraigarh coal fields, which fall within the Raigarh, Sarguja and Korba districts of the state. When forests are diverted for coal or any other mining, local people inherit the problems that arise due to the diversion. In the case of human-wildlife conflict, no mining company ever pays compensation for people killed or property damaged because of wildlife that is displaced or disturbed due to the mining. In most cases, at the time of forest clearance process, wildlife presence and habitat usage are either not reported or under reported by agencies conducting the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), and very often by the state government itself, in order to secure an easy clearance for the project.

Introduction

The Elephant Task Force report 2010, "Gajah-Securing the future of elephants in India" clearly states that the biggest challenges faced by - elephants in the country are reduction in living space and human-elephant conflict. According to Elephant Task Force report there is serious conflict in states like West Bengal, Assam, Orissa, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh; 2/3 of the money spent on elephant conservation goes directly or indirectly for human-elephant conflict.ⁱⁱⁱ

In the case of Central and eastern India, elephants used to be present only in Odisha, Jharkhand and West Bengal. Over the past three decades, more elephant presence has been recorded in the neighbouring states of Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh, often causing more damage to crops and habitats. Increased mining in Odisha and Jharkhand in particular are believed to have played a role in this elephant migration.^{iv} Mining for iron ore, manganese and chromate in the large scale in northern Orissa and southern Jharkhand is considered as the single largest threat to the conservation of elephants.^v

The objective of this study is to do a rapid assessment of the ongoing human-elephant conflict within parts of the Hasdeo-Arand and Mandraigarh coalfields located in the civil districts Raigarh, Sarguja and Korba of Chhattisgarh. The forest divisions that the coalfields fall within are south Sarguja, Katghora, Korba and Dharamjaigarh. While the assessment was focussed on elephant conflict, data was also gathered for other Schedule I species like leopards and sloth bears.

The coal blocks for surveying were selected from within the four forest divisions. The field visits and data gathering was conducted by Conservation Core Society (CCS), based in Bilaspur. CCS interviewed villagers at villages located inside and near the proposed coal blocks. Human-wildlife conflict data was collected from the respective forest departments for the period 2009 to 2012. It should be noted that the figures given in this report on property damage caused by wildlife are the number of cases reported to respective forest departments per their records. Most importantly, this report only touches upon the likely increase in future conflict and is by no means exhaustive. To understand full extent of the impact, one needs to study the complete landscape.



Ramela Bairagi, Madorma, Dharamjaigarh, lost her son Jagdish Bairagi to human-elephant conflict on 17th January, 2011

Human-Elephant Conflict in Central India

The Central Indian elephant habitat is one of the most fragmented and degraded ecosystems for the elephant because of encroachment, shifting cultivation and mining activities.^v The elephants of Central and eastern India are distributed over 17, 000 square kilometres mostly in the Chota Nagpur plateau across the states of Odisha and southern West Bengal.^{vi}

According to the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), there are 2,865 elephants in Odisha, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh, of which Odisha has close to 70% (1,930 elephants) followed by Jharkhand (688 elephants), Chhattisgarh (247 elephants) as of 2012 (Table 1).^{viii}

	2002	2007	2012
Chhattisgarh	-	122	247
Odisha	1841	1862	1930
Jharkhand	772	624	688
All India	26328	27657 - 27682	29391 - 30711

Table 1: Elephant population in Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand and All India

The Elephant Task Force report 2010 notes mining, especially open cast mining as one of the major factors impacting elephant conservation in Central India where most of the elephant areas in Singhbhum (Jharkhand), Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Dhenkanal, Angul and Phulbani (Orissa) have been severely fragmented leading to increased human-elephant conflict and movement of elephants into Chhattisgarh and West Bengal.^x This was ratified by the then Minister of Environment, Mr. Jairam Ramesh during the Elephant-8 conference 2011, when he said that coal mining and iron ore mining are the two "single biggest threats" to elephant corridors in Central India as a result of increasing mining activities in states like Orissa, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh.^x

Annually, around 300 human lives are lost due to human-elephant conflict in India.^{xi} In Chhattisgarh, between 2005-06, 2012-13 198 people have lost their lives.^{xii} In Odisha, in the eight years between (2005-06 to 2012-13) there were 473 cases of human death,^{xiii} 132 cases of human injury, 3,863 cases of house damage and 21,768 acres of crop damage due to elephant depredation and 96 elephant accidents (mostly electrocution) were also reported during the same time.^{xiv} Jharkhand on the other hand witnessed around 867 human deaths and 32 cases elephant electrocution during the same time.^{xv} (Table:2)

Chhattisgarh, Odisha, and Jharkhand have less than 10% of the elephant population in the country but on an average close to 65% of human deaths occurs due to human-elephant conflict.

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Chhattisgarh	17	23	22	27	29	25	33	22
Odisha	42	44	62	58	82	61	41	83
Jharkhand	867							
India	374	289	280	283	303	292	263	311

Table 2: Human deaths due to human-elephant conflict

	Chhattisgarh	Odisha	Jharkhand	Chhattisgarh+Odisha +Jharkhand	All India
Number of elephants	247	1930	688	2865	30051
Average human casualty by elephants / year	25	59	108	192	300
Number of people killed / 100 elephants/year	10	3	16	29	1

Table 3: Human-elephant conflict in Central India

If we calculate the average of human casualty in these three states in comparison to the national scenario (Table 3), it's clear that close to 65% of human deaths from elephants nationwide are caused by the 10% of India's elephant population that occurs in Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Jharkhand. The severity of the conflict is further evident by the amount of money spent as compensation for human death due to human-elephant conflict in these three states (Table 4).



Cleared forest around Parsa East and Kente Basan coal blocks in 2013.

Human-Elephant Conflict in Chhattisgarh

In 1988, 18 elephants from Jharkhand and Odisha migrated into what is now Chhattisgarh for the first time.^{xvi} They caused extensive damage in Sarguja, Jashpur, Korba and Raigarh districts. The then Madhya Pradesh government thought it was an isolated incident and captured 10 elephants to prevent further entry into the area. This incident was repeated in 1995. And from the year 2000 onwards, the incidence of elephants straying into Chhattisgarh has increased.^{xvii}

In 2001, acting on the request of the state government, the Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) conducted a rapid assessment to evaluate the elephant conflict situation in Chhattisgarh. At that time five districts - Korba, Raigarh, Dharamjaygarh, Jashpur and Sarguja - were facing problems due to human-elephant conflict.^{xviii}

The assessment report suggested that the elephants in this area had come in from the neighbouring forests of Sundergarh and/or Sambalpur forest division in Odisha. The estimated elephant population that entered into Chhattisgarh at that point was around 24.^{xix} The report went on to suggest that forest patches in Dharamjaygarh and Korba forests divisions can provide a good habitat for elephants, which will ultimately help in reducing human-elephant conflict cases.

In 2002, a study done by the WTI suggests that Korba and Dharamjaigarh forests can provide good habitats for elephants, which will ultimately help reduce human-elephant conflict.



Herd of Elephants in Dharamjaigarh forests in December 2013.

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Forest area in Dharamjaigarh.

© Subrata Biswas / Greenpeace

Subsequently, the number of elephants coming into Chhattisgarh have gone up over the years. The number of elephants in Chhattisgarh according to state forest department was 123 in 2005.^{xx} Again, in a detailed estimation conducted by Chhattisgarh forest department in May 2007 estimated 122 elephants were recorded to have been spread across the four districts of Sarguja, Jashpur, Raigar and Korba covering two forest circles Bilaspur and Sarguja. From the year 2007 onwards the elephant population in the state increased gradually to 247 in 2012.^{xxi}

Heeding the WTI recommendation, in 2005, the state government requested the MoEF to include three Elephant Reserves under Project Elephant. Badalkhol Manora Wildlife Sanctuary (WLS) (176.14 sq.km.) Tamorpingla WLS (872.16 sq.km.) and Lemru (450 sq.km.) in Raigarh, Jashpur and Korba districts respectively.

However, after getting the go ahead from the Central government in 2007, the state government succumbed to the pressure^{xxii} of the coal mining lobby and dropped Lemru from the list and went ahead with notifying the existing Protected Areas of Badalkhol, Tamor Pingla and Semarsot Wildlife Sanctuaries as Elephant Reserves in 2011. Since these areas are already within the Protected Area (PA) network as notified by the Wildlife Protection Act 1972, the title of Elephant Reserve offers no extra protection to elephants, and little if any financial support for habitat monitoring. However, the tag of an 'Elephant Reserve' would have been much more significant for Lemru, which is not even recognised as a PA.

Since 2007, the human-elephant conflict in Chhattisgarh is growing in severity - for both elephants and humans. The frequency of elephants being electrocuted, either deliberately or by accident, is increasing, while the official figures of Ministry of Environment and Forests indicate only five elephant electrocution incidents between 2005-06 to 2012-13.^{xxiii} According to the state forest department of Chhattisgarh 14 elephants were electrocuted between 2005-06 and 2012-13. On the ground, the situation seems to be completely different. News reports suggest as many as 18 elephants have been electrocuted in Dharamjaigarh forest division alone between April 2013 and 2014.^{xxiv} According to local NGOs, many electrocution cases are reported as natural deaths by the forest department. According to news reports, 50 elephants raided over 50 ha. of standing crops; three people were killed by elephants in the region in September 2013.^{xxv} On August 29, 2013, more than 100 residents of Dharamjaigarh and adjoining villages joined a public protest to demand that the state manage human-elephant conflict, by securing a space for elephants to live.^{xxvi} According to news reports in July 2014, around 300 people threw stones at the forest officer's house



House damaged due to human-elephant conflict in Morga village.
© Meetu Gupta/Greenpeace

for failing to control the human-elephant conflict situation in Dharamjaigarh.^{xxvii} Locals claim that elephants started breeding in the forests around Dharamjaigarh town due to the availability of space and food. The current population of elephants around Dharamjaigarh has reached more than 100.^{xxviii}

According to the forest department, the two decade period since elephants started reappearing in Chhattisgarh and 2005, the state has recorded 50 human deaths due to elephants at an average of three people a year. The ex-gratia amount paid for human death and crop damage within this period was 21.9 lakhs (average 1.15 lakhs/year) and 219.62 lakhs (average 11.55 lakh/ year) respectively.^{xxix}

Currently, the figure of human deaths due to elephants has risen eight times to average 25 deaths a year and the compensation paid has increased has risen three times to 51 lakh a year (Table 3). Compensation for crop/property damage has increased to 226 lakhs for the year 2012 alone (Table 5). Human-elephant conflict in the state of Chhattisgarh has seen 114 human injuries between 2005-06 and 2013-14, 8,657 property damage incidents between 2006-07 and 2013-14 and 99,152 incidents of crop damage between 2004-05 and 2013-14 adding up to a total of 2140.20 lakhs spent as compensation between 2004-05 and 2013-14. This is clear proof that conflict on the ground is getting worse by the day.

To control public anger, the State Government in its order No F 7-32/2003/10-2 dated 22.09.2010 has increased the compensation from Rs 100,000 to Rs 200,000 in case of a human death. There has been no action on protecting the forests or the elephant corridors. The continued diversion of forests is leading the human-elephant conflict situation in Chhattisgarh to deteriorate rapidly.

	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Chhattisgarh	24.50	40.50	43.50	46.0	64.0	42.0
Odisha	61.1	45.8	68.9	60.42	70.13	147.93
Jharkhand (from 2005-06)	660.3					
India overall	238.94	263.19	269.54	358.28	398.28	536.63

Table 4: Amount of compensation paid for loss of life from 2007-2013 are as follows: (Rs. In Lakhs)

	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Chattisgarh	79.91	178.66	178.22	150.46	179.12	226.72
Odisha	97.13	88.02	102.18	156.56	267.44	800.53
Jharkhand (from 2005-06)	703.27					
India overall	979.66	21268.08	1077.21	1977.24	2003.83	3274.46

Table 5: Amount of compensation paid for loss of crop property damage from 2007-2013 are as follows: (Rs. In Lakhs)

Mining vs Biodiversity

in Chhattisgarh

Chhattisgarh has 55,674 sq. km. of forests, covering 41.18% of its geographical area. ^{xxi}It has the third largest area under forest cover after Madhya Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh. Of this, three percent is very dense forests, 25.82% is moderately dense, 12.28% is open forests and 0.09% is scrub.^{xxii}The forest ecosystem comprises of tropical moist - drop of deciduous forest and tropical dry deciduous forest.^{xxiii}

Raigarh, Korba and Sarguja are biodiversity rich and tribal dominated areas of the state. Korba has 50.75% of its land area under forest, while Raigarh has 35.93%, Koriya 62.19% and Sarguja has 45.34%, most of them above the state average of 41.18%.^{xxiii} Raigarh, Korba and Sarguja are also the most mineral rich districts of the state. Korba, Raigarh and Sarguja have nearly 100% of the coal reserves of the state while Korba has 26%, Raigarh has 45.5% and Sarguja (with Korea) has 25.35%. Sarguja also has 41% of the total bauxite reserves of the state.^{xxiv}

Raigarh, Korba and Sarguja are the most biodiversity-rich and tribal-dominated areas of the state. Any expansion of mining into existing forest areas has the potential to exacerbate the human-elephant conflict in the state. South Eastern Coalfields Limited, a Coal India subsidiary, has coal mines in Korba, Sarguja, Korea and Raigarh districts and produced about 118 mt of coal in 2012-2013.^{xxv} The company has plans for large expansion of capacity in Korba and Raigarh, to about 130 mt by 2017-18.^{xxvi} In addition, there are many more coal blocks proposed for captive power generation for private companies.^{xxvii}

Raigarh, Korba and Sarguja have nearly 100% of the coal reserves of Chhattisgarh.



Kusmunda open cast coal mine in Korba, Chhattisgarh
© Subrata Biswas/Greenpeace

Coalfields and Wildlife

Hasdeo-Arand

The Hasdeo-Arand coalfield is spread over Korba and Surguja districts of Chhattisgarh. Its southeastern edge borders the Mand-raigarh coalfield. About 80% of Hasdeo-Arand is covered by good quality forest.^{xxxviii} This is one of the largest intact forest areas in Central India outside of the Protected Area system. It is also the watershed of the Hasdeo-Bango reservoir and the Hasdeo river, which is a tributary of the river Mahanadi.

In June 2011, the MoEF granted forest clearance under the Forest Conservation Act 1980 for three coal blocks - Tara, Parsa East and Kente Basan - in Hasdeo-Arand after much pressure from the state government. While clearing them, the Minister noted the following:

"The clearance for these three blocks in the fringe area was given because they are not in the biodiversity rich region of the Hasdeo- Arand forest region. While giving this approval, I have observed as long as mining is restricted to fringe area and as long as the state government does not come up with fresh applications for opening up the main Hasdeo-Arand area, I am of the opinion that permission can be accorded for Tara, Parsa East and Kante Basan"^{xxxix}

Shri Jairam Ramesh, Minister of State Environment & Forests, June 2011



Forest area in Dharamjalgarh.
© Subrata Biswas/Greenpeace

01 Parsa East and Kente Basan Coal Block

The coal blocks are allotted to Parsa Kente Collieries Ltd. (PKCL). PKCL is a joint venture between Rajasthan Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Ltd. (RVUNL), a public sector company, and Adani Enterprises. Adani owns 74% of the equity in PKCL.^{xl}

The Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), South Surguja Division, has mentioned the presence of sloth bear and leopard in the region while forwarding the proposal to divert Tara block. The site visit report of Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) also confirmed the presence of elephants in the area.^{xli}

Over 2009, 2010 and 2011, the FAC repeatedly advised against granting mining leases in the area, saying that it would destroy dense forests that sustained a rich ecosystem inhabited by elephants, leopards and sloth bears. The MoEF upheld the Committee's recommendations thrice, but then overturned its earlier decision in June 2011 following the Minister's about-face, which in turn was a result of significant pressure from the state government

Even though these blocks were cleared on the basis of being on the fringe of the forest, the survey shows presence of elephants, leopards and sloth bears, all falling under the Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act 1972. The National Green Tribunal (NGT) in its order in March 2014 on the appeal filed by advocate Sudieep Shrivastava questioned the forest clearance, did not agree with the minister's view that the area was not biodiversity rich, even though it was on the fringe of Hasdeo-Arand forests. Sighting various shortfalls in the way forest clearance was awarded, The tribunal ordered for a complete re-appraisal by the FAC.^{xlii}

Recent wildlife sightings and conflict around the coal blocks

May 2013, elephants had come to the area adjoining the mining site.

According to the villagers, Kete to Parobia via Basan is a migratory route for elephants.

Sloth bears are frequently sighted in the forest around in these villages.

Leopards sightings were also frequently reported in Kete Village till 2011, but no cattle lifting incidents occurred.

In August 2008, a herd of seven elephants stayed near Basan village for more than a week, damaging 35 houses there.

According to villagers, elephants have been visiting the area since 2001.

Affected villages:
Kete, Basan, Parsa,
Ghaatbarra, Harihar
Pur, Salhei.



02 Tara Coal Block

This coal block is allotted to Chhattisgarh Mineral Development Corporation. It is one of the three coal blocks cleared along with Parsa East and Kente basan by MoEF in 2011.^{xliii}

Recent wildlife sightings and conflict around the coal blocks

On May 20 2013, a herd of four elephants came to the Mendra *talab* (pond) adjoining Kataroli village.

May 15 2013, elephants raided Ravi Lal's kitchen garden in Kataroli village.

In August 2012, three houses were damaged by elephants at Janardanpur village.

In 2011, Mohan Singh's house in Kataroli village was damaged by an elephant and Singh was also attacked by a sloth bear in 2009.

15 cases of cattle lifting by leopards were reported in Janardanpur village in 2011.

Every year, more than 10 cases of cattle lifting by leopards are reported from Tara village.

In 2011, one house and in 2012, two houses were damaged by elephants at Tara village.

Affected villages:
Tara, Kataroli and
Janardanpur.

03 Morga Coal Block

Morga II coal block was rejected by the MoEF in June 2011 because it was located in main Hasdeo Arand region.^{xiv} However, both the Morga II and Morga IV proposals have now been reconsidered. Granting further clearances for blocks in Hasdeo-Arand runs counter to the stand that the MoEF took while clearing Tara, Parsa East and Kente Basan.

The Chhattisgarh government in its application and factsheet for Morga IV coal block have failed to note the presence of elephants in the area. However, the Working Plan for Katghora Division records the presence of elephants and it is well known that the region sees significant elephant movement.

Recent wildlife sightings and conflict around the coal blocks

In 2012, an elephant damaged a house in the village.

Frequent sightings of sloth bears have been observed in the village.

Leopards are sighted in the adjoining forests but cattle lifting is rare due to a high prey base in the forest.

{ **Affected village:**
Botopal

04 Madanpur North and South Coal Blocks

Recent wildlife sightings and conflict around the coal blocks

In 2012, a house was damaged by an elephant.

Frequent sightings of sloth bears have been observed in the village.

Leopards are sighted in the adjoining forests but not much cattle lifting cases due to a high prey base in the forest.

{ **Affected village:**
Bhulsibhauna

05 Paturia Coal Block

Recent wildlife sightings and conflict around the coal blocks

Two houses were completely destroyed by elephants in 2011.

Sloth bears frequently visit the village.

Leopard sightings are reported in the adjoining forests but not many cattle lifting cases.

{ **Affected village:**
Paturia

06 Nakia Coal Block

Allotted to the Chhattisgarh Captive Coal Company.

Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Korba in a letter to the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) on 4.06.2007 asked permission to shoot a lone male elephant, tusker which had killed nine people within 10 months in the Lemru range of Korba Forest Division. (Annex. 1)

In another letter written by DFO Korba Forest Division to the Collector of Korba district on 1.12.2007 states that the proposed coal block (Nakia) lies adjacent to the area proposed for the Lemru Elephant Reserve and the area also falls within the migratory route of elephants, connecting to Sarguja in the north. The letter mentions that elephants from Dharamjaigarh forest division use this area frequently. He also mentions the presence of tigers in the same area. (Annex. 2)

Recent wildlife sightings and conflict around the coal blocks

Elephants also damaged Maingu Ram's crop in 2012.

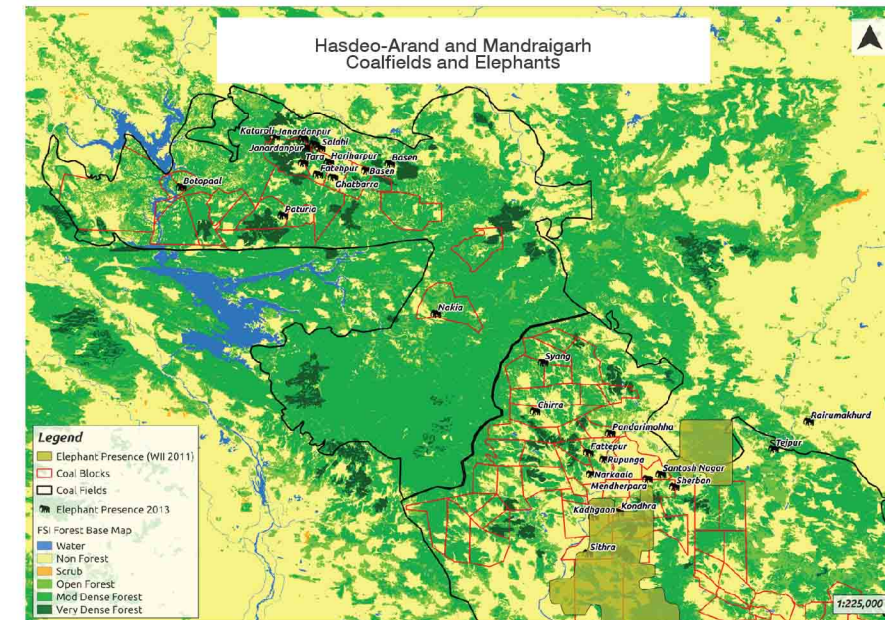
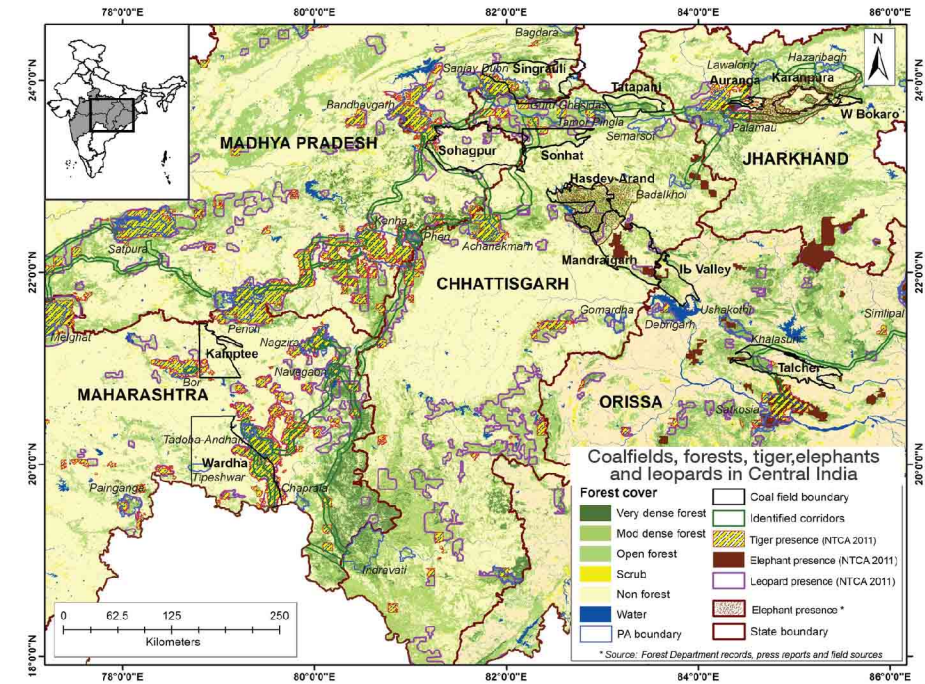
In 2010, elephants damaged the Public Distribution System (PDS) shop and a jack fruit tree in the village

{ **Affected village:**
Nakia



Gouri Mondal of Baisi village in Dharamjaigarh - Elephants damaged her house in 2013, she has received Rs 7000 from the state government.

Map 1 Sampled conflict locations mapped on the coal field/forest cover map



PDS shop in Nakia village was damaged by elephants in 2010.

Mandraigarh Coal field

The Mandraigarh coalfield stretches in a northwest-southeast direction, starting from the southeast part of Hasdeo-Arand coalfield and extending all the way to the Odisha border. These forests are contiguous with those in the Sundargarh district of Odisha, and a corridor for elephant movement between the two states. The northwest border of Mandraigarh coalfield is where the controversial proposed Lemru Elephant Reserve lies. The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), 2011 report indicates elephant and leopard presence in a large part of the forests of Mandraigarh, and tiger presence in the 2004 enumeration (pg 79 of the 2004 report) but none in 2010.^{xiv}

In the northwestern part of the coalfield more than 40 coal blocks have been demarcated. If this cluster is developed, it would permanently cut the connection between the forests of Hasdeo-Arand and Mandraigarh, leading to a break in forest connectivity between the Korba and Dharamjaigarh forest divisions.

The Mandraigarh coalfield contains a large number of demarcated coal blocks in dense forest areas, including several that overlap on elephant and leopard habitat. If these blocks are mined, elephant migration between Dharamjaigarh and Korba would be further disrupted, causing them to move in into human settlements, resulting in more damage to human, animal and property.

01 Dharamjaigarh and Sithra-Kurkela Coal Block

According to Wildlife Institute of India, 2011, the whole of Sithra-Kurkela block and northern portion of Dharamjaigarh blocks are elephant habitat. The forests around Dharamjaigarh town are a good habitat for elephants according to locals.^{xvii} According to them the elephant population has reached more than 100 individuals in the region.^{xviii} Due to this, Dharamjaigarh is now the most affected place in the state by human-elephant conflict. There is also the seasonal conflict with sloth bears in the region.

Recent wildlife sightings and conflict around the coal blocks

According to news reports, 18 elephants have been electrocuted in the region between April 2013 and 2014.^{xviii}

In August 2013, 26 houses were damaged by elephants in Dharamjaigarh and adjoining villages.

On August 19, 2013, Barman resident of Baise village of Dharamjaigarh area got electrocuted by the fence he had constructed around his own agricultural field when a herd of four elephants entered his maize field and chased him.

Between 2010 and 2012, 19 human Casualties recorded in Dharamjaigarh Forest Division due to elephant conflict according to the forest department of Chhattisgarh.

Eight elephants have been electrocuted in Dharamjaigarh forest division according to the Chhattisgarh forest minister between 2006 – 20011-12.^{xlix}

Affected villages: Total 12 wards out of 15 wards of Dharamjaigarh town fall within the coal blocks. Village Rairumakhurd, Gersa, Tejpur, Beejapatra, Sherban, Baise, Semipali, Kondhra, Kotia, Medharpara, Sithra, Khadgaon.



"For any forest division, working plans is the basic document for forest management and its also duly approved by the MoEF. All the working plans of forest divisions in Sarguja, Korba and Raigarh have categorically recorded elephant presence."

Advocate Sudiep Shrivastava

"Altogether 82 people, including 29 women and 53 men were killed in elephant attacks in seven districts of the state between January 1, 2010 and December 31, 2012."

Mr. Vikram Usendi, Forest Minister, Chhattisgarh

02 Nawagaon Coal Block

Recent wildlife sightings and conflict around the coal blocks

Human-elephant conflict resulted in the death of two individuals and damage to 10 houses in the last five years.

It was alleged that an elephant was electrocuted in Hariprasad's field but there was no case registered by the forest department.

{ Affected village:
Semipali.

* Most of the families in Semipali village were displaced from Hirakud Dam Site of Odhisa. They are living in fear of displacement due to the coal block.

03 Fatehpur South and West of Basin Fatepur Coal Block

Recent wildlife sightings and conflict around the coal blocks

In May 2013, a herd of 25 elephants were sighted in the region.

May 2013, elephants raided Babu Ram's agricultural field in Fatehpur village.

Narayan Sarthi, resident of Rupunga village was chased by an elephant in the second week of May 2013.

Between 2011 and 2012, elephants damaged three houses constructed under the government Scheme "Indra Awwas Yojna" in Narkalo Village.

In 2010-2012, six houses were raided and damaged by elephants in Fatehpur village.

{ Affected villages:
Fatehpur, Rupunga,
Narkalo and Ududa.



Crop damaged by elephants in Dharamjalgarh in December 2013.

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04 Chirra Coal Block

Recent wildlife sightings and conflict around the coal blocks

On May 20, 2013 two people were attacked by sloth bear in the adjoining the forest area while they were collecting *tendu patta*.

In April 2013 there were eight cases of cattle lifting by leopards in Aelong village.

In April 2012, a herd of 60-65 elephants of all age classes were reported in this area.

In 2009-10 elephants raided and damaged seven houses in Chirra village.

Forests along the villages are common migratory route for elephants.

**Affected villages:
Chirra and Aelong.**

05 Syang Coal Block

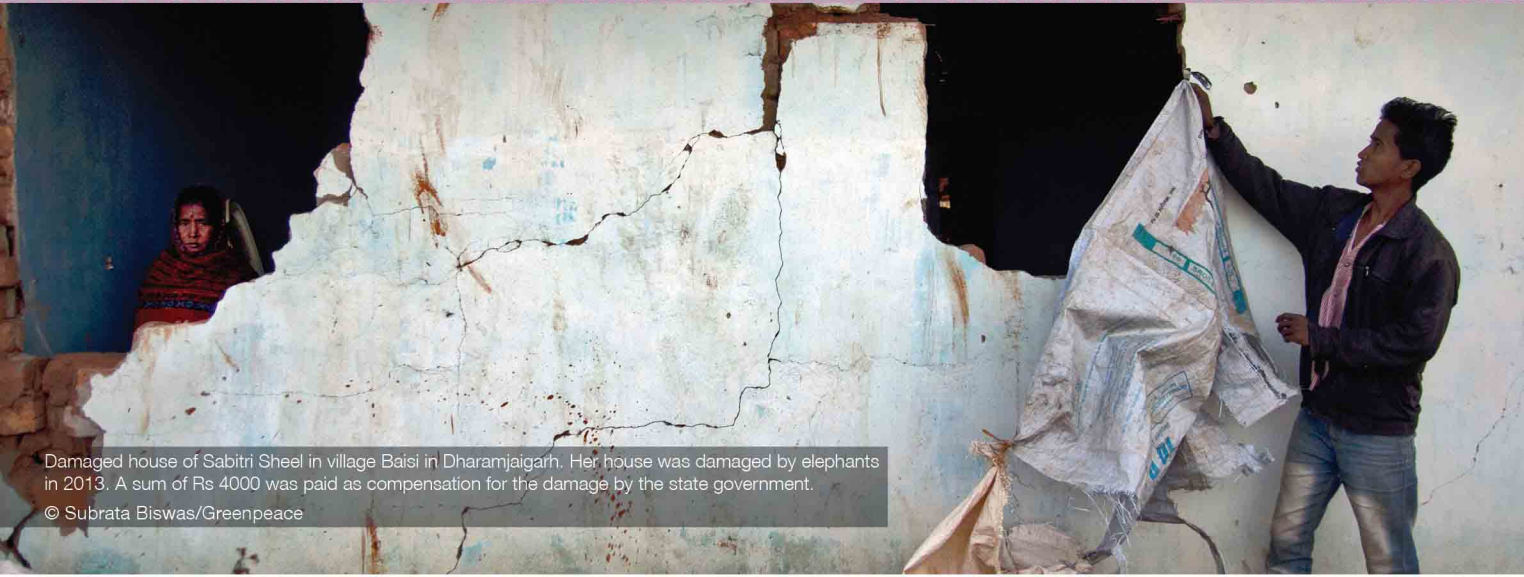
Recent wildlife sightings and conflict around the coal blocks

In May 2013, a herd of 25 elephants were sighted in the area. They damaged Nandlal Rathia and Gopal Rathia's agricultural fields in Syang village.

In 2012, elephants damaged Jaleel Khan and Chameli Madam's house.

Sloth bear and leopard sightings are common in the forests near Syang.

**Affected village:
Syang**



Damaged house of Sabitri Sheel in village Baisi in Dharamjaigarh. Her house was damaged by elephants in 2013. A sum of Rs 4000 was paid as compensation for the damage by the state government.

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Table 5: Incidents of human-wildlife conflict in South Sarguja, Kathghora, Dharamjaigarh and Korba forest divisions.

		SOUTH SURGUJA				KATGHORA			
		2009	2010	2011	2012	2009	2010	2011	2012
TIGER	Human Casualty	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Human Injury		0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Crop Raiding / House Damage	0	0	0	0	0		0	0
LEOPARD	Human Casualty	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
	Human Injury	1	0	14	0	1	6	0	0
	Crop Raiding / House Damage	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ELEPHANT	Human Casualty	8	3	3	0	1	0	0	0
	Human Injury	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
	Crop Raiding / House Damage	1240/ 430	1150/269	1528/402	1567/406	0	62	12	8
SLOTH BEAR	Human Casualty	6	8	2	2	0		1	1
	Human Injury	21	88	50	31	14		30	20
	Crop Raiding / House Damage	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		DHARAMJAIGARH				KORBA			
		2009	2010	2011	2012	2009	2010	2011	2012
TIGER	Human Casualty	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Human Injury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Crop Raiding / House Damage	0	0	0	0	0		0	0
LEOPARD	Human Casualty				0	1			
	Human Injury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Crop Raiding / House Damage	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ELEPHANT	Human Casualty	1	4	8	7	1	1	1	0
	Human Injury	2	1	4	3	2	0	1	0
	Crop Raiding / House Damage	1519	1919	1679	1888/258	784	744	622	2961
SLOTH BEAR	Human Casualty	3	3	2	1	2	1	2	4
	Human Injury	30	12	7	2	42	31	18	48
	Crop Raiding / House Damage	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Chhattisgarh forest department

Data gathered from all the villages suggests that:

The forests in South Sarguja and Katghora forest divisions are key leopard habitats.

Dharamjaigarh and South Sarguja have the highest human casualty due to human-elephant conflict among all four forest divisions.

South Sarguja, Korba and Dharamjaigarh have high sloth bear conflict.



Herd of wild elephants in Dharamjaigarh forest in December 2013.
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Coal vs Elephants

in Lemru

The State Assembly of Chhattisgarh passed a resolution on 11th of March 2005 (Annex.3) for the inclusion of Chhattisgarh in the Government of India's "Project Elephant Scheme". Consequently, the Secretary of Chhattisgarh State Assembly wrote a letter dated 17.03.2005 (Annex.4) to the Secretary, Forest, Government of Chhattisgarh mentioning their decision and asking that appropriate action be taken from the Centre to implement "Elephant Reserve" in the districts of Raigarh, Jashpur and Korba. And to ensure prerequisite economic assistance towards the implementation of Project Elephant in the state.

On 15.04.2004, Principal Secretary (Forest), Government of Chhattisgarh, Raipur sent a proposal for the inclusion of Chhattisgarh State in "Project Elephant" to the Inspector General of Forest (IGF) and Director, Project Elephant, Government of India, MoEF, New Delhi. In this proposal, the Forest Department of Chhattisgarh elaborated on the problem of wild elephants in the north-eastern parts of Chhattisgarh, stating that the north-eastern districts of Sarguja, Jashpur, Korba and Raigarh have been experiencing frequent incursions of wild elephants from across the borders of the adjoining states of Jharkhand and Orissa since 1988. This letter further mentioned that "there are about 90-100 elephants in the forests of the State; out of which Badalkhol Sanctuary in Jashpur is home of herd of 42 elephants and Korba has 21 elephants". These elephants, the letter continues, have become resident in forests of Korba, Jashpur, Raigarh and Sarguja and their number is increasing.

Following this, the Directorate of Project Elephant, MoEF, Gol has constituted an expert team consisting of Shri M.K.Appaya, Retd. PCCF (Wildlife, Karnataka / Member, Project Elephant Steering Committee; Dr. Sushant Chowdhury, Scientist F/Professor, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun and Shri. A.N. Prasad, IGF & Director, Project Elephant, MoEF, Gol to undertake the inspection of the sites and submit their recommendations/report for necessary consideration of MoEF on the matter. Accordingly, the constituted team undertook a site inspection from March 22-25, 2007 and submitted their report, in May 2006. (Annex.5)

One of the recommendations of the report was "The other elephant reserve to be declared could be the Lemru as proposed by the Chhattisgarh Forest Department covering forest ranges of Lemru, Balco, Kudmura and Korba. This proposed elephant reserve do not have any protected area but there is an added advantage of having nearly 400-500 sq.km. area free from human settlement. The forests are characterized by high dense cover, perennial water sources and moist riverine forest especially suitable for elephants. The proposed reserve is constituted through major forest areas of district Korba having only 15-20 villages falling within 2-2.5 km radius around. The only unforeseen threat lying for this area is in terms of mineral importance for coal and bauxite to which it is extremely rich."

Subsequently, IGF & Director, Gol, MoEF, Project Elephant Division sent a letter dated 5th October 2007 to the Principal Secretary (Forest), Government of Chhattisgarh, Raipur informing him of the Gol's approval of the proposal to declare two elephant reserves – consisting of the Badalkhol Manora Wildlife SanctuaryWLS (176.14 sq.km.) -TamoringlaWLS (872.16 sq.km.) and Lemru (450 sq.km.). (Annex.6)

Conclusion

The increase in the numbers of elephants migrating into Chhattisgarh from Jharkhand and Odisha over the years makes it clear that this problem is only likely to be intensified as mining intensifies in elephant habitats of Odisha and Jharkhand. Attempts to increase mining in the Saranda forest division within the Singhbhum Elephant Reserve is one clear example!

It is also clear from ground assessment that there is an extensive presence of elephants within both the Hasdeo-Arand and Mandraigarh coalfields and further diversion of these forests for coal mining would escalate human-elephant conflict in the region. Developing the cluster of coal blocks identified in this report will further fragment the forest, pushing displaced elephants further into human civilisation. In addition, there are other coal blocks, which while beyond the purview of the report, need to be taken into account while making impact assessments.

The MoEF and the Chhattisgarh State Government must conduct a thorough and impartial assessment of any mining proposal on forest land in either of these coalfields to determine its impact on elephants, leopards and tigers in and around the region.

These two coalfields are not only important for elephants but also for leopards and sloth bears. At the moment, leopard conflict is significantly low in the region due to good prey availability in the forests. If this were to change due to increased destruction of the forest, the consequences in terms of loss of human life could be severe.

It is also clear from documents now publicly available that the state government avoided notifying Lemru due to pressure from the mining lobby. The ground assessment around the very same coal blocks mentioned in the CII letter proves the presence of elephants in the area. The elephant reserves currently in place will not solve the conflict in Korba, South Sarguja, Katghora and Dharamjaigarh forest divisions, and it is also not feasible (nor desirable) to mine within 450 sq. km. of relatively undisturbed forests and “move” the wildlife to a far away reserve.



Forest adjoining crop land in Nakia village.
© Meetu Gupta/Greenpeace

On February 2, 2008, the local body of Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) wrote to the Deputy Forest Officer, Korba saying coal blocks like Nakia, Syang and Fatehpur and Fatehpur East fall inside or along the proposed Elephant Reserve. The letter stated that the proposed Elephant Reserve would impact the coal mining projects of a few private companies and asked the state to “move” the proposed Elephant Reserve to a suitable alternative location. (Annex. 7)

After the CII letter, the state put the Elephant Reserve proposal on the back burner. Finally, on July 20, 2009, the Secretary of Forests, Government of Chhattisgarh, wrote to the Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife) and Chief Wildlife Warden informing him that the State Government had dropped the “Lemru Area” of Korba Forest Division from the list of proposed Elephant Reserves. (Annex. 8)

The State Government notified the Badalkhol, Tamor Pingla and Semarsot Wildlife Sanctuaries as Elephant Reserves on September 15, 2011 conveniently avoiding Lemru from the list.



Recommendations

- 01** There should be a comprehensive independent assessment of the biodiversity, corridors and habitat usage of the two coal fields, especially for elephants, leopards sloth bears and tigers by a committee comprising experts and institutions, which have a credible record in the field and are also knowledgeable about the local situation. The recommendations of this committee should be binding on both state and central governments.
- 02** No further clearances for coal blocks in the dense forest areas of Hasdeo-Arand and Mandraigarh should be granted.
- 03** The clearance process for coal blocks that are in non-forest areas within these two coalfields must also be halted pending the outcome of the assessment specified in (1) as elephants also use agricultural and uncultivated lands as a part of their migratory route.
- 04** The cluster development of coal blocks around Dharamjaigarh in particular should not be allowed.
- 05** The Lemru Elephant Reserve should be notified and a systematic effort should be taken to manage human-elephant conflict using the Reserve.



Debi Mallick of Baisi, Dharamjaigarh is working in her agriculture land. She might lose her land for coal mining in the near future.
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End Notes

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कार्यालय वनमण्डलाधिकारी, कोरबा वनमण्डल कोरबा (छ.ग.)
कोरबा, दिनांक

वन संरक्षक
विलासपुर वृक्ष विलासपुर (छ.ग.)

विषय :- अकेले व्यस्क नर हाथी को मारने के संबंध में।
संदर्भ :- इस कार्यालय का पत्र क्रमांक/स्टेनो/600 दिनांक 04.06.07

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विषयान्तर्गत लेख है कि कोरबा वनमण्डल में विगत लगभग 10 माह से एक अकेला नर हाथी वनक्षेत्र में विचरण कर रहा है, यह हाथी कुदमुरा, करतला व कोरबा के वनक्षेत्रों में घूम रहा है। इस हाथी के गतिविधियां असात्वान्य है एवं गत 10 माह में इस हाथी के द्वारा 09 लोगों को मारा गया है।
वनमण्डल में हाथियों के आगमन वर्ष 2000 से हुआ है, अब तक कुल 15 मौतों में से गत 10 माह में इस अकेले व्यस्क नर हाथी द्वारा 09 मौतें अकेले इस वनक्षेत्र में मार-किया गया है। जो निम्नानुसार है।

अ. क्र.	मृत व्यक्ति का नाम	मृत्यु दिनांक	घटना विवरण	दिनांक
1.	श्री सुखलाल पिता मेघनाथ उम्र 60 वर्ष, ग्राम छईढोडा	8.10.00	कुदमुरा परिक्षेत्र अन्तर्गत सोलवा बीट के क.क. 505 के वनक्षेत्र में लकड़ी काटते समय अचानक हाथी ने हमला कर मार डाला।	
2.	श्री जेठसिंह पिता घुरसिंह उम्र 50 वर्ष ग्राम सरसादेवा	4.11.01	कुदमुरा परिक्षेत्र के अन्तर्गत श्यांग बीट के क.क. 459 के वनक्षेत्र में लकड़ी काटते समय अचानक हाथी ने हमला कर मार डाला।	
3.	श्री कर्मराम पिता जंगलीराम ग्राम तराईमारडीह	23.1.02	कुदमुरा परिक्षेत्र के अन्तर्गत कोलगा बीट के क.क. 537 के वनक्षेत्र रास्ते होते हुए अपने ग्राम मिर्जापुर जाते समय अचानक हाथी ने हमला कर मार डाला।	
4.	श्री फूलशाय पिता कमलशाय उम्र 50 वर्ष ग्राम केराकछार	17.3.03	लेमरु परिक्षेत्र के अन्तर्गत केऊबहार बीट के वनक्षेत्र में लकड़ी काटते समय अचानक हाथी ने हमला कर मार डाला।	
5.	श्रीमति लोहारिन बाई जी. तिगुनलाल ग्राम कोरकोमा	24.9.06	कोरबा परिक्षेत्र के अन्तर्गत ग्राम कोरकोमा में प्रातः 4 बजे रात्रि में सांभरा मुहल्ला में अचानक हाथी ने प्रवेश कर सांभरा झोपड़ियों को तोड़ने लगा, सभी लोग भाग गए किन्तु मृतक वृद्ध होने के कारण भाग नहीं पाई और झोपड़ी टूटने से छप्पर व लकड़ी उसके ऊपर गिर जाने के कारण वह अचान्त घायल हो गई। ईलाज के दौरान अचानक मृत्यु हो गई।	शुप में
6.	श्री जोतराम पिता कंधे सिंह राठिया ग्राम कलनीटिकरा	30.10.06	कुदमुरा परिक्षेत्र के अन्तर्गत बासीन बीट के क.क. 2300 वनक्षेत्र में शाम 5 से 6 बजे के बीच लकड़ी काटते समय अचानक हाथी ने हमला कर मार डाला।	अकेले नर हाथी

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कार्यालय वनमण्डलाधिकारी कोरबा वनमण्डल कोरबा (छ.ग.)
कोरबा, दिनांक

क्रमांक/मा.चि./ प्रति. 6629
1-12-07
कलेक्टर
कोरबा जिला - कोरबा (छ.ग.)

विषय :- हसदेव अरण्य कोयला प्रक्षेत्र स्थित कोल ब्लॉक नकिया - 1 एवं 2 रकबा 2551.476 हेक्टर क्षेत्र पर खनिज अचला का खनि पट्टा मैसर्स छत्तीसगढ़ कैपिटल माइनिंग लिमिटेड रायपुर।
संदर्भ :- आपका ज्ञापन क्रमांक/मा.चि./07/7712 कोरबा दिनांक 07.09.07

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विषयान्तर्गत लेख है कि संदर्भित ज्ञापन से चाही गयी जानकारी का स्थल निरीक्षण परिक्षेत्र अधिकारी लेमरु से कराया गया। उनके प्रतिवेदन अनुसार आवेदित क्षेत्र के पक्का क्रमांक 21106, 21107, 21108, 21109, 21117, 21118 आवेदित रकबा 1381.987 हेक्टर (लेमरु परिक्षेत्र के अन्तर्गत रकबा) जिसमें साल के II, IV a, IVb, की जंगल है।
उक्त क्षेत्र में वन्य प्राणियों की भी उपस्थिति है। अर्थात् हाल ही में लेमरु हाथी अन्वयण्य के रूप में केन्द्र सरकार द्वारा लेमरु, कुदमुरा के वनक्षेत्रों को चिह्नित किया गया है जो आवेदित क्षेत्र से लगा हुआ है साथ ही साथ इसके उत्तर दिशा की ओर से सरगुजा जिला से हाथियों का आना जाना होता है। उक्त क्षेत्र हाथियों के रहस्रा के लिए अनुकूल वनक्षेत्र है। उक्त तथ्यों के आधार पर आवेदित क्षेत्र अथवा उसके आसपास के वनक्षेत्र को हस्तांतरण करना उचित प्रतीत नहीं होता है।
लेमरु परिक्षेत्र का आवेदित वनक्षेत्र जैव-विविधताओं से भरपूर क्षेत्र है। गत वर्ष कोल ब्लॉक हेतु आवेदित वन क्षेत्र में ही शेर की उपस्थिति के प्रमाण मिले थे। धरमजयगढ़ क्षेत्र से आनेवाली हाथियों का Migration route भी आवेदित क्षेत्र से गुजरती है। उक्त क्षेत्र में कोयला उत्खनन प्रारंभ होने से क्षेत्र की जैव सम्पदा प्रभावित होगी।
प्रतिवेदन उचित कार्यवाही हेतु सादर प्रस्तुत है।

वनमण्डलाधिकारी
कोरबा वनमण्डल कोरबा
कोरबा दिनांक 12/07

पू.क्रमांक/मा.चि./ प्रति. 6630
परिक्षेत्र अधिकारी लेमरु को उनके पत्र क्रमांक 811 दिनांक 19.11.07 के संदर्भ में सूचनार्थ।

वनमण्डलाधिकारी
कोरबा वनमण्डल कोरबा

F:\21\June06\draftsmans\letter.doc Page 2/9 8/2/2007

छत्तीसगढ़ विधान सभा

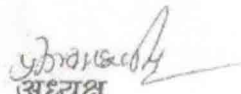
फरवरी-मार्च, 2005-सत्र
अशासकीय संकल्प

यह सदन केन्द्र सरकार से अनुरोध करता है कि "छत्तीसगढ़ राज्य के रायगढ़, जशपुर एवं कोरबा जिले में प्रोजेक्ट ऐलीफेंट के अंतर्गत "हाथी अभयारण" बनाने हेतु केन्द्रीय शासन द्वारा स्वीकृति दी जाकर आर्थिक सहयोग प्रदान किया जाय।"

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उपर्युक्त अशासकीय संकल्प शुक्रवार, दिनांक 11 मार्च, 2005 को छत्तीसगढ़ विधान सभा में सर्व सम्मति से स्वीकृत हुआ।

रायपुर :
दिनांक : 14/03/2005


अध्यक्ष
छत्तीसगढ़ विधान सभा

छत्तीसगढ़ विधान सभा सचिवालय

क्रमांक 406/स्थ./व्या./अशा. सं./2005 रायपुर, दिनांक 17/3/2005

प्रेषक :-
देवेन्द्र वर्मा
सचिव,
प्रेषिती :-
सचिव,
छत्तीसगढ़ शासन,
वन विभाग,
मंत्रालय, दाऊ कल्याण सिंह भवन,
रायपुर.

विषय :- यह सदन केन्द्र सरकार से अनुरोध करता है कि "छत्तीसगढ़ राज्य के रायगढ़, जशपुर एवं कोरबा जिले में प्रोजेक्ट ऐलीफेंट के अंतर्गत "हाथी अभयारण" बनाने हेतु केन्द्रीय शासन द्वारा स्वीकृति दी जाकर आर्थिक सहयोग प्रदान किया जाय।"



अतिरिक्तानुसार निवेदन है कि उक्त विषयक अशासकीय संकल्प छत्तीसगढ़ विधान सभा में दिनांक 11 मार्च, 2005 को सर्वसम्मति से स्वीकृत हुआ है।

छत्तीसगढ़ विधान सभा नियमावली के नियम 129 के अनुसरण में उक्त अशासकीय संकल्प की प्रमाणित प्रति संलग्न है।

उल्लेखनीय है कि विधान सभा नियमावली के नियम 209(1)(घ) की अपेक्षानुसार ऐसे संकल्प के संबंध में विभाग द्वारा की गई अनेतर कार्यवाही का अनुशीलन विधान सभा समिति द्वारा किया जाता है।

अतः अनुरोध है कि परिप्रेक्ष्य में की गई कार्यवाही से इस सचिवालय को एक माह के अन्दर अवगत कराने का कष्ट करें।

संलग्न :- उपरोक्तानुसार

अ.प्र.सु.सं. (अ.प्र.सु.सं.)
22/03/05
प्रमाणित मूल्य पत्र संरक्षण
छत्तीसगढ़, रायपुर
381
जायक क्र. / विशेष वाहक/फैन्स/व.सं./दिनांक
रूपया तन्त्रान भागद्वयक कार्यवाही का अनुरोध है
17/3/05
सचिव,
छत्तीसगढ़ विधान सभा.

CISAOSHALLUPM.S01
प्रति Pcel संयुक्त सचिव

Report on proposal of creation of Elephant Reserves in Chattisgarh

Background

The Additional PCCF (WL), Chattisgarh vide letter No. WL/ 736 dated 26.6.2006 has submitted a proposal to Director, Project Elephant, MoEF, GOI to include three suitable areas of the State as Elephant Reserve for managing elephant populations and its habitats and reducing human-elephant conflicts therein. These three proposed Elephant Reserves are: Badalkhol – Manora; Tamorpingla and Lemru located in forest divisions of Jashpur, North Sarguja and Korba respectively. Against this background, the Directorate of Project Elephant, MoEF, GOI has constituted an expert team consisting of Shri M.K.Appaya, Retd. PCCF (WL), Karnataka/ Member Project Elephant Steering Committee; Dr.Sushant Chowdhury, Scientist F/ Professor, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun and Shri A.N.Prasad, IGF & Director, Project Elephant, MoEF, GOI to undertake the inspection of the sites and submit their recommendations / report for necessary consideration of MoEF on the matter. Accordingly, the constituted team undertook site inspections from 22-25th March 2007 with following itinerary:

- 22.03.2007 Arrival Ranchi from Delhi. By Road arrival to Jashpur. Discussions with Additional PCCF (WL), Chattisgarh, DFO, Jashpur and Superintendent Badalkhol Sanctuary.
- 23.03.2007 Meeting with local political, panchayat and municipal representatives of Jashpur. Visit to Badalkhol WLS and adjoining areas. Thereafter proceeded to Korba via Pathalgarh, Dharmjaygarh. Discussions with DFO, Dharmjaygarh.
- 24.03.2007 Visit to Lemru. Meeting with people affected with elephant conflict at Village Domardihi. Discussions with CF, Bilaspur and DFO, Korba. Return from Korba to Raipur.
- 25.03.2007 Meeting & discussions with PCCF (General), Additional PCCF (WL) and other senior officials of state hq and concerned CFs and DFOs of elephant ranging circles and divisions.

The inspection report of the committee is as below:

ff

No.2-13/2002-PE
 Government of India
 Ministry of Environment & Forests
 Project Elephant Division

CGO Complex, Lodi Road
 Paryavaran Bhawan, New Delhi

Dated the 5th October, 2007

To

The Principal Secretary (Forests)
 Government of Chhatisgarh
 Raipur

Sub: Creation of Elephant Reserve in Chhatisgarh.

Ref: No.WL/MGMT/2007/1895 dated 7.9.2007.

Sir,

Inviting reference above number dated 7.9.2007 on the above mentioned subject, the undersigned is directed to convey the consent of the Government of India on the proposal for declaration of two Elephant Reserve – first consisting of by combining the proposed Badalkhol Manora (176.14 sq kmt) and Tamorpingla 872.16 sq kmt) and the second Lemru (450 sq kmt) respectively without any financial implecation during the current financial year. A copy of the State Government notification for the two Elephant Reserves may kindly be sent to the Ministry at the earliest. Also it is requested to nominate field coordinators for this elephant reserve.


Handwritten notes in Hindi: "अनुमति" (Consent), "अचान मुस्य वन संरक्षक (वन्य प्राणी)" (Chief Wildlife Warden, Wildlife), "राजधानी, रायपुर" (Raipur, Capital).


3175
 18-10-07


Yours faithfully,
 (A.N.Prasad)
 IGF & Director(PE)

Copy to:

1. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Govt. of Chhatisgarh, Raipur for information.
2. The Chief Wildlife Warden, Chhatisgarh, Raipur for information.


 Building People
 Building India
 CHAIRMAN


 कौशलेन्द्र शासन, वन विभाग
 को. 603
 रा. 1519/15
 कोरबा वन मंडल जिला-कोरबा


 Confederation of Indian Industry
 Chhattisgarh State Office
 193 Jabbal Building, Civil Lines
 Raipur 492001
 Phone : 0771 401 3520 / 653 2992
 Fax: 0771 409 3299
 Website: www.cii.in

05/02/2008

The Divisional Forest Officer
 Department of Forest
 Govt. of Chhattisgarh,
 Dist. Korba (CG)

Dear Sir,

Coal Deposits in relation to proposed Elephant Sanctuary.

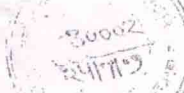
With reference to above, we would like to draw your kind attention on proposed Elephant Sanctuary in Korba District. The location of the proposed Elephant Sanctuary has been studied in relation to the existing and proposed Captive Coal Mining Blocks and Coal bearing areas in and around the proposed Elephant Sanctuary. The details of Coal Blocks and Coal Bearing areas and the proposed Elephant Sanctuary has been brought on a common map which indicates that the proposed sanctuary is in the Coal bearing area which is established by GSI, MEC and CMPDIL. In this connection, following facts are brought to your kind notice and consideration.

1. The Area in and around the proposed Sanctuary has been established to be Coal bearing by Geological mapping and drilling by Geological Survey of India, CMPDIL and MECL. Initially Geological Survey of India carried out Geological mapping on regional basis and large coal bearing area was established which extends over an area of about 500 sq.km. Subsequently, MECL carried out promotional drilling under the specific Programme funded by MOC, Govt. of India to establish potential coal blocks. This exploration was carried out from 2001 to 2003 and about 13000 Million Tonnes of coal deposit was established.

Based on the above exploration, Captive Coal Blocks were identified by CMPDIL and few of them have already been allocated to private parties for Steel making & Power generation.

Details of blocks so far identified are as under:-

- i) Four Captive Coal Blocks namely Nakia, Syang, Fatehpur and Fatehpur East, which have already been allotted to private parties for Captive Mining, fall fully or partially within 10 kms radius of the proposed Sanctuary.
- ii) Three more Captive Coal Blocks namely Rajgamar dip side, Rajgamar dip side (Devnara) and Kesla North fall in the zone of influenced of proposed Sanctuary. These Coal blocks are in the process of allotment.


 छत्तीसगढ़ शासन
 वन विभाग
 डी0के0एस0 भवन, मंत्रालय, रायपुर
 /निस0/सचिव, वन/2009 रायपुर दिनांक/...../2009

कर्मक/प्रति,

प्रधान मुख्य वन संरक्षक,
 वन्य-प्राणी,
 छत्तीसगढ़

विषय - कोरबा वन मण्डल में हाथी रिजर्व का प्रस्ताव ।
 संदर्भ - आपका पत्र क्रमांक 1357, रायपुर, दिनांक 22-06-2009.

— 0 —

विषयांतर्गत लेख है कि छत्तीसगढ़ में हाथी की समस्या को देखते हुए राज्य शासन ने यह निर्णय लिया है कि बादलखोल, समरसोत एवं तमोर पिंगला अभ्यारण्यों में हाथी रिजर्व बनाने का कार्य जारी रखा जाय एवं प्रदेश के अन्य किसी भी स्थान पर कोई नया हाथी रिजर्व, सेन्चुरी अथवा नेशनल पार्क न बनाया जाय ।

वर्तमान में जो नेशनल पार्क एवं अभ्यारण्य अस्तित्व में है उन पर ही भली भांति ध्यान देकर वन्य प्राणियों के सुरक्षा एवं विकास का कार्य किया जाय तथा क्षेत्रिय वन मण्डलों में जो वन्य प्राणी पाये जाते हैं उनके लिए संबंधित वन मण्डलाधिकारी द्वारा वन्य प्राणी प्रबंधन के लिए पानी के श्रोत एवं रहवास विकसित करने के प्रयास उनके वन मण्डल के सभी कार्यों के साथ-साथ किये जावें ।

राज्य शासन द्वारा यह निर्णय लिया गया है कि राज्य में पुराने अभ्यारण्यों/ नेशनल पार्क के क्षेत्रफल में परिवर्तन करने के प्रस्ताव, नये वन क्षेत्रों को हाथी रिजर्व अभ्यारण्य अथवा नेशनल पार्क बनाने के प्रस्ताव मंत्रि परिषद में विस्तार से चर्चा के उपरांत ही पारित किये जा सकेंगे । वर्तमान में राज्य शासन अभी किसी नये क्षेत्र को अभ्यारण्य/ हाथी रिजर्व/नेशनल पार्क बनाये जाने पर विचार नहीं कर रहा है ।

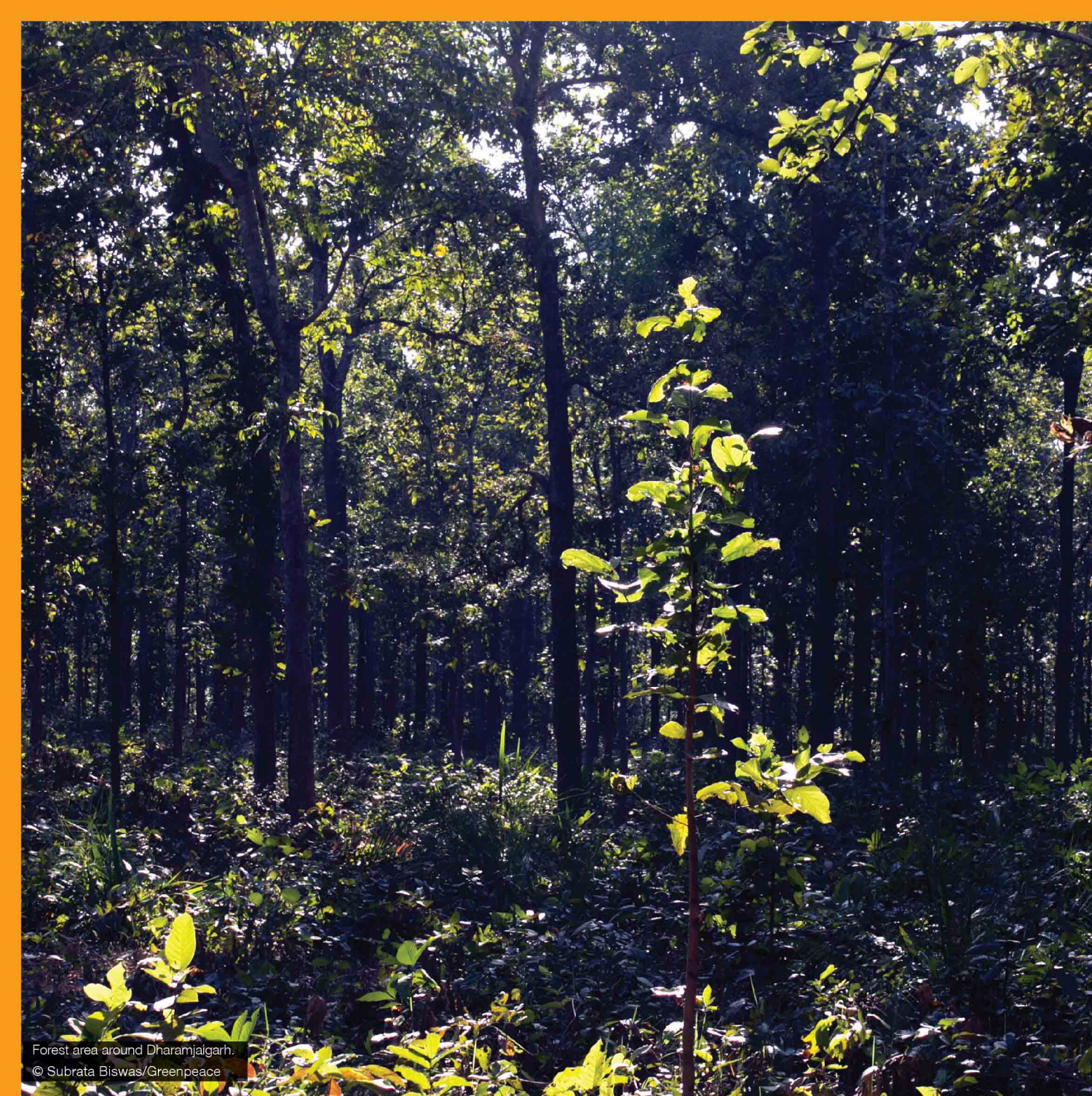
(कौशलेन्द्र सिंह)
 सचिव,
 छ0ग0 शासन, वन विभाग
 रायपुर दिनांक 22/07/2009

पु0क्रमांक/ 165 /निस0/सचिव, वन/2009
 प्रतिलिपि:-

- 1/ मुख्य वन संरक्षक, (भू प्रबंध), कार्यालय प्रधान मुख्य वन संरक्षक, छत्तीसगढ़, रायपुर को उनके पत्र क्रमांक भू प्रबंध/ खनिज/ 277/1283, दिनांक 9-6-2009 के संदर्भ में सूचनार्थ प्रेषित ।
- 2/ वन मण्डलाधिकारी, कोरबा वन मण्डल, कोरबा की ओर सूचनार्थ प्रेषित ।

सचिव,
 छत्तीसगढ़ शासन, वन विभाग

Litter in Secy-Forest-1 621



Forest area around Dharamjaigarh.
© Subrata Biswas/Greenpeace



Rambati of Madorma in Dharamjaigarh, lost her crops in 2012 due to human-elephant conflict.
© Subrata Biswas/Greenpeace