MOEFCC

Non-coal mining clearance threshold for states raised to 500 ha

MoEFCC's S.O. 6278(E) of November 18, 2026 amends item 1(a) of the EIA Notification, 2006 Schedule, replacing the 250 ha limit with 500 ha.

THE MINISTRY OF Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has raised the threshold of delegation to the states for environmental clearance of non-coal mining projects from 250 ha to 500 ha. It did so by notification S.O. 6278(E), dated November 18, 2026, published the same day in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 3, Sub-section (ii), No. 6038. The notification amends the Schedule of the Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006 (S.O. 1533(E) of September 14, 2006). It is signed by Uday Chaudhari, Joint Secretary, under F. No. IA3-19/39/2025-IA.III.

KEY FACTS

AUTHORITY
MoEFCC

PUBLISHED
November 18, 2026

ISSUED BY
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change

DOCUMENT
Notification S.O. 6278(E)



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Against item 1(a) of the Schedule, column (3) now reads "> 500 ha" in place of ">250 ha", and column (4) reads "≤500 ha" in place of "≤ 250 ha". The notification is made under section 3(1) and 3(2)(v) of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, read with rule 5(3)(d) of the Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986.

The notification gives its reasons. State Level Environment Impact Assessment Authorities, set up under section 3(3) of the Act, consider and grant environmental clearance for all proposals under Category 'B'. They "have gained substantial experience over the past two decades", and the process at the state level has been made completely online through the PARIVESH portal. The eligibility criteria for experts on the State Level Expert Appraisal Committees and the Expert Appraisal Committees are identical, governed by Appendix VI of the EIA Notification. The states have already been delegated powers for appraising 500 ha of coal mining projects, and the notification says "the impact on environment of non-coal mining projects is less as compared to coal mining." So the Central Government raises the threshold for non-coal mining "from 250 ha. to 500 ha., as done in coal mining projects, for facilitating clearances at State level".

Based on the recommendations of the Expert Advisory Committee, a draft, S.O. 4166(E) of July 27, 2026, invited objections and suggestions within sixty days, and the notification says those received were duly considered. It states no date from which the change applies and says nothing about proposals already under appraisal. Its note records that the EIA Notification was last amended by S.O. 5189(E), dated September 21, 2026.

Issued by	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
Document	Notification S.O. 6278(E)
Dated	November 18, 2026
Published	Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 3, Sub-section (ii), No. 6038, November 18, 2026 (CG-DL-E-18112026-278027)

Amends	Schedule of the Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006 (S.O. 1533(E) of September 14, 2006), item 1(a), columns (3) and (4)
Applies to	Non-coal mining projects
Threshold of delegation	From 250 ha to 500 ha, as done in coal mining projects
Draft	S.O. 4166(E), July 27, 2026, open for objections and suggestions for sixty days
Legal basis	Section 3(1) and 3(2)(v), Environment (Protection) Act, 1986; rule 5(3)(d), Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986
Takes effect	No date stated in the notification
File number	F. No. IA3-19/39/2025-IA.III
Signed by	Uday Chaudhari, Jt. Secy.

Item 1(a) of the EIA Notification Schedule

Column	Before	After
Column (3)	>250 ha	> 500 ha
Column (4)	≤ 250 ha	≤500 ha

The notification (PDF, 591 KB)

Source: Gazette of India, CG-DL-E-18112026-278027.

Checked against the official copy on November 21, 2026.

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