ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND FORESTS DEPARTMENT

FORESTS

POLICY NOTE
2026 – 2027

DEMAND No. 54

R.V. RANJITHKUMAR
Minister for Forests

©
Government of Tamil Nadu
2026

INDEX

Sl. No	Subject	Page No.
1.	Introduction	2-3
2.	Forest Wealth of Tamil Nadu	3-5
3.	Forest Management	5-14
4.	Wildlife Management	15-30
5.	Forest Policy and Legal Framework	30-34
6.	Ongoing Schemes	34-37
7.	Special Projects / Missions	38-56
8.	Forest Research	56-58
9.	Forest Institutions	58-62
10.	Statutory Bodies	63-67
11.	Forest Corporations	67-73
12.	Special Initiatives and Achievements	73-90
13.	Forest Revenue	90-92
14.	Human Resource Management	92-94
15.	Conclusion	94-95

FORESTS DEPARTMENT

POLICY NOTE 2026-2027

பயன்மரம் உள்ளூர்ப் பழுத்தற்றால் செல்வம்
நயனுடை யான்கண் படின்.

(திருக்குறள்– 216)

“When a tree that serves the community grows in a village, many people benefit from its fruits. Likewise, when wealth rests with a selfless leader, it benefits all”.

This Kural uses the tree as a metaphor to praise the virtue of leadership that serves the common good.

Vision

The vision of the department is to make Tamil Nadu the leading State in India in scientific and socially responsible forest and wildlife management, ensuring that economic, social,

environmental and cultural benefits are sustainably delivered to both present and future generations.

Mission

Forest and Wildlife Management in Tamil Nadu focuses on building healthy, resilient ecosystems through innovation, scientific management, collaboration, and community participation. The Department strives to equip officers with knowledge and tools needed for effective conservation and sustainable use of forest and wildlife resources.

1. Introduction

Forests are vital natural assets, providing ecological services, sustaining biodiversity, regulating climate and supporting rainfall patterns. The health of forests is closely linked to a nation’s well-being.

The geographical expanse of the State of Tamil Nadu, covering 1,30,058 sq. km (3.96% of India's area), includes Coastal Plains, the Eastern Ghats, the Central Plateau and the Western Ghats. The Forest Department implements initiatives aligned with the National Forest Policy (1988), State Forest Policy (2018), and Sustainable Development Goals, focusing on protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation to enhance forest and tree cover.

- Tamil Nadu covers **1,30,058** sq km - 3.96% of India's area - spanning Coastal Plains, Eastern Ghats, Central Plateau and Western Ghats.

2. Forest Wealth of Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu, the southernmost State of India, hosts a varied and rich biodiversity from the coastal ecosystems of the Gulf of Mannar to the evergreen forests of the Western Ghats. It is a global eco-diversity hotspot and a centre of endemism.

Its forests are grouped by temperature into Tropical, Montane Subtropical and Montane Temperate and further classified into nine types based on moisture and structure. According to the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2023, the State has 26,450.22 sq. km of forest cover (20.34% of its area) with a combined forest and tree cover of 31,820.94 sq. km (24.47%).

- Tamil Nadu's forests are grouped by temperature into Tropical, Montane Subtropical and Montane Temperate, and further into nine types by moisture and structure.
- **ISFR 2023**: forest cover 26,450.22 sq km (20.34% of the State), and forest plus tree cover 31,820.94 sq km (24.47%).

2.1 Faunal Diversity

Tamil Nadu hosts a rich faunal diversity with 165 species of freshwater fishes, 76 species of amphibians, 177 species of reptiles, 454 species of birds and 187 species of mammals. Many species are red-listed and a high level of endemism is recorded, with several amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals found only in Tamil Nadu.

- Faunal diversity: 165 freshwater fish, 76 amphibian, 177 reptile, 454 bird and 187 mammal species.

2.2 Floral Diversity

Tamil Nadu also boasts an exceptional forest floral diversity, ranging from tropical rainforests to dry deciduous forests and scrublands. Of India’s 17,672 angiosperms, the State hosts 5,640 species, the highest nationally, including 533 endemics and 230 red-listed species along with numerous medicinal plants and wild crop relatives. Tamil Nadu also supports diverse gymnosperms, pteridophytes, bryophytes, lichens, fungi, algae and bacteria, reflecting its rich ecological and botanical heritage.

- Of India's 17,672 angiosperms, Tamil Nadu hosts 5,640 species - the highest in the country - with 533 endemics and 230 red-listed.

3. Forest Management

3.1 Forest Protection

Forest protection is the top priority for the Government of Tamil Nadu to conserve biodiversity, maintain ecological balance and ensure sustainable management. Forests face

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

threats from illegal felling, forest fires, encroachments, illicit extraction and poaching.

To address these challenges, the Forest Department has strengthened frontline staff through recruitment and specialized training, upgraded infrastructure with modern arms, communication and transport, enhanced intelligence and coordination with enforcement agencies and consolidated forest boundaries using DGPS, remote sensing, GIS and advanced surveillance—including marine ecosystem protection.

Protection is reinforced by 14 Forest Protection Squads, 17 Forest Stations, 11 Roving Check Posts and 129 Forest Check Posts equipped with surveillance systems. Forest fire management is coordinated via the State Forest Fire Control Centre and 34 District Centres under the Tamil Nadu Forest Fire Management System.

- Protection network: 14 Forest Protection Squads, 17 Forest Stations, 11 Roving Check Posts and 129 Forest Check Posts.
- Fire management runs from the State Forest Fire Control Centre and 34 district centres under the Tamil Nadu Forest Fire Management System.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

The Forest Elite Force and Tamil Nadu Forest and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau wing in coordination with WCCB, Customs and Police, have intensified enforcement. All these are reflective of the State's strong commitment to forest protection.

3.2 Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

India is a signatory to international agreements on greenhouse gas reduction. Forest-based carbon sequestration offers cost-effective means for climate change mitigation. The Green Tamil Nadu Mission contributes significantly to both mitigation and adaptation. According to ISFR 2023, the State's total forest carbon stock including trees outside forests over one hectare is estimated at 217.56 million tonnes, accounting for 2.99% of India's total forest carbon stock.

- **ISFR 2023** puts the State's forest carbon stock, including trees outside forests, at 217.56 million tonnes - 2.99% of India's total.

3.3 Forest Hydrology and integrated watershed management

Forest Hydrology and Integrated Watershed Management promote the sustainable conservation of land, water and biodiversity within a watershed to maintain ecological balance and meet human and wildlife needs. In Tamil Nadu, forestry interventions focus on soil and water conservation through contour bunds, check dams, percolation ponds and afforestation, while supporting rural livelihoods.

3.4 Welfare of Tribal and other forest fringe communities.

The welfare of tribal and forest-fringe communities is one of the priorities for the Tamil Nadu Government. Protecting individual and community forest rights under the Forest Rights Act, 2006 safeguards livelihoods, culture and traditional practices. The State has a tribal

Individual and community forest rights are protected under the Forest Rights **Act, 2006**. The State's tribal population is **7.21 lakh**, 1.10% of the total (Census **2011**).

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

population of 7.21 lakh (1.10% of the total population, Census 2011) closely linked to forests.

3.5 Ecotourism

Ecotourism in Tamil Nadu promotes conservation, sustainable tourism and community development by showcasing the State's rich natural and cultural heritage. The Government ensures that benefits flow directly to local communities, supporting livelihoods and socio-economic growth.

By promoting responsible and sustainable practices, Tamil Nadu aims to conserve natural resources, create employment, highlight local culture and ensure equitable sharing of ecotourism benefits.

3.6 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Tamil Nadu aligns its development efforts with the UN Sustainable Development Goals

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

(SDGs), adapting them to local social, economic and environmental priorities.

The Forest Department has set up State and District level SDG units to track progress through an SDG Dashboard in coordination with the Planning and Development Department, focusing on Goals 12, 13, 14, and 15.

3.7 National Working Plan Code

A Working Plan is a scientific management document for a forest division that assesses forest conditions, reviews past practices and prescribes sustainable strategies for 10-years and is a very effective tool for managing forests and climate change in a scientific manner.

3.8 Conservation of forest biodiversity and genetic resources

Tamil Nadu has brought 9,184.924 sq. km (39.61% of its forest area) under a strong

Protected Area network comprising 5 National Parks, 18 Wildlife Sanctuaries, 18 Bird Sanctuaries, 3 Conservation Reserves, 5 Tiger Reserves and a Gene Pool garden. The State's biodiversity is further enriched by the Western and Eastern Ghats, five Elephant Reserves and extensive coastal ecosystems including mangroves.

Landscape-level conservation focuses on ecosystem restoration through removal of invasive species, promoting native vegetation, improving habitats, enhancing fodder availability, and supporting natural regeneration to reduce human–wildlife conflict. Conflict mitigation combines traditional patrolling with modern tools like GIS, GPS and drone surveillance to ensure wildlife protection and community safety. Some of the key initiatives being taken to reduce human-wildlife conflict are detailed below:-

- Monitoring wildlife habitats for water and fodder availability.
- Continuous tracking of wildlife movement in conflict-prone areas.
- Early warning systems to alert communities in conflict zones.
- Sensitization and awareness programmes for local inhabitants.
- Prompt and timely compensation to victims of wildlife-related damage.
- Standardized protocols for rescue and rehabilitation of wildlife straying outside forests.
- Strengthening veterinary services through Rapid Response Teams and Mobile Veterinary Units.

Wildlife health indicates an animal's ability to adapt to biological, social and environmental changes with infectious diseases posing significant conservation challenges. Veterinarians play a vital role in handling wildlife emergencies, reducing stress and ensuring care and welfare of injured or displaced animals.

3.9 Forest Fire prevention and Management

Forest fires are a major challenge in Tamil Nadu, particularly as most forests are deciduous and prone to frequent fires due to anthropogenic factors. The State implements several forest fire prevention and management measures:

1. **Fire Lines and Firebreaks**: Clearing vegetation to create barriers that prevent the spread of forest fires.
2. **Early Warning Systems**: Detecting fires early through watch towers, remote sensing and community surveillance.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

3. **Capacity Building**: Training forest staff and local communities in fire prevention and emergency response.
4. **Public Awareness**: Conducting campaigns and workshops on fire safety and responsible forest protection.

The initiative aims to reduce wildfire incidence and severity, protect forests and biodiversity and sustain ecosystem services and forest dependent livelihoods.

3.10 Invasive Species Management

Invasive species threaten biodiversity by displacing native plants and disrupting ecosystems. Tamil Nadu addresses this through systematic removal, restoration with native species, continuous monitoring and soil & moisture conservation. The State is the first in India to adopt a dedicated policy on invasive species management and natural forest protection.

4. Wildlife Management

Tamil Nadu has been a pioneer in wildlife conservation, enacting the Tamil Nadu Wild Elephants Preservation Act in 1873 and establishing India's first bird sanctuary at Vedanthangal in 1936. The State follows a comprehensive conservation approach focused on habitat protection, wildlife corridor development, anti-poaching measures and community-based initiatives to preserve biodiversity, maintain ecological balance and sustain vital ecosystem services for future generations.

- Two firsts to memorise: the Tamil Nadu Wild Elephants Preservation Act of 1873, and India's first bird sanctuary at Vedanthangal in **1936**.
- Vedanthangal, notified **1936**, is India's first bird sanctuary - just 30 hectares in Chengalpattu.

4.1 National Parks

Under Section 35 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, National Parks are declared to protect areas of significant ecological, faunal, floral, geomorphological and zoological importance.

- National Parks are declared under Section 35 of the Wildlife (Protection) **Act, 1972**; Tamil Nadu has five.

Tamil Nadu has notified five National Parks in recognition of their unique ecological and natural value.

Sl. No	Name of the National Park	Extent (in ha.)	District(s)	Year of notification
1	Guindy National Park	270.57	Chennai	1978
2	Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park	52,602.00	Ramanathapuram and Tuticorin	1986
3	Indira Gandhi National Park	11,710.00	Coimbatore	1989
4	Mukurthi National Park	7,846.00	Nilgiris	2001
5	Mudumalai National Park	10,323.00	Nilgiris	2005

- The five National Parks with years: Guindy **1978**, Gulf of Mannar Marine **1986**, Indira Gandhi **1989**, Mukurthi **2001** and Mudumalai **2005**.

4.2 Wildlife Sanctuaries

Wildlife Sanctuaries, notified under Sections 18 and 26A of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, are designated for their ecological, faunal, floral, geomorphological, natural and zoological significance. These areas aim to protect, propagate and develop wildlife and their habitats.

- Wildlife Sanctuaries are notified under Sections 18 and 26A of the Wildlife (Protection) **Act, 1972**.

Details of the sanctuaries in Tamil Nadu are as follows.

Sl. No	Name of Wildlife Sanctuary	Extent (in ha)	Districts	Year of Notification
1	Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary	21,776.000	Nilgiris	1940
2	Mundanthurai Wildlife Sanctuary	58,207.580	Tirunelveli	1962
3	Point Calimere Wildlife Sanctuary	1,728.810	Nagapattinam	1967
4	Indira Gandhi Wildlife Sanctuary	84,149.000	Coimbatore and Tiruppur	1976
5	Kalakad Wildlife Sanctuary	22,358.000	Tirunelveli	1976
6	Vallanadu Black Buck Sanctuary	1,641.000	Tuticorin	1987
7	Srivilliputtur Grizzled Squirrel Wildlife Sanctuary	48,520.000	Virudhunagar	1988
8	Kanyakumari Wildlife Sanctuary	40,239.550	Kanyakumari	2007
9	Sathyamangalam Wildlife Sanctuary I and II	1,41,160.940	Erode	2008 & 2011
10	Megamalai Wildlife Sanctuary	26,910.810	Theni and Madurai	2009
11	Point Calimere Wildlife Sanctuary, Block A & B	12,407.270	Thanjavur, Tiruvarur and Nagapattinam	2013

- Mudumalai, notified **1940**, is the oldest wildlife sanctuary in the State; Sathyamangalam at 1,41,160.94 ha is the largest.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

12	Kodaikanal Wildlife Sanctuary	60,895.482	Dindigul and Theni	2013
13	Gangaikondan Spotted Deer Sanctuary	288.400	Tirunelveli	2013
14	Cauvery North Wildlife Sanctuary	50,433.480	Krishnagiri and Dharmapuri	2014
15	Nellai Wildlife Sanctuary	35,673.330	Tenkasi	2015
16	Kadavur Slender Loris Sanctuary	11,806.560	Karur and Dindigul	2022
17	Cauvery South Wildlife Sanctuary	68,640.613	Krishnagiri and Dharmapuri	2022
18	Thanthai Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary	80,114.800	Erode	2024

4.3 Bird Sanctuaries

Tamil Nadu is internationally known for hosting large populations of migratory birds each year. Its tanks, ponds and lakes offer ideal habitats for feeding and breeding. With 18 notified Bird Sanctuaries including the Greater Flamingo Bird Sanctuary declared in 2025 the State ranks

- With 18 notified bird sanctuaries - the Greater Flamingo Bird Sanctuary declared in **2025** among them - Tamil Nadu ranks first in India in number of bird sanctuaries.

first in India in the number of bird sanctuaries.

The list of the Bird Sanctuaries is as follows:-

Sl. No	Name of Bird Sanctuary	Extent (in ha)	Districts	Year of Notification
1	Vedanthangal Bird Sanctuary	30.00	Chengalpattu	1936
2	Vettangudi Bird Sanctuary	38.40	Sivaganga	1977
3	Pulicat Lake Bird Sanctuary	15,367.00	Tiruvallur	1980
4	Karikili Bird Sanctuary	61.21	Chengalpattu	1989
5	Kanjirankulam Bird Sanctuary	104.00	Ramanathapuram	1989
6	Chitrangudi Bird Sanctuary	47.63	Ramanathapuram	1989
7	Koonthankulam-Kadankulam Bird Sanctuary	129.00	Tirunelveli	1994
8	Udayamarthandpuram Bird Sanctuary	45.28	Tiruvarur	1998
9	Vaduvoor Bird Sanctuary	128.10	Tiruvarur	1999
10	Karaivetti Bird Sanctuary	453.71	Ariyalur	1999
11	Vellode Bird Sanctuary	77.18	Erode	2000
12	Melaselvanur-Kilaselvanur Bird Sanctuary	593.08	Ramanathapuram	2010

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

13	Therthangal Bird Sanctuary	29.29	Ramanathapuram	2010
14	Sakkarakottai Tank Bird Sanctuary	230.49	Ramanathapuram	2012
15	Oussudu Lake Bird Sanctuary	331.785	Villupuram	2015
16	Kazhuveli Bird Sanctuary	5,151.60	Villupuram	2021
17	Nanjarayan Tank Bird Sanctuary	125.865	Tiruppur	2022
18	Greater Flamingo Bird Sanctuary	524.780	Ramanathapuram	2025

4.4 Tamil Nadu Wetland Mission

The Tamil Nadu Wetland Mission aims to restore 100 wetlands while supporting livelihoods. Wetlands provide water purification, groundwater recharge, biodiversity conservation and climate mitigation. Tamil Nadu leads the country with 20 Ramsar Sites.

Details of Ramsar sites in Tamil Nadu are as follows:-

Sl. No	Name of Ramsar site	District	Year of Declaration	Area (in ha)
1	Point Calimere Wildlife and Bird Sanctuary	Nagapattinam and Tiruvarur	2002	38,500
2	Chitrangudi Bird Sanctuary	Ramanathapuram	2021	260.47
3	Koonthankulam Bird Sanctuary	Tirunelveli	2021	72.047
4	Pallikaranai Marsh Reserved Forest	Chennai	2022	1,247.54
5	Karikili Bird Sanctuary	Chengalpattu	2022	58.44
6	Vedanthangal Bird Sanctuary	Chengalpattu	2022	40.35
7	Pichavaram Mangrove	Cuddalore	2022	1,478.64
8	Vellode Bird Sanctuary	Erode	2022	77.19
9	Suchindram Theroor Wetland Complex	Kanniyakumari	2022	94.23
10	Vembannur Wetland Complex	Kanniyakumari	2022	19.746
11	Gulf of Mannar Marine Biosphere Reserve	Ramanathapuram	2022	52671.876
12	Kanjirankulam Bird Sanctuary	Ramanathapuram	2022	96.891

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

13	Udhayamarthandapuram Bird Sanctuary	Tiruvarur	2022	43.767
14	Vaduvur Bird Sanctuary	Tiruvarur	2022	112.638
15	Karaivetti Bird Sanctuary	Ariyalur	2023	453.715
16	Longwood Shola Reserved Forest	The Nilgiris	2023	116.007
17	Nanjarayan Bird Sanctuary	Tiruppur	2024	125.865
18	Kazhuveli Bird Sanctuary	Viluppuram	2024	5151.60
19	Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary	Ramanathapuram	2024	230.49
20	Therthangal Bird Sanctuary	Ramanathapuram	2024	29.295

4.5 Conservation Reserves

Conservation Reserves are legally protected areas for the conservation of flora and fauna, notified under Section 36A of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and declared in consultation with local communities.

- Conservation Reserves are notified under Section 36A of the Wildlife (Protection) **Act, 1972**, in consultation with local communities. Tamil Nadu has three - Thiruppudaimaruthur (**2005**), Suchindrum-Theroor-Managudi (**2015**) and the Dugong Conservation Reserve in Palk Bay (**2022**).

Tamil Nadu has notified three Conservation Reserves, as follows:-

Sl. No	Name of Conservation Reserve	Extent (in ha)	District	Year of Notification
1.	Thiruppudaimaruthur Birds Conservation Reserve	2.84	Tirunelveli	2005
2.	Suchindrum-Theroor –Managudi Conservation Reserve	483.92	Kanniyakumari	2015
3.	Dugong Conservation Reserve in Palk Bay	44,834.00	Thanjavur	2022

4.6 Tiger Reserves

Launched in April 1973, Project Tiger seeks to secure viable tiger populations by protecting critical habitats of ecological and national importance.

- Project Tiger began in April **1973** - but Tamil Nadu had already declared the Mundanthurai Tiger Sanctuary in **1962**, eleven years earlier.

Tamil Nadu has been a leader in tiger conservation, declaring the Mundanthurai Tiger Sanctuary in 1962, even before the launch of Project Tiger.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

The State currently has five Tiger Reserves, as listed below:

Area in sq.km

Sl No	Name of Reserve	Districts	Core Area	Buffer area	Total area
1	Kalakad-Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve	Tirunelveli	895.00	706.542	1,601.542
2	Anamalai Tiger Reserve	Coimbatore and Tiruppur	958.59	521.280	1,479.870
3	Mudumalai Tiger Reserve	The Nilgiris	321.00	367.590	688.590
4	Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve	Erode	793.493	614.912	1,408.405
5	Srivilliputhur-Megamalai Tiger Reserve	Virudhunagar, Theni and Madurai	641.862	374.709	1,016.571

- The five Tiger Reserves: Kalakad-Mundanthurai, Anamalai, Mudumalai, Sathyamangalam and Srivilliputhur-Megamalai.

4.7 Elephant Reserves

Launched in 1992, Project Elephant aims to conserve elephants, their habitats and vital migration corridors.

- Project Elephant began in **1992**. Tamil Nadu has five Elephant Reserves - Nilgiri, Nilambur, Srivilliputhur, Anamalai and Agasthyamalai.

The State currently has five Elephant Reserves as listed below:

Sl. No	Name of Reserve	Districts	Area in ha
1	Nilgiris – Eastern Ghat (Nilgiri Elephant Reserve)	Nilgiris, Erode, Dharmapuri and Krishnagiri	4,66,245
2	Nilambur Silent Valley - Coimbatore Elephant Reserve (Nilambur Elephant Reserve)	Coimbatore and Nilgiris	56,557
3	Periyar Elephant Reserve (Srivilliputhur Elephant Reserve)	Theni, Virudhunagar and Tenkasi	1,24,910
4	Anamalai – Parambikulam Elephant Reserve (Anamalai Elephant Reserve)	Coimbatore and Dindigul	1,45,723
5	Agasthyamalai Elephant Reserve	Tirunelveli, Tenkasi and Kaniyakumari	1,19,748.26

4.8 Biosphere Reserves

Biosphere Reserves are designated under UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme (1971) to promote sustainable development through community participation

- Biosphere Reserves are designated under **UNESCO**'s Man and the Biosphere Programme of **1971**. Tamil Nadu has three: Nilgiris, Gulf of Mannar and Agasthiyamalai.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

and scientific management. Their primary purpose is the in-situ conservation of all life forms and ecosystems, serving as reference sites for monitoring ecological changes.

Tamil Nadu currently has three Biosphere Reserves as detailed below:

Sl. No	Name of Biosphere Reserve	Districts	Area in ha
1	Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve	The Nilgiris	2,53,800
2	Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve	Ramanathapuram and Thoothukudi	10,50,000
3	Agasthiyamalai Biosphere Reserve	Kanniyakumari, Tenkasi and Tirunelveli	1,67,236

4.9 Wildlife Management Outside Protected areas

The Tamil Nadu Forest Department implements wildlife management strategies outside Protected Areas to mitigate human–wildlife conflict, conserve biodiversity and

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

promote coexistence in human-dominated landscapes. These are;

Corridor Conservation: Securing wildlife corridors to connect fragmented habitats, maintain genetic diversity and enable safe seasonal movements.

Community-Based Conservation: Engaging local communities through Community Reserves, Community Forest Management (CFM) and Joint Forest Management (JFM).

Conflict Mitigation: Implementing preventive and deterrent measures to reduce crop damage and human–wildlife interactions.

Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation: Strengthening centres for treatment, care

and relocation of injured or conflict-affected wildlife.

Awareness and Education: Conducting outreach programmes to promote conservation awareness and coexistence.

Livelihood Enhancement: Supporting sustainable livelihoods such as ecotourism, agroforestry and climate-resilient agriculture.

Research and Monitoring: Facilitating evidence-based management through scientific studies and continuous monitoring.

Additionally, the Department monitors sea turtle populations along the coastline through 52 hatcheries, protecting nests and releasing nearly two lakh hatchlings annually.

Sea turtle nests are protected through 52 hatcheries along the coast, releasing nearly two lakh hatchlings a year.

These initiatives adopt a holistic approach, integrating ecological, social and economic

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

dimensions to ensure long-term wildlife conservation across Tamil Nadu.

4.10 Human Wildlife Conflict Mitigation

Human–wildlife conflict is an increasing challenge in Tamil Nadu, requiring continuous management by the Forest Department.

- **Preventive Infrastructure**: Elephant-proof trenches, solar and steel rope fencing, stone walls, fodder development, water augmentation and regular patrolling to deter wildlife entry.
- **Monitoring and Early Warning**: Tracking animal movements with real-time alerts to communities using AI-based surveillance, radio-collaring, geo-referenced tracking and trip-wire systems.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

- **Rapid Response and Veterinary Care**: Deployment of trained teams, kumki elephants, Rapid Response Teams and Mobile Veterinary Units for safe capture, treatment and release.

- **Awareness and Coordination**: Community outreach and close coordination with District Administration.

- **Compensation:** Timely relief for loss of life, injury, damage to the crops and property.

Conflict response uses kumki elephants, Rapid Response Teams and Mobile Veterinary Units, with **AI**-based surveillance, radio-collaring and trip-wire early warning.

5. Forest Policy and Legal Framework

Forest policy and legal framework form the foundation of sustainable forest management, biodiversity conservation, ecosystem protection, and the welfare of forest-dependent communities.

Forest Policy: Defines the State's vision and strategies, emphasizing conservation, ecosystem services, community participation

and equitable benefit-sharing through multi-stakeholder collaboration.

Forest Laws: Provide the legal framework for forest protection and governance, covering land rights, wildlife conservation, protected areas, regulated resource use and prevention of offences such as illegal logging and poaching.

Conservation and Protection: Prevent deforestation and biodiversity loss through protected areas and regulated land use.

5.1. National Forest Policy, 1988

The National Forest Policy, 1988 provides a framework for the conservation, management, and sustainable use of forests in India. Though formulated by the Government of India, its principles are implemented by States. In Tamil Nadu, the Policy is implemented to ensure

- The department works to the National Forest Policy **1988** and the State Forest Policy **2018**.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

conservation and ecological stability by protecting forests to maintain ecological balance, conserve biodiversity and prevent degradation. While the Policy provides the national framework, Tamil Nadu complements it with State-specific strategies suited to its ecological and socio-economic conditions.

5.2. State Forest Policy, 2018

Tamil Nadu's State Forest Policy guides the sustainable management and conservation of forests, promoting biodiversity, social equity and participatory governance in line with national and international commitments.

The Policy focuses on:

1. Biodiversity conservation
2. Sustainable forest management
3. Community participation
4. Livelihood support

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

5. Forest protection and law enforcement
6. Research and capacity building
7. Climate change mitigation and adaptation
8. Collaboration and partnerships

5.3. Acts and Rules

Tamil Nadu has a robust legal framework for forest conservation, management and sustainable use, protecting ecosystems, biodiversity and wildlife while regulating timber, non-timber produce and land use. Key laws include:

- The legal framework: Tamil Nadu Forest **Act 1882**, Preservation of Private Forest **Act 1949**, Hill Areas (Preservation of Trees) **Act 1955**, Wildlife (Protection) **Act 1972** and the Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam **1980**.

5.3.1 Tamil Nadu Forest Act, 1882 – Regulates forests, prevents illegal activities and fires, empowers authorities.

5.3.2 Tamil Nadu Preservation of Private Forest Act, 1949 – To prevent the indiscriminate destruction of private forests and interference with customary and prescriptive rights therein.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

5.3.3 Tamil Nadu Hill Areas (Preservation of Trees) Act, 1955 – Protects trees in hill stations; regulates felling and transport of trees.

5.3.4 Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 – Safeguards wildlife and habitats; bans hunting and illegal trade.

5.3.5 Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980 – Regulates forest land diversion for non-forest purposes.

6. Ongoing Schemes

6.1 Centrally Sponsored Schemes

The following schemes are jointly funded by the Central and the State Government in a ratio of 60:40.

The Centrally Sponsored Schemes here - Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats, Project Tiger, Project Elephant and Forest Fire Prevention - are funded 60:40.

6.1.1 Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats

This scheme supports Protected Areas (National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries,

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

Conservation and Community Reserves), wildlife outside protected areas and recovery of critically endangered species.

6.1.2 Project Tiger

Tigers, as apex predators, are an indicator of the overall health of the ecosystem. The State manages five Tiger Reserves through habitat protection, fire prevention, eco-development, water enhancement, conflict mitigation and infrastructure support.

6.1.3 Project Elephant

Tamil Nadu, with 3170 elephants (2025 census), implements Project Elephant in five reserves, focusing on scientific management and habitat conservation. The scheme supports habitat improvement, rescue centres, Tribal Sub-Plan activities and mitigation of human–elephant conflict.

- Tamil Nadu has 3,170 elephants by the **2025** census.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

6.1.4 Forest Fire Prevention and Management Scheme

The scheme focuses on fire prevention, control and mitigation through fire lines, early warning systems, capacity building, public awareness, community participation and research.

6.2 State Schemes

The State Government is implementing around 49 schemes towards forest and wildlife management. Some of the major schemes are detailed below.

About 49 State schemes run alongside the four Centrally Sponsored ones.

6.2.1 Modernization of Forest Force

Advancements in forestry and wildlife management require sustainable strategies and modern technologies to conserve forests, biodiversity and ecosystem services, which the department needs to be equipped with. This will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

forest force in Tamil Nadu to respond to emerging challenges in forest management.

6.2.2 Forest Fire Prevention and Mitigation Scheme

Dry deciduous and scrub forests face high risk of fire from January to July due to dry spells, rising temperatures and human activity. The scheme aims to reduce fire frequency and severity.

6.2.3 Elephant Conservation Scheme

This scheme supports a multi-pronged mitigation strategy, including habitat improvement, augmentation of water sources, creation of physical barriers along forest boundaries and awareness generation among local communities.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

7. Special Projects / Missions

7.1 Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Conservation and Greening Project for Climate Change Response (TBGPCCR)

The Tamil Nadu Forest Department continues to protect forests and wildlife while providing essential ecosystem services. The Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Conservation and Greening Project (2022–23 to 2029–30), supported by JICA with Rs.920.52 crore, promotes biodiversity conservation, climate mitigation, livelihoods and forest management.

- The Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Conservation and Greening Project (**2022-23** to **2029-30**) is **JICA**-supported at **Rs.920.52 crore**, covering 155 tribal villages.

Eco-tourism initiatives cover the Eastern Ghats, Gudalur Gene Pool Garden and heritage sites, while 155 tribal villages benefit from livelihood support. Project infrastructure strengthening includes 107 vehicles, 256 e-bikes and 74 staff quarters.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

7.1.1 Eco System Based Climate Change Measures

A. Marine Ecosystems

A survey of Tamil Nadu's 11,000 ha of coral reefs found 1,292 ha degraded. In 2024–25, 1.2 ha. was restored at Kasuvari Island, Gulf of Mannar.

- A survey of the State's 11,000 hectares of coral reef found 1,292 hectares degraded; 1.2 ha was restored at Kasuvari Island in **2024-25**, and over 100 ha of seagrass established.

Olive Ridley turtles, breeding areas are patrolled and Dugongs in the Gulf of Mannar and Palk Bay are monitored with fishermen incentivized to release endangered species safely.

Seagrass restoration is ongoing and over 100 ha. of seagrass has been established in Vannichippattinam and Thanjavur, vital for Dugong survival.

B. Land Ecosystems

Efforts under this category include species recovery plans, Mangrove restoration, removal of

invasive alien species and promoting Trees Outside Forests.

C. Mangrove restoration

Till date, restoration of mangroves has been completed over an area of 700 hectares in Muthupet of Thiruvarur district, with an additional 350 hectares currently under restoration. Maintenance of mangroves restored in previous years is also being carried out as part of this project. Eco-tourism activities have been promoted in the Muthupet mangrove area through the provision of two boats, creation of Board walk and development of an interpretation centre to enhance visitor experience and awareness.

7.1.2 Human Wildlife Conflict Measures

Community involvement is strengthened through 95 Anti-Depredation Committees and

village-level early warning systems, including SMS alerts to promote coexistence and reduce conflicts.

7.1.3 Species recovery plan

Twenty-five endangered endemic and Rare, Endangered and Threatened (RET) plant species have been prioritized for conservation through species recovery programs, including population assessment, habitat mapping, propagation and ex-situ conservation.

7.1.4 Livelihood Improvement Activities

Livelihood initiatives in the Eastern Ghats support tribal communities while promoting forest and wildlife conservation. Eco-Development Committees in 155 villages benefit 45,000 people from 11 hill ranges and five indigenous groups. Skill development training in tailoring, millet cultivation, agroforestry, Aari work and farm business have been provided. Land reclamation,

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

soil-moisture conservation activities have been implemented in 40 villages to enhance productivity. Eco-tourism activities augment revenue which in turn supports conservation and tribal welfare.

7.1.5 Information and Communication Technology

Management Information System (MIS)

The Tamil Nadu Forest Department has implemented a comprehensive Management Information System (MIS) as part of its digital transformation and e-governance initiatives. The MIS integrates administrative, financial, operational and field-level data into a unified digital platform, enabling data-driven decisions, transparency and accountability.

A key feature is end-to-end computerization, digitizing processes from file movement and approvals to reporting via., web

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

portals, mobile apps and the e-Office framework, minimizing manual intervention and supporting real-time monitoring.

The MIS covers forest protection, wildlife management, human–wildlife conflict mitigation, plantation and nursery management, ecotourism, asset management and scheme implementation. Modules like Forest and Wildlife Clearances and Tree Felling Permits are operational, with other modules being deployed.

Overall, MIS strengthens governance, operational efficiency, service delivery and sustainable management of forests and wildlife across Tamil Nadu.

Geographical Information System in Forestry

The Tamil Nadu Forest Department leverages digital technologies GIS, web platforms and mobile apps to strengthen forest and wildlife

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

management. GIS supports mapping, monitoring afforestation, habitats, carbon stocks and forest cover for evidence-based planning.

Under the Tamil Nadu Digital Forest Scheme, boundaries are digitized using DGPS and LiDAR, producing accurate, legally robust geospatial records. District Forest Atlases and maps of Reserved Forests and Eco-Sensitive Zones aid management and dispute resolution.

The Department's website provides access to schemes, notifications, ecotourism initiatives and statutory documents. TNFFMIS enables real-time forest fire monitoring and rapid prevention.

These initiatives promote digital governance, transparency, sustainable management and data-driven decision-making across Tamil Nadu.

7.2 Restoration of Degraded Forest Landscape (RIDF – NABARD)

Restoration of Degraded Forest Landscape – Phase I (2021–2022 to 2025–2026), with a total outlay of Rs.481.15 crore (95% NABARD loan, 5% State share), aims to revive watersheds, prevent soil erosion, enhance groundwater, support natural regeneration and provide drinking water for wildlife and communities.

7.2.1 Restoration of Degraded Forest Landscape

Reforestation works are being carried out over 31,060 ha. of degraded forests across 33 districts to restore and recover forest ecosystems. As part of this initiative, over 31.06 lakh seedlings have been planted and maintained, contributing significantly to the enhancement of forest cover in the State.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

7.2.2 Development of Red Sanders Plantations and Conservation of Mangrove and Sandalwood Ecosystem

Red Sanders have been planted and maintained over 600 ha. across Karur, Vellore, Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Tiruvallur and Chengalpattu to strengthen reserves and restore degraded forests. In the Eastern Ghats, 304 ha. receive in-situ protection and cultural operations, supporting natural sandalwood recovery.

7.2.3 Formation and Maintenance of Tissue Culture Lab

To promote the conservation of endangered species, support large-scale production of genetically superior seedlings for commercially important trees in agroforestry and assist various afforestation programs, the tissue culture laboratory at the State Forest Research Institute, Kolapakkam has been maintained and two new

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

tissue culture labs have been established in Madurai and Coimbatore.

7.2.4 Forest Fire Protection and Disaster Management Activities

So far, 2,470 km of firelines have been created and 3,797 km maintained. To strengthen forest fire management, 45 Fire Watch Towers, 45 Anti-Poaching Centres and 45 Field Staff Dormitories have been established.

A State Forest Fire Control Centre at the headquarters, supported by a network of 34 District Centres, has been set up to ensure rapid information flow and coordinated patrolling for management of forest fires.

7.3 Green Tamil Nadu Mission

The Green Tamil Nadu Mission aims to raise the State's forest and tree cover from 23.71% to 33% by 2030, enhancing biodiversity,

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods. It promotes forest productivity, urban and peri-urban greening and plantations on farmlands, degraded lands and highways with native, climate-resilient species. Over 11 crore geo-tagged seedlings have been planted across more than 1.75 lakh ha., with active support from multiple State agencies, 10,093 volunteers, more than 540 non-governmental organizations and trusts.

7.3.1 Convergence of activities of Green Tamil Nadu mission through Viksit Bharat – Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajivika Mission [Gramin] (VB-G RAM G)

To link greening with rural livelihoods, the Green Tamil Nadu Mission has been converged with VB-G RAM G, engaging local communities through Panchayats in raising, planting and maintaining seedlings.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

7.3.2 Rastriya Krishi Vikasa Yojana (RKVY)

Seedlings under this scheme have been handed over to the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare for subsequent plantation on farmlands to promote agroforestry and enhance farm-based green cover.

7.3.3 Creation of Maragatha Pooncholai (Village Woodlots)

Village-level greening eases pressure on natural forests and provides timber, fuelwood, fodder and eco-recreation. So far 100 number of Maragatha pooncholai have been created with each having an area of 1-ha. Woodlot being equipped with basic amenities and infrastructure. 55,000 native seedlings of timber, fuelwood and fodder species have been planted thus far.

7.3.4 Kurungadugal Thittam

Under this initiative, 1,000 micro forests have been developed by industries in partnership

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

with the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board. A total of 17,71,699 seedlings have been planted over 4,459 acres enhancing green cover in industrial landscapes and helping to reduce the industrial carbon footprint.

7.3.5 TN-SHORE (World Bank Assisted Coastal Programme)

Under the World Bank–assisted TN-SHORE programme implemented from 2025–2030, efforts are being made to further strengthen coastal ecosystems and enhance livelihood resilience. The programme targets establishment of 300 hectares of new mangrove plantations, restoration of 700 hectares of degraded mangroves and development of 550 hectares of coastal agroforestry systems across 14 coastal districts, with the aim of improving ecological stability and to support coastal communities.

7.3.6 Roadside and Corridor Greening with National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) Support

The Mission promotes green corridors along major national highways enhancing carbon sequestration, roadside micro-climates and landscape connectivity.

7.3.7 Establishment of Hi-Tech Nurseries

Five Hi-Tech Nurseries are being established at Chennai, Perambalur, Krishnagiri, Cuddalore and Theni. These nurseries will provide high-quality planting material for large-scale afforestation, ecological restoration and biodiversity conservation using advanced propagation techniques and will further enhance green initiatives.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

7.4 Wetland Conservation

7.4.1 Creation of Mangrove Conservation Centre at Pichavaram in Cuddalore District

The Pichavaram Mangrove Forest is India's second-largest mangrove ecosystem. A State-of-the-Art Mangrove Conservation Centre is planned to be set up which will support sustainable mangrove conservation, local livelihoods and community engagement.

7.4.2 Preparation of wetlands ecosystem health cards

65 wetlands in Tamil Nadu underwent a comprehensive condition assessment covering hydrology, biology, ecology and Green House Gas profiles. The study provides a baseline for future monitoring of hydrological, soil and ecological changes.

7.4.3 Restoration of degraded coastal wetlands focusing on seagrass meadows in Gulf of Mannar, Tamil Nadu

Seagrasses are highly productive coastal wetlands that provide habitat for fisheries, marine reptiles and mammals, while acting as powerful carbon sinks—sequestering "blue carbon" up to 35 times faster than tropical rainforests. Under the Tamil Nadu Wetlands Mission, in collaboration with SDMRI, one acre of degraded seagrass meadows in the Gulf of Mannar near Koswari Island was restored.

7.4.4 Waste Audit study and SOP development for cleanup drives

The Waste Audit study and SOP development for cleanup drives in 10 wetlands has been initiated and the work has been successfully completed.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

7.4.5 Preparation of brief documents and ecosystem health cards for 120 wetlands

The work for preparation of brief documents and ecosystem health cards for 120 wetlands, along with the identification of ecologically significant wetlands outside protected areas in Tamil Nadu, has been initiated.

7.5 Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission

The TN-SHORE project promotes coastal resilience and sustainable marine resource use through a multi-sectoral approach, integrating ecological, socio-economic and infrastructural goals. It supports a circular blue economy, local livelihoods and capacity building.

7.5.1 Enhance Coastal Biodiversity

This component of the TN-SHORE project aims to strengthen institutional capacity for the comprehensive conservation of coastal and

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

marine biodiversity. Key initiatives under this component include:

- Biodiversity Conservation Park at Kadambur, Chengalpattu District.
- Sea Turtle Conservation Centres at Chennai and Nagapattinam.
- International Dugong Conservation Centre at Manora, Thanjavur District.
- International Bird Centre at Marakkanam, Villupuram District.
- Conservation and Restoration of Coastal Wetlands.

These centres and programs are designed to support species protection, habitat restoration, research, awareness generation and community engagement along Tamil Nadu’s coastline.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

7.5.2 Coastal Protection

This TN-SHORE project component focuses on coastal protection using an Ecosystem-based Approach (EbA) and green infrastructure (living shorelines) emphasizing mangrove and seagrass restoration.

This approach enhances ecosystem services and supports carbon credit trading for climate-resilient, sustainable coastal management.

7.5.3 Improving livelihoods

This TN-SHORE project component enhances livelihoods by promoting sustainable opportunities for coastal communities, linking conservation with socio-economic development.

8. Forest Research

The Forest Research and Education Wing is a century-old institution with a rich history and

numerous achievements credited to the dedication of its officers and staff.

8.1 Forest Research Wing

Forest research in Tamil Nadu began in 1918, with the first Annual Research Report in 1919–1920. The Research Circle (Chennai) and Forest Research Wing which celebrated 100 years in 2018, now operates five divisional Head Quartres and 52 centres across seven agro-climatic zones, studying ecosystems, biodiversity, conservation and socio-economics.

- Forest research began in **1918** with the first Annual Research Report in **1919-20**; the Research Wing marked its centenary in **2018** and now runs 52 centres across seven agro-climatic zones.

Key achievements include seed and clonal orchards, identification of over 1,600 Candidate Plus Trees and propagation of fast-growing economically important species, providing scientific knowledge to support sustainable forest management and policy-making.

- Research has identified over 1,600 Candidate Plus Trees for seed and clonal orchards.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

8.2 Forest Education Wing / Tamil Nadu Forest Academy

Tamil Nadu Forest Academy (TNFA) was established in 1912 as the Madras Forest College by Thiru. F.A. Lodge, Conservator of Forests, Coimbatore.

- The Tamil Nadu Forest Academy began in **1912** as the Madras Forest College, founded by F.A. Lodge, Conservator of Forests, Coimbatore.

The Tamil Nadu Forestry Training College at Vaigai Dam, under TNFA, was started in 1961 as an Integrated Forestry Training School for Foresters and Forest Guards. It was upgraded in 1987 as Tamil Nadu Forestry College and renamed as Tamil Nadu Forestry Training College in 2005.

- The Forestry Training College at Vaigai Dam started in **1961**, was upgraded in **1987** and renamed in **2005**.

9. Forest Institutions

9.1 Arignar Anna Zoological Park (AAZP), Vandalur

Arignar Anna Zoological Park established in 1855 and relocated to Vandalur in 1985, is India's oldest and largest zoo, spread over 602 ha.

- Arignar Anna Zoological Park, established 1855 and moved to Vandalur in **1985**, is India's oldest and largest zoo - 602 hectares, about 20 lakh visitors a year.

It features naturalistic enclosures, attracts around 20 lakh visitors annually and generates about Rs.28 crore per year.

The park, ranked first among large Indian zoos with an 83% score in the 2022 Management Effectiveness Evaluation, houses 1,664 animals across 137 species. A centre of excellence for ex-situ conservation, it coordinates Lion-Tailed Macaque and Nilgiri Langur programmes and participates in breeding initiatives for Bengal Tigers, Indian Gaur, Giant Squirrels and Wild Dogs.

- The zoo houses 1,664 animals of 137 species and ranked first among large Indian zoos with 83% in the **2022** Management Effectiveness Evaluation.

Recent Initiatives

Accessibility for differently-abled visitors was improved and visitor movement is facilitated by 35 battery-operated and three air-conditioned safari vehicles. Ongoing renovations include animal enclosures and visitor amenities. Over 95% of tickets are now sold digitally via kiosks

and QR codes and animal exchange proposals with other zoos are in progress.

Zoo Veterinary Hospital

The Zoo Veterinary Hospital (ZVH) at Arignar Anna Zoological Park ensures the health and welfare of zoo animals. Staffed by one Veterinary Officer and two Veterinary Assistant Surgeons, the two-floor facility includes an X-ray unit, small animal operation theatre, in-patient and quarantine wards, pharmacy, sterilization room, neonatal clinic, veterinary lab and kitchen, post-mortem and post-operative care units and an incinerator. Large and small animal ambulances are available.

9.2 Advanced Institute for Wildlife Conservation (AIWC)

The Advanced Institute for Wildlife Conservation (AIWC), integrates research, conservation and wildlife law enforcement. It has

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

six specialized centres covering Wildlife Forensics, Animal Care, Conservation Education, Ecology, Genetics and Species Survival. It is the first Southern Indian institution designated as a 'Government Scientific Expert' under BNSS.

- The Advanced Institute for Wildlife Conservation is the first institution in southern India designated a 'Government Scientific Expert' under the **BNSS**, with six centres including Wildlife Forensics.

9.3 Tamil Nadu Forest and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (TNFWCCB)

The Tamil Nadu Forest and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (TNFWCCB), a pioneering initiative in India, was established to detect and prevent organized forest and wildlife crimes. It is Headquartered in Chennai with a Director as its Head and has four zonal offices (Chennai, Coimbatore, Madurai, Ramanathapuram) and nine forest stations with 100 staffs to carry out field works.

Since inception, the Bureau has effectively enforced the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 (Amended 2022), registering 732 cases upto

- The Tamil Nadu Forest and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau - a first of its kind in India - had registered 732 cases up to June **2026**, covering tiger parts, ivory, pangolin scales and sea cucumbers.

June 2026, including illegal trade in tiger parts, elephant tusks and ivory, marine shells, pangolin scales, sea cucumbers, Alexandrine parakeets and mongoose hair brushes.

TNFWCCB combats illegal wildlife trade—including tiger, elephant, pangolin, sea cucumber, sandalwood, timber and mongoose hair products—while conducting public awareness and capacity-building programs to strengthen wildlife crime intelligence, investigation and protection across Tamil Nadu.

9.4 Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve Trust (GOMBRT)

The Gulf of Mannar, on India’s southeastern coast, is a biodiversity-rich marine ecosystem. The Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve Trust (GOMBRT) promotes coordinated efforts to conserve marine biodiversity while supporting the livelihoods of coastal communities.

10. Statutory Bodies

10.1 Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Board

While a varied biodiversity ranging from microbes to large mammals supports food security and livelihoods, it also faces threats from human activity, climate change and over exploitation. India joined the Convention on Biological Diversity in 1994 and enacted the Biological Diversity Act (BDA) in 2002 and framed rules in 2004.

India joined the Convention on Biological Diversity in **1994**, enacted the Biological Diversity Act in **2002** and framed rules in **2004**; the Board now works to the **2023** Amendment Act.

The Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Board and Government implement the BDA (Amendment Act, 2023) and State Biodiversity Rules, strengthening community participation, capacity-building and sustainable management of the State's biological resources.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

10.2 Zoo Authority of Tamil Nadu

The Zoo Authority of Tamil Nadu (ZAT), was established on 03.12.2004 under section 38-H of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 and registered as a society which oversees the effective management of State zoos. Zoos under ZAT include Arignar Anna Zoological Park (Vandalur), Guindy Children's Park (Chennai), Kurumbapatti Zoological Park (Salem) and Amirthi Zoo (Vellore).

The Zoo Authority of Tamil Nadu (ZAT) oversees all State zoos, ensuring compliance with Central Zoo Authority standards for animal care, management and statutory requirements. It promotes modernization, provides financial and technical support, facilitates animal exchanges, encourages research and education and coordinates emergency preparedness.

Through these efforts, ZAT advances animal welfare, conservation education and sustainable zoo management in Tamil Nadu.

10.3 Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (TN CAMPA)

The Tamil Nadu Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (TN CAMPA), established under the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act, 2016 and Rules, 2018 promotes compensatory afforestation using the net present value of forest land diverted for non-forestry purposes.

TN CAMPA focuses on forest regeneration and capacity-building, including training forest officials at all levels, chaired by the Hon'ble Chief Minister, implements and monitors funded activities, ensuring timely, efficient and transparent use of resources to mitigate the impact of forest land diversion.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

10.4 State Board for Wildlife

The Tamil Nadu State Wildlife Board, established under Section 6 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, is chaired by the Hon'ble Chief Minister and includes 3 Legislative Assembly Members, 14 official members and 13 non-official members. It advises the Government on policies, measures for the protection and conservation of wildlife and specified plants. A Standing Committee of the Board was formed to enhance quick decision-making and implementation of wildlife conservation initiatives in the State.

10.5 Tamil Nadu State Wetland Authority

The Tamil Nadu State Wetland Authority (TNSWA), constituted under the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017 is chaired by the Hon'ble Minister (Forests) with the Chief Secretary as Vice-Chairperson. Its members include the Secretaries and

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

Senior official from the line departments, boards and other statutory authorities and few expert members.

District-Level Wetlands Management Committees have been reconstituted to coordinate departmental efforts for effective wetland conservation and management.

11. FOREST CORPORATIONS

11.1 Tamil Nadu Forest Plantation Corporation Limited

Tamil Nadu Forest Plantation Corporation Limited (TAFCORN), established on 13 June 1974 and headquartered in Trichy, raises, maintains, and harvests forest plantations on a sustained-yield basis to meet commercial demands, primarily for the paper industry. The Government leased 71,539.55 ha. of Reserved Forest land to TAFCORN, with lease rent now calculated at 30% of annual sales turnover

- **TAFCORN**, established 13 June **1974** at Trichy, holds 71,539.55 ha of leased Reserved Forest, with lease rent at 30% of annual sales turnover since **1996-97**.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

since 1996–1997. The company has an authorized share capital of Rs.10 crore and a paid-up capital of Rs.5.64 crores.

11.2 Tamil Nadu Tea Plantation Corporation Limited (TANTEA)

The Government of Tamil Nadu established the Government Tea Project in the Nilgiris in 1968 to rehabilitate Sri Lanka repatriates under the Shastri-Sirimavo Pact (1964). TANTEA Corporation, registered under the Companies Act in 1975, has an authorized share capital of Rs.25 crores and paid-up capital of Rs.14.96 crore, wholly owned by the Government and provides employment through tea estate operations.

- **TANTEA** grew from the Government Tea Project started in the Nilgiris in **1968** to rehabilitate Sri Lankan repatriates under the Shastri-Sirimavo Pact of **1964**; it was registered as a company in **1975**.

Of the total planted area of 3,376.83 ha, harvesting occurs over 2,848.73 ha, with non-operational areas mainly in the Lawson Division. TANTEA manages eight divisions:

- **TANTEA** runs eight divisions and six tea factories with a combined installed capacity of 12.75 million kg of made tea.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

Coonoor, Kothagiri, Pandiar, Cherambady, Cherangode, Nelliyalam, Naduvattam and Lawson.

Sl. No.	Division	Operational area (ha.)
1.	Coonoor	144.73
2.	Kothagiri	126.61
3.	Naduvattam	303.06
4.	Pandiar	624.13
5.	Cherambady	353.07
6.	Cherangode	494.54
7.	Nelliyalam	335.76
8.	Lawson	466.83
	Total	**2848.73**

The following are the 6 tea factories of TANTEA.

Sl. No.	Name of the factory	Year of establishment	Installed capacity (in million kg of made tea)
1.	Cherangode	28.01.1978	2.25
2.	Tiger Hill	03.05.1980	1.50
3.	Pandiar	30.09.1988	2.25
4.	Nelliyalam	03.08.1995	2.25
5.	Ryan	21.10.2001	3.00
6.	Quinshola	08.12.1994	1.50
Total			**12.75**

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

TANTEA has initiated measures to improve GTL quality and factory performance, aiming to enhance tea quality and increase revenue.

11.3 Arasu Rubber Corporation

Arasu Rubber Corporation was likewise created to rehabilitate Sri Lankan repatriates skilled in rubber cultivation.

To rehabilitate Sri Lankan repatriates skilled in rubber cultivation, the Government of Tamil Nadu established the Government Rubber Plantation in Kanyakumari in 1961 over 4,785.70 ha. In 1984, the plantation was corporatized as Arasu Rubber Corporation Limited, registered under the Companies Act, 1956 on 01.08.1984.

- **Authorized & Paid-up Capital:** Rs.13.07 crore (held largely by the Hon'ble Governor of Tamil Nadu)
- **Current Operational Area:** 3,573.025 ha (after returning unsuitable areas to Forest Department)
- **Employment:** 900 workers

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

11.4 Tamil Nadu Wilderness Experiences Corporation

Tamil Nadu Wilderness Experiences Corporation (TNWEC), incorporated under the Companies Act, 2013, promotes ecotourism across the State through partnerships with local communities and private enterprises. It showcases "Enchanting Tamil Nadu," highlighting the state's diverse geography, rich biodiversity and cultural heritage, while focusing on conservation awareness and livelihood enhancement.

Through its "Trek Tamil Nadu" initiative, TNWEC manages responsible trekking in forest and wildlife areas with organized trails, online booking and payment facilities to ensure eco-conscious tourism.

Forest trekking is regulated under the Tamil Nadu Forest and Wildlife Areas (Regulation

of Trekking) Rules, 2018, with routes classified as Easy, Moderate and Tough and fees collected supports forest and ecotourism development.

During the past 18 operational months since implementation, the programme has achieved notable scale and inclusivity, successfully guiding more than 36,500 trekkers across Tamil Nadu's diverse landscapes. The demographic profile comprising over 12,000 women, 2,000 students and more than 200 international visitors reflects the growing interest in adventure tourism across diverse age groups and backgrounds. Significantly, two thirds of the revenue generated under the scheme has been channelled back to local communities, thereby reinforcing equitable benefit sharing and sustainable livelihood creation.

The Wilderness Experiences Corporation has identified 45 trekking routes in an organised and

systematic manner with provisions for online booking and payments.

12. Special Initiatives and Achievements

12.1 State Bird Authority

The Government of Tamil Nadu is a pioneer in bird conservation, with 18 Bird Sanctuaries. To further strengthen efforts, a State Bird Authority has been constituted to undertake the following key tasks:

1. **Integrated Management Plans** – Prepare comprehensive management plans for all bird sanctuaries aimed at improving nesting conditions and implementing other conservation measures.

2. **Mapping and Identification** – Map locations across Tamil Nadu frequented by native and migratory birds to identify potential new protected areas.

3. **Restoration and Habitat Management** – Review and restore bird sanctuaries by removing invasive species, supporting plantation of suitable trees and enhancing overall habitat quality.

4. **Visitor Facilities and Education** – Assess and improve facilities for visitors, including bird watching infrastructure, guided walks, handbooks, reading materials and interpretive displays about local bird species.

5. **Community-based Eco-tourism** – Promote eco-tourism with local communities by training them as guides and building their capacity to serve as conservation champions.

The Government of Tamil Nadu is actively working to protect the State's bird biodiversity, identifying important bird areas and potential

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

sites for designation as bird sanctuaries, conservation reserves or community reserves.

12.2 Conservation Authority of Pallikaranai Marshland

The Conservation Authority of Pallikaranai Marshland was established to ensure effective management and utilization of State and Central funds.

It coordinates departments such as Finance, Environment, Tourism, Water Resources and Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board serving as the apex technical advisory body for the marshland and other wetlands in Chennai, Kancheepuram and Tiruvallur Districts, guiding their conservation, management and sustainable use.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

12.3 Vulture Conservation

Vultures, as nature's scavengers are vital for ecological balance and environmental cleanliness. To conserve them, the Government of Tamil Nadu has formed a State-Level Committee for Vulture Conservation and implemented measures such as periodic population monitoring and regulation of harmful veterinary drugs. Synchronized population surveys have been conducted across Tamil Nadu and neighbouring regions of Keralam and Karnataka with the latest assessment in March 2026.

12.4 Slender Loris Conservation

The Slender Loris is a small, nocturnal mammal listed under Schedule-I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. It is primarily found in Kadavur forests in the Eastern Ghats specifically in the Dindigul Forest Division

(Dindigul District) and Karur Division (Karur District).

12.5 Turtle Conservation

Tamil Nadu's 1,076 km coastline stretches from Pulicat Lake to Cape Comorin, covering 14 coastal districts along the Bay of Bengal, Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea. Sea turtles as flagship species, support habitats including coral reefs, seagrass meadows, open seas and sandy beaches, playing a key role in maintaining marine ecosystem balance and biodiversity.

12.6 Dugong Conservation

The endangered Dugong or Sea Cow, inhabits the Gulf of Mannar and Palk Bay and is threatened by pollution and seagrass habitat loss. To protect it, a 448.34 sq.km Dugong Marine Conservation Reserve has been established in Palk Bay. A Dugong Conservation Centre is being set up

under the TN-SHORE Annual Action Plan, will strengthen conservation and research efforts for conserving this vulnerable species.

12.7 Synchronized Bird Census

Birds, as key indicators of ecosystem health are monitored through Tamil Nadu's synchronized Bird Census across over 2,000 wetland and terrestrial sites. This long-term initiative records species presence, assesses habitats, identifies threats and informs conservation strategies. The program provides critical data on bird distribution, behaviour and abundance to guide long-term conservation.

12.8 AI Surveillance System

The Coimbatore Forest Division (693.48 km^2) in the Western Ghats has seen a rise in Human-Elephant Conflict (HEC) due to growing interactions with humans, corridor encroachment, agriculture and infrastructure. Since the

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

introduction of AI in surveillance in 2024, no elephant deaths due to train collisions in Madukkarai have occurred, while the system provides valuable insights into elephant movement, behaviour and morphology for long-term conservation planning.

12.9 Modernization of Forest Force

The Government of Tamil Nadu has sanctioned a special scheme to modernize the Forest Force and strengthen protection, management and research. Through this scheme, Forest personnel in Tamil Nadu are provided arms and ammunition as per Forest Codal provisions. Rising forest offences and organized poaching have created an urgent need for modern lethal, non-lethal and animal-darting weapons.

Personnel routinely conduct boundary patrolling, combing operations, wildlife census, night patrols, human–wildlife conflict

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

management and confront armed offenders, making weapon upgrades essential. To strengthen enforcement, Tamil Nadu Forest and Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (TNFWCCB) has been established.

12.10 Marine Elite Force

The Tamil Nadu Forest Department has formed a Marine Elite Force with two units to protect marine biodiversity and prevent poaching in the Gulf of Mannar and Palk Bay. Each unit is equipped with deep-water boats, GPS, wireless communication, diving and snorkelling gear and kayaks. Twelve local youth serve as Marine Watchers, trained in boat handling, engine technology, lifeguarding, diving, intelligence gathering and patrolling, working alongside the Coast Guard, Marine Police and WCCB wing, led by an Assistant Conservator of Forests with two Range Officers and two Foresters, the force uses

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

field guides to identify protected species. As of 27.07.2026, a total of 103 cases have been detected, comprising 17 cases in Chennai, 44 cases in Ramanathapuram Unit I and 42 cases in Unit II.

12.11 Tamil Nadu State Forest Fire Control Centre

The Tamil Nadu State Forest Fire Control Centre (TNSFFCC) serves as the State's central hub for forest fire monitoring and management. Using advanced fire detection systems, GIS dashboards and real-time data, it coordinates prevention, early warning and rapid response with Forest Survey of India, State Disaster Management Authority and National Disaster Management Authority.

To decentralize operations, 34 District Forest Fire Control Centres were set up in high-risk districts, equipped with modern tools,

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

GIS systems and trained personnel. TN Forest Fire Management Information System (TNFFMIS) enables real-time reporting, monitoring and fire trend analysis.

12.12 Forest Fire recognized as a disaster under SDRF

The Government of Tamil Nadu has recognized forest fires as a disaster and funds are allotted. This fund is utilized for the purchase of advanced firefighting equipment, procurement of forest fire response vehicles and for strengthening wireless communication.

12.13 Project Nilgiri Tahr

The Nilgiri Tahr (Varayadu) is the State animal of Tamil Nadu and is an endangered endemic ungulate. Project Nilgiri Tahr with components including synchronized surveys, radio collaring, shola grassland restoration, disease diagnostics, reintroduction, ecotourism and

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

conservation education has been set up. October 7th has been declared Nilgiri Tahr Day in memory of E.R.C. Davidar, a pioneer in Nilgiri Tahr conservation. These initiatives integrate scientific research, habitat restoration and public outreach to ensure the long-term conservation of the Nilgiri Tahr.

12.14 Elephant Conservation Measures

Tamil Nadu, home to a significant population of Asian Elephants and contiguous habitat connectivity with Kerala and Karnataka has a rich heritage in elephant conservation. Key initiatives by the Government of Tamil Nadu towards elephant conservation include:

1. **Elephant Camps Upgradation** – An Elephant camp has been established at Sadivayal (Coimbatore) and existing elephant camps at Kozhikamuthi and Theppakkadu have been upgraded.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

2. **Mahout and Cavadies Accommodation** – New Housing facilities have been provided to 91 traditional Mahouts and Cavadies.

3. **Elephant Corridors** – Two committees have been constituted to identify and consolidate viable elephant corridors to ensure free movement across elephant habitats. Three corridors have been notified in Krishnagiri District.

4. **Wildlife Transit and Treatment Centre (WTTC), Pethikuttai –** This facility has been created in Coimbatore District to treat rescued, injured, abandoned wildlife and ensure smooth rewilding into the forests in the State.

12.15 Power Fence Rules

The Tamil Nadu Government notified the Tamil Nadu Power Fences (Registration and

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

Regulation) Rules allowing solar and power fences to protect crops from wildlife. These Rules ensure regulated fencing, preventing illegal installations and reducing electrocution of wildlife.

12.16 Management of Captive Elephants and Orphaned Elephant Calves

Elephant camps in Tamil Nadu, managed for over a century by mahouts and cavadies from Nilgiris and Anamalai's tribal communities, showcase a strong caretaker–elephant bond, serving as a national and international model. The manner in which orphaned elephants need to be managed if taken into captivity are codified in a Standard Operating Procedure on Orphaned Elephant Calf Management.

12.17 Wild Pig Menace – Guidelines

To control wild pig damage and address farmers' grievances, the Government of Tamil Nadu issued Wild Pig Management

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

Guidelines. Areas along forest fringes have been categorized into different zones with tailored management measures for each zone.,

ZONE - A	***(Up to 1 km from the reserve forest)*** Hunting of wild pigs is not permitted in the area
ZONE – B	(***Above 1 km to 3 km from the reserve forest)*** Hunting of wild pigs is not permitted in the area. Capture and safe release of wild pigs into dense forest should be ensured
ZONE –C	(***Above 3 km from the reserve forest***) Hunting of wild pigs is permitted in the area. Non forest area could also be considered as zone–C and action may be taken for hunting of problematic wild pigs.

All District Forest Officers, Deputy Directors and Wildlife Wardens have to form committees by including a Forester, Village Administrative Officer and Panchayat President / Member to address wild pig-related crop damage. The committee inspects conflict areas and recommends either

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

farmer compensation or if necessary controlled shooting with approval granted to the jurisdictional Forest Range Officer based on the zone and recommendations by the District Forest Officer concerned.

12.18 New areas under Forest Notification

12,818.77 hectares across 86 forest blocks have been declared as Reserved Forests under Section 16 of the Tamil Nadu Forest Act, 1882 in the recent past.

12.19 Introduction of section 16A in Tamil Nadu Forest Act, 1882

As per Tamil Nadu Government Gazette No. 201 dated 08.05.2019, Section 16A was added to the Tamil Nadu Forest Act, 1882, allowing Gudalur Janmam lands to be notified directly as Reserved Forests. A total of 677.03 hectares across 17 forest blocks have been notified under this provision.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

12.20 Recognition of Rights under Forest Rights Act, 2006

The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 recognizes forest rights for Scheduled Tribes and then traditional forest dwellers residing in forests for at least three generations. To date, 21,742 individual claims covering 8,890.1634 ha and 763 community rights claims over 13,863.34 ha have been granted for collection, use and sale of minor forest produce under Section 3(1). Additionally, 292.37 ha have been allocated under Section 3(2) for community development projects such as roads, schools, drinking water, community halls, ration shops and electricity.

12.21 Rationalization of Functioning of Eco-Development Committees (EDCs)

Eco Development Committees (EDCs) are community-based organizations supporting

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

conservation and sustainable development in protected areas. Tamil Nadu has 955 EDCs under the Forest Department, promoting ecotourism, developing infrastructure and guiding visitors to benefit both communities and the environment. Their accounts have been audited, user fee collection digitized and regulation strengthened through the State Forest Development Agency.

12.22 Tamil Nadu Policy on Invasive Plants and Ecological Restoration Policy (TNPIPER)

Tamil Nadu is the first State in India to adopt a dedicated policy for invasive plant management and habitat restoration, focusing on species control, legal frameworks, awareness, ecological restoration, research, partnerships and alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals. The policy seeks to identify invasive species, prevent their spread and implement effective control and

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

eradication measures across terrestrial ecosystems.

12.23 Remodeling of Guindy Children's Park

Guindy Children's Park was remodeled into Guindy Nature's Park at a cost of Rs.20 crores. Since then, it has welcomed 6,71,594 visitors, generated Rs.2.66 crores in revenue and promotes nature awareness and public support for forest and wildlife conservation.

13. Forest Revenue

13.1. Major Forest Produce

Sandalwood trees and sandalwood sale in Tamil Nadu

Approximately 3 lakh ha. of forests in the Western and Eastern Ghats naturally host sandalwood trees. Sales are conducted through depots at Tirupattur, Salem, and Sathyamangalam with retail operations streamlined to manage limited supplies.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

820 kg of sandalwood were supplied to nine Tamil Nadu temples under the HR&CE Department at Rs.3.42 crore and 2,250 kg sandalwood to major temples in other states (Puri Jagannath, Kasi Viswanath, Badrinath, Kedarnath) at Rs.7.21 crore.

Red Sanders is found mainly in Chengalpattu, Tiruvallur, Dharmapuri and Vellore. They are sold through tender-cum-global e-auction. Government of India permits annual exports from artificially propagated Red Sanders and one-time export from confiscated stocks. Following Tamil Nadu Government orders, 299.732 MT were sold via global e-auction and earned around Rs.63.70 crore. Guidelines for extraction, possession and transport of Red Sanders from Patta lands have been issued and are available on the Forest Department website.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

13.2 Minor Forest Produce (MFP)

Tribal communities collect Minor Forest Produce (MFP) such as tamarind, gallnut, nelli, lemon and ilavam free of cost through Village Forest Committees supporting livelihoods and forest conservation.

14. Human Resource Management

14.1 Strength and Composition: The Department has 9,712 sanctioned posts, with about 65% serving as frontline uniformed staff. Currently, 1,904 posts are vacant and are being filled through promotions, transfers and direct recruitment.

14.2 Mentoring and Performance: Senior officers provide continuous mentoring, monitoring and skill development to maintain high performance standards.

14.3 Training and Capacity Building: In-service training being imparted under the TBGPCCR and Modernization of Forest Force schemes. Key institutions providing training include the Tamil Nadu Forest Academy (Coimbatore), Tamil Nadu Forestry Training College (Vaigai Dam) and Advanced Institute for Wildlife Conservation (Chennai).

14.4 Modern Workforce Management:

14.4.1 Online Transfer Portal: Integrates smartcards capturing employee profiles and service history for optimized deployment.

14.4.2 Compassionate Ground Appointments: Dependents of deceased or missing government servants are appointed to relieve financial distress in the family.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

14.4.3 Leadership in Environment Conservation:

Tamil Nadu continues to lead in forestry initiatives with a focus on community participation, multi-sectoral collaboration and modern management practices to ensure environmental security.

15. Conclusion

Forests are essential for ecosystem balance, biodiversity conservation and for providing vital resources like clean air and water. While these ecosystems regulate climate and support livelihoods, they are facing increasing pressure from urbanization and over exploitation. Conservation efforts have to focus on protecting biodiversity, enhancing carbon sequestration and promoting sustainable resource use. Strengthening local community participation is imperative in the sustainable management of forests. The Government will focus on climate

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80

resilient policies which will promote conservation and climate change mitigation to ensure a sustainable green future through healthy and resilient forests.

R.V. RANJITHKUMAR
MINISTER FOR FORESTS

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80



Meeting with District Collectors and Forest Officials was held on 30.06.2026 at Secretariat under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.

1



13th Board Meeting of the Tamil Nadu Bio-Diversity Board (TNBB) was held on 21.08.2026 under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister for Forests.



Hon'ble Minister For Forest Department Flagged off the Patrolling Vehicles issued to Frontline staff at Guindy Children's Park, Chennai.

3



Hon'ble Minister For Forest Department inspected fire arms issued to frontline staff at Guindy Children's Park, Chennai.

ESSAAR Academy Full study notes: essaaracademy.in/policy-notes/forests · Daily TNPSC tests: essaaracademy.in/mission-80



Review Meeting regarding the Schemes implemented through Forest Department was held under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister for Forest Department at Secretariat.

5

Printed by Govt. Central Press, Chennai - 600 001.