



Guidelines for Formation and Functioning of Village Mangrove Council

TN SHORE PROJECT

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>Sl.No.</i>	<i>Abbreviation</i>	<i>Full Form</i>
1	ATR	Action Taken Report
2	CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
3	DFO	District Forest Officer
4	EC	Executive Committee
5	GIS	Geographic Information System
6	GOMBRT	Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve Trust
7	IEC	Information, Education and Communication
8	IGA	Income Generating Activity
9	JFM	Joint Forest Management
10	KPI	Key Performance Indicator
11	MIS	Management Information System
12	MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
13	MGNREGS	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
14	MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
15	NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
16	NRLM	National Rural Livelihood Mission
17	NWFP	Non-Wood Forest Produce
18	PAD	Project Appraisal Document
19	PEA	Project Executing Agency
20	PDO	Project Development Objective
21	PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
22	SC/ST	Scheduled Caste / Scheduled Tribe
23	SHG	Self-Help Group

<i>Sl.No.</i>	<i>Abbreviation</i>	<i>Full Form</i>
24	SPV	Special Purpose Vehicle
25	tCO ₂ e	Tonnes of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
26	TN-SHORE	Tamil Nadu Sustainably Harnessing Ocean Resources and Blue Economy
27	VFC	Village Forest Committee
28	VMC	Village Mangrove Council
29	WLW	Wildlife Warden

LIST OF ANNEXURES

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3	Annexure – 3	Format of Receipt for Membership Fees or Other Income
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GUIDELINES FOR FORMATION & FUNCTIONING OF VILLAGE MANGROVE COUNCILS (VMC) UNDER THE TNSHORE PROJECT

1. INTRODUCTION

The National Forest Policy 1988, National Agroforestry policy 2014 and Tamil Nadu State Forest Policy 2018 emphasizes the protection, conservation, and sustainable management of forest resources through active participation of local communities. Recognizing that the forest-dependent communities are key stakeholders in conservation; the formation of VMC/VFC is committed to involve local communities in protection, restoration of degraded habitats, afforestation, and sustainable forest management.

The Tamil Nadu Sustainably Harnessing Ocean Resources and Blue Economy (TN-SHORE) Project is a major coastal restoration initiative aimed at strengthening coastal resilience, protecting marine biodiversity, restoring mangroves and seascapes, and enhancing livelihoods of coastal communities. The programme is being implemented with an investment of approximately ₹1,675 crore with support from the World Bank and the Government of Tamil Nadu.

Mangrove ecosystems play a critical role in protecting coastal areas from erosion, storm surges, and sea-level rise while supporting fisheries, biodiversity, and carbon sequestration. Community participation is vital for the sustainable management and restoration of mangrove ecosystems.

Village Mangrove Councils (VMCs) under the TNSHORE project are proposed as community-based institutions at the village level to facilitate participatory mangrove conservation, livelihood enhancement, and climate-resilient coastal management. These committees will actively participate in protecting natural areas such as coral reefs, seagrass meadows, mangrove patches and its associates, supporting natural regeneration and plantation activities, preventing forest degradation, and ensuring sustainable use of forest resources.

To achieve this vision of inclusive and sustainable protection and enhancement of natural resources, and strengthening livelihood; the project adopts a comprehensive approach by increasing community incomes through diversification, job creation and enhanced livelihood opportunities for vulnerable populations, particularly women.

2. PURPOSE OF GUIDELINES

These guidelines provide operational and structural framework for the formation and functioning of Village Mangrove Councils (VMCs), under the Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission (TN-SHORE) Project, and define their roles and responsibilities thereby ensuring, transparency, accountability and effective community participation

3. OBJECTIVES OF VILLAGE MANGROVE COUNCILS

The main objectives of VMCs are to:

- Promote restoration of degraded mangrove ecosystems.
- Strengthen coastal resilience to climate change, cyclones, and storm surges.
- Establish institutional mechanisms for community participation in habitat restoration and mangrove conservation.
- Enable transparent governance and equitable benefit sharing.
- Support sustainable livelihood opportunities for coastal communities.
- Facilitate participation in future ecosystem service markets, including blue carbon finance.

4. COVERAGE AND APPLICABILITY

These guidelines apply to coastal villages located near mangrove ecosystems or potential restoration areas in the 14 coastal districts of Tamil Nadu including Chennai, Tiruvallur, Chengalpattu, Villupuram, Cuddalore, Mayiladuthurai, Nagapattinam, Tiruvarur, Thanjavur, Pudukkottai, Ramanathapuram, Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli, and Kanniyakumari.

5. SELECTION OF AREA

- The unit of management under Village Mangrove Council shall be a hamlet, a group of hamlets, or an entire village, depending on coastal resources for the sustainable livelihood.
- The management unit shall include coastal areas, as well as community and private lands (agroforestry), to ensure a cohesive and manageable unit.

- Villages shall be identified based on proximity to mangrove ecosystems, potential for ecological restoration, dependency of local communities on coastal resources, and vulnerability to coastal hazards such as cyclones, erosion, and saline intrusion.

The area covered under each management unit shall be determined by the District/Divisional Forest Officer/Wildlife Warden, in consultation with the local communities

6. FORMATION OF VMC

6.1 Constitution and Legal Status

Legal hierarchy and governance framework is explicitly defined as follows:

- Village Mangrove Councils (VMCs) shall be constituted as independent legal entities registered under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act, 1975. The provisions of the Act shall prevail in matters relating to legal status, governance, financial management, and dispute resolution. The Joint Forest Management (JFM) guidelines shall serve as a guiding framework for participatory resource management, to the extent that they are consistent with the objectives of the TN-SHORE Project and do not conflict with statutory provisions.
- Further, the governance structure delineates the following roles:
 - o *VMC General Body & Executive Committee*: Primary decision-making authority on, planning, implementation, and benefit sharing
 - o *Forest Department*: Technical support, regulatory oversight, & approval of ecological aspects
 - o *TN-SHORE Authorities*: Funding, coordination, monitoring, and policy guidance
- This legal hierarchy and governance framework will ensure that VMCs function as empowered community institutions with legal certainty; while still benefiting from the institutional experience and safeguards of the JFM framework.

6.2 Functioning of VMC

- The councils shall function as community-based coastal ecosystem governance institutions under the TN-SHORE Project framework with delegated authority (as per JFM principle) for mangrove restoration, blue carbon management, shoreline protection by means of Bio shields, climate resilience planning, and sustainable livelihood enhancement.

- The VMC shall be recognized as a community-based natural capital management institution, integrating ecological restoration, coastal disaster preparedness, and ecosystem service valuation.
- The VMC shall operate in coordination with the relevant Government departments including the Forest Department, Fisheries Department, Environment Department, and local bodies.
- Where the VMC has a limited membership base, particularly fewer than 20 members, the scale of investment may be suitably considered in relation to its membership strength and capacity to manage the funds effectively.
- Where feasible, eligible members from neighbouring hamlets may also be brought under the VMC, in accordance with the applicable guidelines, to ensure adequate participation and effective utilisation of available resources.

6.3 Participatory Rural Appraisal

- Community consultations shall be conducted to mobilize villagers and explain the objectives of the TN-SHORE Project.
- The Forester / Ranger / District Forest Officer / Divisional Forest Officer / Wildlife Warden concerned shall explain the concept and objectives of VMC to the villagers and motivate maximum participation in the Committee.
- Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methods may be used to identify local priorities and ecological restoration needs.
- Based on the PRA, the priority thrust areas and management interventions of the Management Unit shall be finalized in consultation with the Committee members.

6.4 Formation of VMC

- In each identified Management Unit, a representative body of the local community namely Village Mangrove Council (VMC) shall be constituted.
- The VMC shall be actively involved in planning, execution of works, protection, harvesting, and benefit sharing within the management unit, with special emphasis on degraded habitat, mangrove areas and their associates.
- The concerned Forester/Range Officer shall initiate and facilitate the process of formation of the VMC.

6.5 Composition & Membership

- Every adult member Male/ Female of the household living in the chosen area, dependant on coastal & marine resources or allied activities is entitled to become a member of the VMC. The Committee shall have one male and one female member from each household, subject to their willingness to participate.
- Each member shall pay annual, non-refundable subscription of Rs.5/- towards membership, which will operate in the VMC accounts.
- Special efforts shall be made to ensure participation of women, fishermen communities, and other vulnerable groups.
- Active participation of women in mangrove plantation and other activities is strongly encouraged, with a target of at least 30% of employees as women.

6.6 Forms and documents related to membership and registration

The following forms and documents shall be utilized,

- **Membership:**

Every individual willing to enroll with VMC shall be registered using the Membership Form given in Annexure – 1. A Register of all the members of the VMC shall be maintained.

- **Memorandum of Understanding:**

Once VMC is formed, the District Forest Officer/Divisional Forest Officer / Wildlife Warden representing the Forest Department shall enter into an MoU with the VMC in the template attached as Annexure - 2.

- **Receipt book:**

Receipts should be given for membership fee collected as well as for any other money charged from the members by the VMC. A format for the receipts is attached (Annexure - 3).

7. INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

The institutional structure of the VMC shall consist of:

- I. General Body
- II. Executive Committee
- III. Thematic sub-committees (where ever required) – (Eg: Women Sub Committee in EDC)

7.1 General Body

- The General Body shall consist of all registered members of the VMC.
- It shall meet at least twice a year to review progress, approve micro-plans, and review financial statements.

Functions of the General Body

The General Body shall:

- Approve the Annual Action Plan of the VMC.
- Approve the Village Micro Plan and any subsequent revisions.
- Elect the members of the Executive Committee in accordance with these Guidelines.
- Approve the annual financial statements and accounts of the VMC.
- Review and approve the findings of the Social Audit.
- Approve the benefit-sharing mechanism and distribution of benefits in accordance with the approved guidelines.
- Approve the annual budget and expenditure proposals of the VMC.

7.2 Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is entrusted with overseeing the overall operations of the VMC. Its members must be elected prior to the registration of the VMC under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act, 1975. The election of Executive Committee members shall be conducted through a democratic process involving all VMC members.

- The Executive Committee shall be elected by the General Body and consist of 5–15 members including President. At least 50% of members should be women; with mandatory inclusion of one SC/ST member (wherever applicable), one traditional fisher representative, and one youth member between 15 and 29 years**.

*** Ref: Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports*

- Each VMC will elect an "Executive Committee", in such a manner that one hamlet elects at least two members, one of whom is a woman. Each VMC will elect a minimum of 5 (five) and a maximum of 15 (fifteen) members to the Executive Committee. The Village Panchayat members of the management unit will be co-opted as ex-officio members of the Executive Committee (EC). The elected members of EC will elect its President from among themselves, who will also be the ex-officio President of the VMC. The Forest Ranger/ Forester concerned who will be the Member Secretary of the EC, will also facilitate the election process of the members and the President of the EC.

- If necessary, the District Forest Officer/ Divisional Forest Officer / Wildlife Warden concerned may nominate one representative of a Development Department of the Government and one N.G.O. as ex-officio member of EC.
- The term of Executive Committee will be three years or till the completion of the project period. It will meet at least once in a month

***as per The Societies Registration Act, 1976 – Section – 15(4)*

- The EC will be responsible for day-to-day activities of the VMC.
- Constant efforts will be taken by the EC to bring about unanimity in its decisions; however, in case of difference of opinion the decisions of the EC will be taken by, majority vote of the members present (elected members and ex-officio members).
- Decisions of EC to be placed before VMC: The President of the EC will inform the VMC, the decisions taken/activities undertaken by EC.

7.3 Meetings

- The General Body of the VMCs shall meet at least once in 6 months and EC at least once in a month.
- Proceedings of the meetings shall be properly recorded and maintained.

7.4 Roles and responsibilities of Office Bearers

President

- The President shall convene and preside over the meetings of the General Body and the Executive Committee.
- Will sign all documents and agreements on behalf of the VMC
- Along with the Member Secretary, the President shall represent the VMC in all matters relating to coordination, collaboration, and communication with Government Departments, NGOs, local bodies, and other relevant organizations.
- Shall act as a joint signatory for the operation of the VMC bank account and the withdrawal of funds along with Member Secretary.

Members of Executive committee

Each member of the Executive Committee shall exercise the following responsibilities in accordance with the Guidelines:

- **Participate** in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and review of activities undertaken by the Village Mangrove Council (VMC).
- **Recommend** amendments to the VMC Bye-laws for consideration by the General Body.
- **Approve** proposals, action plans, and expenditure placed before the Executive Committee in accordance with the approved financial procedures.
- **Oversee** the maintenance of accounts, records, registers, and community assets of the VMC.
- **Review** the implementation of the Village Micro Plan and recommend corrective measures, wherever necessary.
- **Promote** compliance with the VMC Bye-laws and encourage sustainable management of natural resources.
- **Report** any instances of encroachment, illegal extraction of natural resources, forest fires, pollution, or other violations to the Forest Department or other competent authorities.
- **Support** the Forest Department in community vigilance, awareness generation, and protection of project-supported assets and natural resources.
- **Participate** in meetings, decision-making processes, and monitoring visits, and contribute to the effective functioning of the VMC.
- **Perform** such other functions and exercise such powers as may be assigned by the General Body or delegated by the Forest Department from time to time.

7.5 Mandatory Quorum for Village Mangrove Council (VMC)

The quorum is essential to ensure that decisions are representative, participatory, and legitimate.

i) General Body Quorum:

A minimum of 50% of the total registered members of the VMC shall constitute the quorum for any General Body meeting. Within this, it is recommended that:

- At least one-third (33%) of the members present are women, and
- Adequate representation of vulnerable groups (such as fishermen communities and SC/ST households) should be ensured.

If quorum is not met, the meeting shall be adjourned and reconvened within 7–15 days after due prior notice, where decisions may be taken with the members present.

ii) Executive Committee (EC) Meeting Quorum:

For Executive Committee meetings, the quorum shall be:

- At least 50% of the total EC members, including
- Presence of the President, and at least one-woman member.

iii) Documentation:

- Attendance must be recorded with name/designations, signatures/thumb impressions.
- Quorum compliance should be certified in the meeting minutes.

7.6 Voting Procedure

Decision-making in VMCs should be participatory, transparent, and primarily based on consensus. Voting is to be used only when consensus cannot be reached after adequate discussion.

- *Eligibility to Vote:* All registered members of the VMC General Body have the right to vote, with each member having one vote. Voting must be done in person, and proxy voting is not permitted.
- *Types of Voting:* Voting may be conducted through show of hands or voice vote for routine matters, while secret ballot may be used for elections and sensitive issues such as conflicts or disputes.
- *Majority Requirements:* Any decisions shall be made by simple majority.
 - All decisions shall be taken by simple majority (more than 50%) of members present.
- *Quorum Requirement:* Voting is valid only when the prescribed quorum is met, typically 50% of members for both General Body and Executive Committee meetings.
- *Role of Chairperson:* The President presides over meetings, ensures fair conduct of voting, and has a casting vote in case of a tie.
- *Recording of Voting:* All voting outcomes must be documented in the meeting minutes, including the number of members present, votes cast, and method of voting, while maintaining confidentiality in case of secret ballots.
- *Transparency and Disclosure:* Voting results should be publicly announced during meetings and displayed in community spaces to ensure transparency.

- *Conflict of Interest:* Members with personal or financial interests in a matter must disclose their interest and abstain from voting.
- *Legal Validity:* Decisions taken following proper quorum and voting procedures are legally valid, while those taken without adherence to these norms are considered invalid.
- *Inclusiveness:* Efforts must be made to ensure participation of women, SC/ST communities, and fishermen groups, and decisions affecting these groups should not be taken without their involvement.

7.7 Removal of Executive Committee Members

The VMC can itself decide the procedure for removal of a member due to reasons such as mentioned below,

- Engaging in forest crimes / illegal activities.
- Repeated absence for 3 consecutive meetings of member
- Working against the interests of VMC
- Bankruptcy or mental retardation
- Conviction by Court.

In all such situations, a chance of hearing should be given to the concerned person and notice given before action.

7.8 Filling up of Vacant Position in the Executive Committee

In case any position in the Executive Committee becomes vacant, a special meeting of the VMC will be convened for conducting a new election for filling the position for the remaining time period.

In case the position of ex-officio NGO member becomes vacant, the Executive Committee can pass a resolution nominating a new NGO and inform the General Body. A person nominated from the approved NGO will then take the charge as an ex- officio member.

7.9 Dissolution of Executive Committee

The Executive Committee may be dissolved if

- Financial irregularity
- Persistent non-performance

- Violation of Government Orders
- Misuse of funds

Fresh elections shall be conducted within ninety days.

7.9.1. Procedure dissolution of Executive Committee

1. The District / Divisional Forest Officer / Chief Wildlife Warden shall issue two written notices to the Executive Committee, specifying the deficiencies and providing an opportunity to explain or rectify them within the stipulated period.
2. If the Executive Committee fails to take satisfactory corrective action, the General Body, may, by resolution and after recording reasons in writing, dissolve the Executive Committee.
3. Upon dissolution, the General Body shall authorize the Forest Department to take charge of the records, funds, and assets of the VMC until a new Executive Committee is constituted.
4. Fresh elections to reconstitute the Executive Committee shall be conducted within a reasonable period in accordance with these Bye-laws.

7.10 Management of Assets after Project Completion

5. All assets created or procured under the TN-SHORE Project, whether movable or immovable, shall remain the property of the Government of Tamil Nadu unless otherwise specified by the Government.
6. During the project implementation period, the Village Mangrove Council (VMC) shall act as the custodian of the assets and shall be responsible for their proper use, maintenance, safety, and upkeep.
7. On completion or closure of the TN-SHORE Project, all assets shall be physically verified by the District Forest Officer/Divisional Forest Officer/Wildlife Warden and a final inventory shall be prepared.
8. Based on the nature, condition, and continued utility of the assets, the Government may, through appropriate orders:
 - o transfer the assets to the concerned Village Mangrove Council for continued community use;

- o transfer the assets to the Forest Department or other Government Department, Local Body, or Government institution;
 - o hand over assets to another community institution created under Government programmes;
 - o dispose of unserviceable assets in accordance with the Tamil Nadu's applicable Government procedures.
9. Assets transferred to the Village Mangrove Council shall be used only for community development, coastal conservation, livelihood enhancement, eco-tourism, or other purposes consistent with the objectives of the TN-SHORE Project. Such assets shall not be sold, mortgaged, leased, or transferred without prior approval of the competent Government authority.
 10. The Village Mangrove Council shall continue to maintain an Asset Register and ensure periodic physical verification of all transferred assets.
 11. Where assets generate revenue (such as boats, eco-tourism facilities, nurseries, visitor centres, equipment, etc.), the income shall be credited to the VMC account and utilized only for operation, maintenance, replacement of assets, and approved community development activities as resolved by the Executive Committee and General Body.
 12. A formal Asset Transfer and Handover Certificate shall be executed at the time of project closure, indicating the description, value, condition, location, custodian, and ownership status of each asset.

8. SELF HELP GROUPS (SHG)

The primary objectives of SHGs include promoting savings and credit activities, skill development, income generation, social empowerment, and community development.

- *Legal Framework:* Though the SHGs are independent organizations at the community level, they will be part of VMC under TN-SHORE mainly constituting women SHGs.
- *Structure:* They would typically consist of 10 to 15 members, predominantly women, although men can also be part of SHGs. Members usually belong to similar socio-economic background and may share common interests or livelihood activities.
- *Governance:* SHGs typically operate on a democratic basis, with members electing leadership positions from among themselves (president, secretary, treasurer, and other

committee members) responsible for functions such as finance, record-keeping, and liaison with external agencies. Decision-making within SHGs is often participatory, with all members having a voice in the group's activities and resource allocation.

- *Functions:* SHGs undertake various activities to achieve their objectives, including:
 - o Income Generation
 - o Skill Development and Training
 - o Social Empowerment
 - o Savings and Credit
- *Funding and Support:* Apart from the support from the VMC, the Women Development Corporation in Tamil Nadu has established a standardized procedure to form, nurture and link them with mainstream financial institutions and line departments for revolving funds and welfare programs.

9. MICROPLAN PREPARATION

- Each VMC shall prepare a participatory micro-plan outlining restoration targets, livelihood activities, disaster risk reduction strategies, and monitoring indicators.
- The Member Secretary (MS) shall prepare/ assist in the preparation of the micro-Plan for the management unit, after consultation with the members of Village Mangrove Councils. After preparation, the micro plan will require formal approval of the EC and then the technical approval of District Forest Officer / Divisional Forest Officer / Wildlife Warden concerned after due scrutiny as per the existing laws, JFM guidelines, management plan / working plan.

10. BENEFIT SHARING

The VMC Guidelines define benefits as all sustainable outputs flowing from the management unit, which includes mangrove forests/patches, degraded forests, Government lands, and community lands.

Sharing the sustainable benefits from the mangrove forests/patches, degraded forests, Government lands in concurrence with land owning department and community lands lying within the management unit, with the members of VMC and among them is the most important component of Joint Forest Management. The guiding principle of this benefit sharing will be equitable distribution and sustainable utilization. The beneficiaries will be decided by the EC.

- Suggested allocation may include household benefits, village mangrove development fund, women livelihood fund, and climate resilience fund.
- All Non-Wood Forest Produce (Minor Forest Produce) for domestic consumption/ Bonafide use will be given free of cost to the members of VMC subject to availability and within the ambit of rules and regulations (applicability of sec 29 of WLPA in PAs).
- Sustainable harvest levels and NWFP available in the Management Unit will be decided by District/Divisional Forest Officer/Wildlife Warden through participatory ecological assessment (or Thematic Committee constituted for the purpose) validated by technical experts but approved by the VMC General Body and the sale/disposal of any surplus quantity shall be decided by District/Divisional Forest Officer/Wildlife Warden and the EC.
- The sale proceeds so received will be distributed equitably among the members of the VMC by the EC as per the suggested revenue allocation below:
 - o Household Distribution – 50%
 - o Village Mangrove Development Funds – 25%
 - o Women’s Livelihood Fund – 15%
 - o Climate Resilience Fund – 10%
- Surplus benefits likely to be available from the management unit can be extended to others by the District/ Divisional Forest Officer/Wildlife Warden in consultation with VMC.

11. VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT

The village development under TN-SHORE requires an integrated approach that combines livelihood enhancement, ecosystem restoration, and community infrastructure development to improve socio-economic resilience while conserving fragile coastal ecosystems. The focus should be on strengthening the income base of coastal households- particularly fishermen, women, and vulnerable groups- while simultaneously investing in community assets that enhance quality of life and climate resilience.

11.1 Income Generation Activities

Income generation activities should be diversified, climate-resilient, and aligned with local resource availability, particularly mangrove and coastal ecosystems. The income generation activities (IGA) can be either individual based or group based (SHG). These

activities be either a) Micro-financing or b) Increasing the earning capacity by capacity building. Key activities include but not limiting to the following:

i. Mangrove-Based Livelihoods

- o Crab fattening and mud crab culture
- o Mangrove honey collection and processing
- o Sustainable harvesting of Non-Wood Forest Produce (NWFP)
- o Mangrove nursery raising and plantation works

ii. Fisheries and Allied Activities

- o Value addition (dry fish, pickles, fish processing units)
- o Ornamental fish culture
- o Mariculture (where feasible)
- o Ice storage and cold chain support

iii. Eco-Tourism and Nature-Based Enterprises

- o Community-managed mangrove ecotourism (boat rides, guided tours)
- o Homestays and coastal tourism services
- o Bird watching and interpretation services
- o Sales of local handicrafts and eco-products

iv. Women-Centric Livelihoods

- o Self-Help Group (SHG)-based enterprises
- o Coir, shell crafts, palm leaf products
- o Small-scale food processing units
- o Micro-enterprises supported through revolving funds

v. Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

- o Training in sustainable fisheries, eco-tourism, and value addition
- o Capacity building in financial literacy and enterprise management
- o Linkages with Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation

11.2. Community Development Works

Community development works should focus on infrastructure creation, climate resilience, and improved service delivery. Following activities are encouraged:

i. Coastal Protection and Ecosystem Restoration

- Mangrove plantation and restoration
- Bio-shield development
- Shoreline stabilization measures
- Wetland and Estuary Restoration

ii. Basic Infrastructure Development

- Drinking water facilities
- Sanitation and waste management systems
- Village roads and connectivity
- Solar lighting and renewable energy solutions

iii. Livelihood Infrastructure

- Fish landing centers
- Storage and processing units
- Community halls and training centers
- Market sheds and value chain infrastructure

iv. Disaster Resilience and Climate Adaptation

- Cyclone shelters and early warning systems
- Elevated platforms and flood protection structures

Disaster preparedness training for communities

11.3 Operational Mechanism

Village Mangrove Councils (VMCs) are responsible for preparing micro-plans, identifying priority activities, ensuring equitable benefit sharing, and monitoring project outcomes, while facilitating convergence with government schemes and stakeholder coordination.

- *Selection Criteria:* Each livelihood option should be assessed based on ecological & technical feasibility, economic viability, risk factors, social acceptance, & potential for scaling/ replication.
- *Process of Identification:* Livelihoods should be identified through participatory approaches such as PRA, resource mapping, market analysis, and community validation, and incorporated into VMC micro-plans for implementation.
- *Implementation Mechanism:* Activities should be implemented through VMCs and SHGs with support for capacity building, financial access, market linkages, and convergence with relevant government schemes.

- *Monitoring and Performance Indicators:* Performance should be tracked through indicators such as income enhancement, participation levels, sustainability of practices, livelihood diversification, and strength of market linkages.

Funding for coastal village development shall be mobilized through multiple sources, including TN-SHORE project funds, convergence with government schemes like MGNREGS and NRLM, CSR contributions, and microfinance mechanisms. Opportunities for accessing ecosystem service payments and carbon finance shall also be explored to ensure long-term financial sustainability.

11.3.1 Terms of the Loan Amount:

- Individual – Upto Rs 25,000
- SHG – Upto Rs 2,00,000
- Rate of Interest – Shall be between 5.5% - 12%** per annum as decided by the Executive Committee

***Rate of Interest for Micro Credit either it will be fixed by the VMC or it should be followed by the Government letter (E&F) No:16120 /FR-5/2001-15 Dated:05.03.2003. with the simple interest of 12 % Per Annum. (Annexure 10)*

- Repayment Period – 10 to 12 months for both Individual and SHG
- Repayment Frequency – Monthly
- Grace Period – Maximum 1 month for seasonal activities
- Security – Execution of Bond with Surety as decided by the VMC
- Penalty on default – Penalty shall be levied at the rate of 2% interest
- Loan Repayment Management – Joint Liability Groups shall be formed, following collective responsibility/Group Guarantee mechanism, with a minimum of seven among SHG members, jointly ensuring timely loan repayment and recovery, thereby promoting repayment discipline and mutual support.

11.3.2 Initial-Year Approval Mechanism for Micro-Credit Activities:

- During the initial year of implementation, the DFO shall develop a simplified project proposal format for VMC micro-credit activities.
- Individual project proposals shall be examined and recommended by the DFO and submitted to the Chief Conservator of Forests/Conservator of Forests, as appropriate, for approval.
- The approval process shall ensure that proposed livelihood activities are technically feasible, economically viable, and aligned with the objectives of the VMC.

- The approval mechanism may be reviewed and streamlined based on the experience gained during the first year of implementation.

The application process will involve submission of the loan request form with activity plan to the VMC which will be reviewed by the EC and VMC will pass resolution. Member Secretary will submit to the DISTRICT FOREST OFFICER / DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER / WILDLIFE WARDEN for approval and the amount shall be disbursed via bank transfer.

11.4 Expected Outcomes and Strategic Approach

The integrated approach is expected to enhance household incomes, diversify livelihoods, improve infrastructure, and strengthen resilience to climate change while conserving coastal ecosystems. The strategy emphasizes ecosystem-based development, community participation, and climate adaptation to achieve sustainable and inclusive coastal development.

12. ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

12.1 VMC

- The VMC shall be responsible for mangrove protection, restoration activities, monitoring of ecosystem health, prevention of illegal activities, livelihood promotion, and awareness generation.

12.2 TN-SHORE

- TNSHORE and District PEAs will facilitate training/capacity building and technical assistance.
- It will also ensure coordination with different line departments and other partners of the project for effective implementation of various livelihood activities.
- TNSHORE will ensure timely release of funds to the VMCs through the PEAs that are necessary to implement activities envisaged under the Project.

12.3. Project Executing Agencies

- Implement livelihood, conservation, and eco-development activities
- To prepare and implement Micro-Plans
- Maintain records, account, and submit periodic reports
- To follow community procurement guidelines for procurement related activities
- Manage Revolving Fund operations and loan recovery.

13. TECHNICAL SUPPORT

- DISTRICT FOREST OFFICER / DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER / WILDLIFE WARDEN, Forest Range Officers or Zonal Officers(GOMBRT) may engage NGOs, public, and private entities for technical assistance.
- Support will focus on training and capacity building for project officers, VMC and beneficiary communities.
- Qualified service providers may include:
 - Community-based experts
 - Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation
 - Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women
 - Vazhndhu Kaattuvom State Society
 - Magalir Thittam (MATHI)
 - Private sector experts, firms and NGOs
 - MSME Schemes for Women and Vulnerable Group
 - TBGP
- Payments may be made directly by the Project Executing Agency to engaged entities, ensuring transparency and accountability.

14. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- A Joint Account in the name of the VMC will be opened in a local or nearest bank or post office with the President and Member-Secretary as signatories.
- Dedicated VMC bank accounts must be maintained.
- The President and Member Secretary will together be responsible and accountable to the VMC for all financial transactions.
- The Member Secretary will be specifically responsible for the proper maintenance of accounts and shall have in his/her possession all records relating to finance.
- The records include Cash Book, Accounts Register, Passbook. Cheque Book and a Record of harvest, sale and share of produce to the VMC with a list of beneficiaries.
- Separate register for Revolving fund has to be maintained.
- All transactions shall be strictly through VMC bank-to-bank transfers.
- Cash transactions allowed only below ₹5,000.

- **Mandatory financial records:**
 - o Cash Book & Ledger: For daily transactions.
 - o Vouchers & Utilization Certificates: For expenditure tracking.
 - o Bank Reconciliation Statements: To ensure financial accuracy.
 - o Monthly Reports: Submitted to District PEA for review.
- An annual financial audit of the VMC accounts shall be conducted by an independent third party with findings presented before the VMC General Body and made publicly accessible.
- A quarterly audit inspection of accounts to be carried out by the District Forest Officer / Divisional Forest Officer / Wildlife Warden
- Mandatory annual social audits shall be conducted to ensure transparency.

14.1. Sources of Funds

The Funds shall be maintained as a separate account head, into which the amount will be credited. Funds may include:

- Membership money
- Fund provided by the TN SHORE PROJECT
- Government Schemes, CSR contributions and Community contributions
- Revenue generated from sustainable livelihood activities
- Grants and loans obtained for VMC activities from authorized sources (Grant/ Micro Credit / Revolving Fund).
- Money levied as fines and penalties

14.2 Fund Utilization

The funds created for VMC will be utilized in the following manner:

- i. For maintenance, protection and improvement of the forest/mangrove area managed by them.
- ii. For extending assistance to forest/mangrove forest dependents and poor for alternate employment and poverty alleviation as approved by the Executive Committee and the DISTRICT FOREST OFFICER / DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER / WILDLIFE WARDEN.

- iii. For community asset creation which may be applicable under TNSHORE project activities and approved by Executive Committee.
- iv. For meeting any contingent and ancillary expenditure by the Executive Committee.
- v. Digitalisation and digital payment receipt for livelihood and eco-tourism activities to be assured as far as possible.

The accounts of the Funds will be maintained by the Member-Secretary which will be audited by an independent agency.

15. INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL AUDIT

The annual financial audit of VMCs aims to ensure transparency, accountability, and proper utilization of funds, while detecting irregularities and strengthening institutional credibility, particularly for public and climate finance.

15.1 Scope of Audit & Frequency

- *Scope:* The audit covers all financial transactions, records, fund utilization, procurement processes, and benefit distribution to ensure compliance with guidelines and proper financial management.
- *Internal Audit:* Biannual Internal Audit by a team deputed by DISTRICT FOREST OFFICER / DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER / WILDLIFE WARDEN may be carried out.
- *Frequency & Timeline:* Audits are to be conducted annually for each financial year and completed within 3–6 months after the end of the financial year.
- *Selection of Auditor:* Audits should be conducted by independent Chartered Accountants or empanelled audit firms, selected through a transparent process, with periodic rotation to maintain independence.

15.2 Audit Process

The process includes pre-audit preparation, field verification of records and assets, reconciliation of accounts, compliance checks, and an exit meeting to discuss findings with the VMC.

- *Audit Report:* The auditor prepares a detailed report including financial statements, audit opinion, observations, compliance status, and recommendations.
- *Classification of Observations:* Audit findings are categorized into major, moderate, and minor issues to prioritize corrective actions.

- *Disclosure and Transparency*: Audit reports must be presented to the VMC General Body, shared with authorities, and publicly disclosed to ensure transparency.
- *Action Taken Report (ATR)*: VMCs must prepare and implement corrective actions within 30–60 days based on audit findings, with follow-up monitoring by authorities.

15.3 Institutional Responsibilities

VMCs are responsible for maintaining records and implementing recommendations, while TN-SHORE and the Forest Department facilitate audits and ensure compliance.

- *Financial Controls and Compliance*: Strict adherence to financial procedures, including bank-based transactions, proper authorization, and record maintenance, is required.
- *Integration with Social Audit*: Financial audit findings should be integrated with social audits to enable community validation and oversight.
- *Use of Digital Tools*: Digital systems and MIS should be used for record-keeping, audit reporting, and compliance tracking to improve efficiency.
- *Penalties and Corrective Measures*: Serious irregularities may lead to fund recovery, suspension of powers, reconstitution of VMC, or legal action.

15.4 Expected Outcomes

- The audit system enhances financial discipline, reduces misuse of funds, strengthens governance, and improves readiness for future funding and climate finance opportunities.

16. TRANSPARENCY AND SOCIAL AUDIT

Social Audit is a community-driven mechanism to review the functioning, transparency, and accountability of Village Mangrove Councils (VMCs), ensuring that decisions, fund utilization, and project activities are carried out in an inclusive and responsible manner.

It aims to promote transparency, verify proper use of funds, strengthen community participation, assess ecological and livelihood outcomes, ensure equitable benefit sharing, and identify gaps or grievances for corrective action.

16.1 Scope & Frequency

- *Scope*: It covers institutional functioning, financial management, implementation of mangrove and livelihood activities, benefit distribution, and compliance with guidelines and approved micro-plans.

- *Internal Social Audit*: Internal Social Audit by team deputed by District/Divisional Forest Officer or Wild Life Warden
- *Frequency*: Social Audits should be conducted at least once annually, preferably before financial audits, with additional audits undertaken if required based on complaints or major interventions.

16.2 Social Audit Process

The process should include preparation, community mobilization, verification of records and field activities, public hearings, documentation of findings, and follow-up corrective actions.

- *Pre-Audit Preparation*: This involves forming a Social Audit team, collecting relevant records, and informing the community in advance about the audit schedule.
- *Community Mobilization*: Efforts should be made to ensure broad participation of all sections of the community, particularly women, fisher groups, and marginalized households, through awareness and engagement activities.
- *Verification Process*: Field verification of works, cross-checking records, and validation of benefits received by households should be undertaken to ensure accuracy and authenticity.
- *Public Hearing*: Findings may be presented in an open forum where community members can raise concerns, provide feedback, and seek clarifications.
- *Documentation and Follow-up*: A Social Audit report should be prepared highlighting findings and recommendations, followed by an Action Taken Report to address issues within a specified timeframe.

16.3 Institutional Arrangements

- An independent Social Audit team will be constituted, with clearly defined roles for VMCs and TN-SHORE authorities will ensure transparency and effective implementation.
- The audit will be guided by principles of transparency, participation, accountability, equity, and independence, using tools like PRA, social mapping, surveys, and public disclosures.

16.4 Indicators, Transparency, and Outcomes

- Performance will be assessed through governance, financial, ecological, livelihood, & inclusion indicators, with transparency ensured through public disclosure and grievance mechanisms, ultimately leading to improved accountability, trust, and sustainability of VMC interventions.

17. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPI)

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for TN-SHORE should align with the Project Appraisal Document (PAD) Results Framework, covering Project Development Objective (PDO) indicators, intermediate results, and component-wise outputs to capture ecological, social, and institutional outcomes.

17.1 PDO-Level Indicators

These reflect the overall impact of the project:

- Area of mangroves restored or brought under improved management (hectares)
- Share of employees in mangrove plantations that are women (Percentage)
- Improving livelihoods for natural resource dependent communities- Beneficiaries provided with training support on coastal livelihoods (Number)
- Enhance livelihood benefits in targeted coastal communities
- Increase in coastal protection (reduction in erosion/vulnerability index)
- Number of beneficiaries with improved livelihoods (disaggregated by gender)
- Percentage increase in household income in project areas
- Reduction in climate vulnerability of coastal communities
- Carbon sequestration achieved (tCO₂e)

17.2 Intermediate Results Indicators

- *Ecosystem Restoration Indicators:* Indicators focus on the extent and quality of restoration, such as area under mangrove plantation, survival rates, increase in canopy cover, and restoration of wetlands and estuarine ecosystems.
- *Climate Resilience Indicators:* These assess the project's effectiveness in enhancing resilience through measures like number of villages with micro-plans, area protected by bio-shields, reduction in flooding or salinity intrusion, and establishment of early warning systems.

- *Livelihood Indicators*: KPIs track livelihood improvements through the number of activities supported, beneficiaries engaged, increase in household income, and participation of women and vulnerable groups.
- *Institutional Indicators*: These measure governance and functionality of VMCs, including number of councils formed, frequency of meetings, micro-plan preparation, and conduct of social audits.
- *Financial and Governance Indicators*: Indicators include fund utilization efficiency, number of audited VMCs, timeliness of fund disbursement, and effectiveness of grievance redressal mechanisms.

17.3 Additional Strategic Indicators

To strengthen the framework, the following strategic indicators could also be considered:

- *Biodiversity Indicators*: Increase in fish/crab populations (proxy indicators); Number of species recorded in restored areas; and Improvement in habitat quality indices.
- *Social Inclusion Indicators*: Women in leadership positions (%); Participation of SC/ST and fisher communities; and Number of SHGs engaged in project activities.
- *Disaster Risk Reduction Indicators*: Reduction in economic losses from climate events; Number of households covered under preparedness plans; and Response time during emergencies.
- *Market and Economic Indicators*: Value of products/services generated from livelihoods; Number of market linkages established; and Growth in eco-tourism footfall.
- *Blue Carbon Indicators*: Area under blue carbon accounting; Volume of carbon credits generated (tCO₂e); Revenue generated from carbon markets; and Number of VMCs participating in carbon initiatives.

17.4 Monitoring Mechanism

- Monitoring should involve baseline, midline, and endline assessments, use of GIS and remote sensing, community-based monitoring through VMCs, and third-party evaluations.
- Monitoring should be conducted at village, district, and state levels to track mangrove survival rates, restoration area, livelihood outcomes, and community participation.
- All indicators should be disaggregated by gender, social category, livelihood group, and geography, with periodic reporting (quarterly, annual, or project cycle-based).

Strategic Outcome: A robust KPI framework enables effective monitoring, accountability, and evidence-based decision-making, while supporting project evaluation, scalability, and integration with climate finance mechanisms.

18. MODALITIES FOR DECENTRALIZATION

- *Functional Devolution with Defined Roles:* Decentralization should be achieved by clearly assigning responsibilities to VMCs for planning, implementation, and benefit sharing, while the Forest Department provides technical guidance and regulatory oversight, and TN-SHORE authorities handle funding, overseeing, and monitoring. This ensures community autonomy with necessary safeguards.
- *Tiered Decision-Making Framework:* A three-tier system shall be adopted where routine activities are decided by VMCs; key planning and benefit-sharing decisions are taken jointly with departments; and sensitive or high-value matters will require regulatory approval.
- *Financial Autonomy with Safeguards:* VMCs shall have authority to manage funds through designated bank accounts within defined limits, supported by dual signatories, mandatory audits, proper record-keeping, and social audits to ensure financial discipline and transparency.
- *Participatory Planning with Technical Validation:* Micro-plans shall be prepared by VMCs through participatory approaches and validated by technical authorities within a defined timeframe, ensuring both ownership and technical soundness.
- *Transparency and Accountability Mechanisms:* Regular social audits, public disclosure of financial and beneficiary information, and time-bound grievance redressal systems shall be instituted to strengthen accountability. Use of digital tools such as MIS, geo-tagging, and online fund tracking can provide light-touch monitoring while maintaining transparency and efficiency.
- *Phased Decentralization Approach:* A gradual transition from guided decentralization to community-led governance should be adopted, allowing VMCs to build capacity before assuming full autonomy.
- *Alignment with Carbon/SPV Models:* VMCs can play a role in local implementation and monitoring, while higher-level institutions or SPVs handle complex financial and carbon-related functions, ensuring community benefits without exposure to risks.

The approach emphasizes decentralizing implementation while maintaining regulatory oversight and strong accountability, leading to enhanced community participation, transparency, ecological outcomes, and readiness for future climate finance opportunities.

19. CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity building in VMCs aims to enhance the knowledge, skills, and institutional capabilities of community members so they can effectively manage mangrove restoration, livelihoods, and governance, ultimately making VMCs self-reliant and sustainable.

19.1 Key Areas of Capacity Building

- *Institutional Strengthening*- Roles and responsibilities of VMC members; Governance processes (meetings, quorum, decision-making); and Leadership development and conflict resolution
- *Technical Skills*- Mangrove restoration techniques and nursery management; Coastal ecosystem conservation practices; and Climate change adaptation and disaster preparedness
- *Financial Management*- Bookkeeping and accounting; Fund utilization and financial reporting; and Audit compliance and transparency
- *Livelihood Development*- Skill training for income-generating activities; Value addition and enterprise development; and Market linkage and business planning
- *Social Inclusion and Gender*- Promoting participation of women and vulnerable groups; Gender-sensitive planning and leadership; and Strengthening SHGs and community institutions

19.2 Capacity Building Methods & Plan

- A mix of training workshops, field demonstrations, exposure visits, on-site mentoring, Training-of-Trainers approaches, and use of IEC materials such as manuals and digital tools should be adopted.
- Project proposals shall wherever applicable, include training, skill development, Marketing linkages etc.,
- Digital platforms, e-learning modules, and MIS systems can be used for training delivery, record-keeping, and monitoring to improve efficiency and reach.

- An annual capacity building plan should be prepared based on local needs, with scheduled training sessions, identification of target groups, and tracking of participation and outcomes.

19.3 Institutional Arrangements

- TN-SHORE authorities to coordinate capacity building, with technical support from the Forest Department and implementation support from NGOs, research institutions, and training agencies, along with convergence with skill development and women-focused institutions.

20. DIGITALIZATION

Digitalization of Village Mangrove Councils (VMCs) is an important step towards strengthening community-based natural resource management by enhancing transparency, efficiency, and accountability. By adopting digital tools, routine administrative processes such as member registration, meeting minutes, financial management, and activity monitoring can be streamlined and easily accessed for review.

VMCs may enable digitalization of their functions **as far as possible**, considering local capacities and available infrastructure, to ensure efficiency in fiduciary, effective implementation of activities and transparency in decision-making. Adoption of digital practices will strengthen institutional governance, improve accountability, and support sustainability of community-based mangrove management initiatives.

Digitalization may also include following tools:

- Mobile-based apps for PRA and household surveys.
- Geo-tagging for spatial analysis.
- Digital ledgers linked to VMC accounts.
- Digital transactions for transparency.
- Digital credit registry for SHGs and VMC-linked groups.
- Mobile dashboards to Track loan disbursement, repayment and credit health monitoring

21. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The conflict resolution mechanism in VMCs is designed to ensure fair, transparent, and timely resolution of disputes related to resource use, benefit sharing, financial management, and governance, thereby maintaining community harmony and effective functioning of the institution.

- *Nature of Conflicts:* Conflicts may arise from issues such as benefit distribution, access to coastal resources, financial irregularities, selection of beneficiaries, leadership disputes, and interactions with external stakeholders.
- *Principles of Resolution:* Conflict resolution shall be guided by principles of equity, transparency, participation, inclusiveness, timeliness, and respect for local customs, with special sensitivity to gender and vulnerable groups.
- *Statutory Support:* In the event of disputes, the provisions of the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act, 1975 and JFMC Guidelines shall apply, ensuring statutory support for resolution, accountability, and enforceability
- *Multi-Tier Framework:* A structured multi-tier system will be followed, starting with the Executive Committee, followed by the General Body, and finally to departmental authorities such as the Forest Department for unresolved or serious cases.
- *Process:* The resolution process will include submission and registration of complaints, review and hearing by concerned bodies, decision-making, documentation, communication of outcomes, and follow-up actions.
- *Documentation:* All grievances must be recorded in a register detailing the nature of the complaint, parties involved, actions taken, and resolution status to ensure accountability.
- *Timeframe:* Conflicts shall be resolved within defined timelines: 7-15 days at the Executive Committee level, 15-30 days at the General Body level, and 30-45 days at the Dept. level.
- *Special Provisions:* Sensitive cases involving financial irregularities, vulnerable groups, or serious disputes may require audits, priority handling, or third-party mediation.
- *Transparency Measures:* Decisions should be documented in meeting minutes and communicated to members, with major issues discussed in General Body meetings to ensure openness.
- *Linkage with Social Audit:* Conflict resolution processes and outcomes should be reviewed during social audits to enhance community oversight and accountability.
- *Grievance Redressal Support:* Support systems such as helplines or grievance committees may be established to facilitate effective resolution.

An effective conflict resolution mechanism will reduce disputes, strengthen trust, improve governance, and enhance social cohesion and implementation of project activities.

22.REVIEW AND AMENDMENT OF GUIDELINES

1. Upon implementation of these Guidelines, the SPMU shall undertake a periodic review to assess their effectiveness and identify areas requiring improvement.
2. Based on the findings of the review and implementation experience, necessary amendments to the Guidelines may be made to strengthen implementation and address emerging requirements.

Annexure 1

FORMATION OF VILLAGE MANGROVE COUNCIL

Name:		
Mobile Number:		
Age:		
Gender:		
Aadhar Number:		
Social Category (OC/OBC /SC/ST/EWS):		
If SHG affiliation membership form attached:	Yes / No	
Primary Occupation:		
Number of years of experience in the activity:		
Any prior experience as an entrepreneur:	Yes / No	
Entrepreneur:		
If yes, how many years?		
New Business Idea for the enterprise:		
Occupation Assets (if any):		
Skill Sets:		
Have you availed any bank;		
loan before:	Yes / No	
Bank Linkage Details:		
Bank Name	Branch	Account No.

Other Sources of Finance, **Yes** or **No**

Annexure 2

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) BETWEEN THE FOREST DEPARTMENT AND THE VILLAGE MANGROVE COUNCIL (VMC).....VILLAGE FOR TN SHORE

Vide : 1.....

2.....

1.PARTIES:

The following MOU is entered between the two parties viz. District/Divisional Forest Officer / Wildlife Warden representing Forest department and the Village Mangrove Council (VMC) village.

a) FIRST PARTY:

Forest Department represented by the District/Divisional Forest Officer / WLW division ofcircle and his successor in office having the office at

b) SECOND PARTY:

Represented by the President of the Village Mangrove Council (VMC)..... village and his successor in office having the address.....

2.OBJECTIVES:

The MOU is signed onwith the following objectives:

- i. To evolve an effective Village Mangrove Council with local communities through Village Mangrove Council (VMC).
- ii. To conserve and develop mangrove forest and activities mentioned in VMC guidelines, in and around the village (management unit)through Village Mangrove Council (VMC).
- iii. To involve local people through Village Mangrove council (VMC) in activities mentioned in VMC guidelines.

- iv. Creating public awareness for better rapport and motivation through Village Mangrove Council (VMC).
- v. Promoting mangrove afforestation and community planting through Village Mangrove Council to enhance coastal resilience besides improving people's livelihood and environment.
- vi. To ensure flow of employment generation and benefits to local people living in the management unit.

3.THE AREA OF OPERATION/STATUS :

- a) (The map of the management unit comprising programme village/villages including Reserved Forests. Reserve land, patta and community lands. clearly demarcating each, should be furnished at this para).

- b) Extent of the management unit

Reserve Forest ha

Reserve Lands ha

Community Lands ha

Patta Lands Ha

Other Government Lands Ha

- c) Boundaries of the management unit to be specified

North Boundary.....

South Boundary.....

East Boundary.....

West boundary.....

4.ORGANISATION AND ACTIVITIES:

The parties agree to abide by the guidelines for implementation of VMC in Tamil Nadu coastal districts as approved by the Government of Tamil Nadu in G.O. (Ms) No.11, dated

10.01.2024(Annexure 13) , G.O. (Ms) No.160, dated 19.09.2024. These guidelines are appended in this MoU as Annexure which will form part and parcel of this MoU(both President of VMC and District Forest Officer / Divisional Forest Officer /WLW should affix their signature in the Annexure as a token of their agreement).

5.RESPONSIBILITY AND ROLE OF THE FOREST DEPARTMENT:

- i. To utilize the co-operation of Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) and the local community to the best advantage in involving an effective technique in the management unit (programme village /villages)
- ii. To Conduct PRA exercises in the programme village and create awareness among people regarding forests, ecology and environment.
- iii. To provide technical guidance and advise the local community in the implementation of Afforestation through VMC.
- iv. The Forest Ranger (Member Secretary of VMC) will prepare the Micro Plan with the advice of the VMC and get approval from the district /Divisional Forest Officer/WLW concerned. The required funds will be released for the various works prescribed in the Micro Plan.

v. To Exercise disciplinary control over the Executive Committee:

Any misconduct, financial or otherwise on the part of Member Secretary will be dealt with under Tamil Nadu Civil Services (Discipline and Appeal) As per Rules Appropriate action will be taken immediately against the Member – Secretary by the District / Divisional Forest Officer/WLW, if any irregularity in execution of work,both in quality and quantity is brought to his notice.

- vi. The concerned District / Divisional Forest Officer/Wildlife Warden will frequently inspect the works executed and ensure correctness of the quantity and quality of works. The concerned District / Divisional Forest Officer/WLW will also check measure the works as per the norms of the Forest Department. Super checking of works executed will be done by Conservator of Forest as per norms of Forest department.

- vii. The District / Divisional Forest Officer / WLW will closely monitor the involvement and the Co-operation of the VMC in executing the mangrove plantation works, afforestation, enhancement of livelihood and orient them in the proper way. He will also send a monthly report in this regard to the concerned district PEAs.
- viii. The District / Divisional Forest Officer / WLW shall have the authority to disband the committees which are not discharging their duties properly. He will do so only after giving adequate opportunities to the committee members.
- ix. The District / Divisional Forest Officer / WLW will also lend his advice in the use of the Reserve Fund.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLE OF THE VILLAGE MANGROVE COUNCIL:**

** Refer VMC Guidelines

7.PERIOD OF AGREEMENT:

This agreement will be in force for a period of five Years or till the end of the project period

8.IMMUNITY OF BIRTH CIVIL AND CRIMINAL ACTS:

If one party commits any criminal misconduct or tort, that party alone will be liable for such acts and other party will be totally immune from the liability.

9.ABOUT TO SUE OR TO BE SUED:

In the event of any litigation arising from third Parties, the Member Secretary is empowered to sue on behalf of both Parties and can be sued by third parties, and the legal expenses will be borne from the Reserve Fund.

Updated Copy

Annexure 3

FORMAT OF RECEIPT FOR MEMBERSHIP FEES OR ANY OTHER INCOME

.....Village Mangrove Council

Receipt number.....

Date:.....

Received of Rs..... from Shri/Smt.....

Son/wife

Shri..... for membership fees / penalty / forest product sales.

Member secretary

.....

Committee must have atleast one-third women members.

Annexure 4

FORMAT FOR PROCEEDINGS REGISTER

..... VMC

Name of Beat..... Forest Division.....

Name of Range..... District.....

Date of Proceeding.....Time.....Venue.....

Agenda	Description of Discussion	Decision
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.

Signature

Signatures of Other Member

Signature President

Member Secretary,

Present

Stamp

Annexure 5

Cash Book Register

Village Mangrove Council (VMC): _____

Village: _____

District: _____

Financial Year: _____

Sl. No.	Date	Receipt Voucher No.	Payment Voucher No.	Particulars	Ledger Head	Receipts (₹)	Payments (₹)	Cash Balance (₹)	Bank Balance (₹)	Initial of Member Secretary
1				(Eg: Opening Balance)						
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										

Monthly Closing Certificate

Particulars	Amount (₹)
Opening Balance	
Total Receipts	
Total Payments	

Closing Cash Balance	
Closing Bank Balance	

Verification Certificate

I hereby certify that the entries recorded in this Cash Book are true and correct and supported by vouchers. The cash balance has been physically verified and found correct.

Member Secretary

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

President, Village Mangrove Council

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Audit Verification

Verified during inspection.

Cash Balance Verified : ₹ _____

Bank Balance Verified : ₹ _____

Observations:

Auditing Officer

Name: _____

Designation: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Annexure 6

Asset Register

Village Mangrove Council (VMC): _____

Village: _____

District: _____

Financial Year: _____

Sl. No.	Asset Identification No.	Name of Asset	Category (Furniture/Equipment/Vehicle/ICT /Plant & Machinery/Other s)	Description / Specification	Quantity	Date of Purchase	Supplier / Vendor	Invoice No. & Date	Funding Source (TN-SHORE/Grant/CSR/Donation/Others)	Cost (₹)	Location of Asset	Custodian / User	Condition (New/Good/Fair/Poor)	Date of Verification	Remarks
1															
2															
3															
4															
5															
6															
7															
8															
9															
10															

Annual Physical Verification Certificate

The assets recorded in this register have been physically verified and found to be in existence except as noted below.

Date of Verification	Number of Assets Verified	Assets Not Traceable / Damaged	Action Taken

Certification

I hereby certify that the assets entered in this register have been procured in accordance with the approved procedures and are under the custody of the Village Mangrove Council.

Member Secretary

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

President, Village Mangrove Council

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Inspection / Audit Verification

Verified during inspection.

Inspecting Officer: _____**Designation:** _____**Office:** _____**Date:** _____**Observations:**

Signature of Inspecting Officer

Instructions

1. Every movable and immovable asset procured, received through grants, CSR, donations, or transferred under the TN-SHORE Project shall be entered immediately upon receipt.
2. Each asset shall be assigned a unique **Asset Identification Number** and, wherever feasible, tagged with an asset label.
3. The register shall be updated whenever an asset is purchased, transferred, condemned, disposed of, or written off.

4. A **physical verification** of all assets shall be carried out **at least once every financial year** and before handing over charge to a new office bearer.
5. Disposal or write-off of assets shall be carried out only with the approval of the Executive Committee and in accordance with the applicable Government of Tamil Nadu and TN-SHORE financial procedures.
6. This register shall be maintained by the **Member Secretary** and verified periodically by the **President** and inspecting officers. This is consistent with the VMC Guidelines requiring maintenance of financial records and asset accountability.

Annexure 7

Revolving Fund Loan Register

Village Mangrove Council (VMC): _____

Village: _____

District: _____

Financial Year: _____

Sl. No.	Loan Account No.	Date of Application	Date of Sanction	Name of Borrower	Membership No.	Category (Individual/SHG)	Purpose of Loan	Resolution No. & Date	Sanctioned Amount (₹)	Interest Rate (% p.a.)	Repayment Period (Months)	Due Date	Amount Disbursed (₹)	Amount Recovered (₹)	Outstanding Balance (₹)	No. of Instalments Paid	Default (Y/N)	Remarks
1																		
2																		
3																		
4																		
5																		
6																		
7																		
8																		
9																		
10																		

Loan Recovery Summary

Particulars	Amount (₹)
Total Loans Sanctioned	
Total Amount Disbursed	
Principal Recovered	
Interest Recovered	
Outstanding Principal	
Outstanding Interest	

Overdue Amount	
----------------	--

Certification

I hereby certify that all loans sanctioned from the Revolving Fund have been approved by the Executive Committee in accordance with the TN-SHORE VMC Guidelines and are supported by loan applications, resolutions, agreements, and disbursement records.

Member Secretary

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

President, Village Mangrove Council

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Inspection / Audit Verification

Verified during inspection.

Inspecting Officer: _____

Designation: _____

Date: _____

Observations:

Signature

Instructions

1. Every sanctioned loan shall be assigned a unique **Loan Account Number**.
2. Loans shall be sanctioned only after approval by the **Executive Committee** and recording of the resolution number.
3. Loan disbursement shall be made only through the **VMC Bank Account** by electronic transfer or crossed cheque.

4. Separate loan application forms, loan agreements, and repayment schedules shall be maintained for each borrower.
5. Recovery of principal and interest shall be recorded immediately upon receipt and reflected in both the **Loan Register** and **Cash Book**.
6. Any overdue loan shall be reviewed by the Executive Committee, and action shall be taken in accordance with the VMC Guidelines and approved loan recovery procedures.
7. The register shall be maintained by the **Member Secretary** and verified periodically by the **President** and inspecting authorities. This aligns with the revolving fund management and financial accountability provisions in the VMC Guidelines.

Annexure 8

FORMAT FOR LETTER FROM DFO WITH INFORMATION REGARDING REGISTRATION OF COMMITTEE

From:

DCF,

.....

To

Conservator of Forests,

.....

S. No.....

Date:.....

Subject: Regarding registration of VMC of..... village

Sir,

With reference to the above stated subject, it is to inform you that committee formed by villages of village has been registered in this office with No..

...dt.... This is in line with clause numbers..... of the State Resolution and u/s of State Forest Act.

The work area of the committee falls under the jurisdiction of.....range,.....beat and police station

Copy to, for information:

- Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, office of the PCCF,
- Chief Conservator of Forests,
- Deputy Collector,
- Superintendent of Police
-self help groups

DFO/DCF

Date

Annexure 9

MODEL BYE-LAWS for Village Mangrove Council (VMC)

Under the Tamil Nadu Sustainably Harnessing Ocean Resources and Blue Economy (TN-SHORE) Project

1. Short Title, Commencement and Applicability

1.1 Short Title

These Bye-laws shall be called the **Village Mangrove Council (VMC) Bye-laws, 2026**.

1.2 Applicability

The Bye-laws shall apply to every Village Mangrove Council constituted under the TN-SHORE Project in the coastal districts of Tamil Nadu.

1.3 Legal Status

The Village Mangrove Council shall be registered under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act, 1975 and shall function in accordance with these Bye-laws, Government Orders issued from time to time, and TN-SHORE Guidelines.

2. Name, Address and Area of Operation

Each Village Mangrove Council shall have

- Name of VMC : _____
- Village : _____
- Panchayat : _____
- Block : _____
- District : _____

The area of operation shall include

- d) (The map of the management unit comprising programme village/villages including Reserved Forests. Reserve land, patta and community lands. clearly demarcating each, should be furnished at this para).

- e) Extent of the management unit

Reserve Forest ha

Reserve Lands ha

Community Lands Ha

Other Government Lands Ha

Patta Lands Ha

f) Boundaries of the management unit to be specified

North Boundary.....

South Boundary.....

East Boundary.....

West boundary.....

3. Definitions

Unless specifically mentioned otherwise:

- 1.1 Samiti and Committee refers to the Village Mangrove Council or
(State specific name), formed as per the rules /GO, dated.....
- 1.2 Forest Act refers to the , (name of act and year), and rules formulated under the act.
- 1.3 Forest Conservation Act (FCA) refers to the Forest Conservation Act, 1980 and associated rules and guidelines.
- 1.4 Wildlife Protection Act refers to Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 and associated rules and guidelines.
- 1.5 Bye-laws, refers to the byelaws approved by the General Assembly of the village mangrove council, (Name of village).
- 1.6 Member, refers to the members of the village mangrove council, (Name of village).
- 1.7 General Assembly includes both ordinary as well as extra-ordinary general assembly meetings.
- 1.8 Executive Committee refers to the EC formed as per the Rules/state GOs , dated xxx, yyy, zzzz, and the Societies Act, 1976(if applicable).
- 1.9 President means, the President of the village mangrove council, (name of village).
- 1.10 Member Secretary refers to the Member Secretary appointed as per the Rules/state GOs..... dated xxx, yyy, zzzz, and the Societies Act, 1860 (if applicable).

1.11 The use of the words “he” and “his”, includes the meaning “she” and “her” in these byelaws.

1.12 Gram Sabha refers to the Gram Sabha as held as per the Panchayat Raj Act.

4. Objectives

The objectives of the Village Mangrove Council shall be

1. To Protect and restore mangrove ecosystems.
2. To Enhance coastal resilience.
3. To Promote sustainable livelihood opportunities.
4. To Facilitate community participation.
5. To Promote women empowerment.
6. To Improve biodiversity conservation.
7. To Facilitate Blue Carbon initiatives.
8. To Ensure equitable benefit sharing.
9. To Promote convergence with Government schemes.
10. To Prepare and implement Micro Plans.

5. Membership

Every adult resident (18 years and above) residing within the Management Unit shall be eligible.

Membership shall consist of

- One male member from each household.
- One female member from each household.

Priority shall be given to

- Fisher communities
- Women
- SC/ST
- Youth member between 15 and 29 years
- Vulnerable households

Membership fee: Rs.5 per annum or as revised by Government Order.

Membership Register shall be maintained both physically and digitally.

6. General Body

The General Body shall consist of all registered members of VMC.

Functions of the General Body

The General Body shall:

- Approve the Annual Action Plan of the VMC.
- Approve the Village Micro Plan and any subsequent revisions.
- Elect the members of the Executive Committee in accordance with these Guidelines.
- Approve the annual financial statements and accounts of the VMC.
- Review and approve the findings of the Social Audit.
- Approve the benefit-sharing mechanism and distribution of benefits in accordance with the approved guidelines.
- Approve the annual budget and expenditure proposals of the VMC.
- Meetings: Minimum two meetings every year.
- Quorum: 50% members.
- At least one-third shall be women.

7. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of Minimum 5 members - Maximum 15 members.

Mandatory representation

- 50% women
- One SC/ST member
- One traditional fisher
- One youth between 15 and 29 years
- One SHG representative
- The President shall be elected by the Executive Committee.
- The Forest Ranger Officer/Forester shall be the Member Secretary.
- Term: Three years .

8. Powers and Functions of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall:

- Implement the approved Village Micro Plan in accordance with the objectives and guidelines of the Project.
- Manage the funds of the Village Mangrove Council (VMC) in a transparent and accountable manner, following the prescribed financial procedures.

- Approve eligible livelihood activities and community development initiatives in accordance with the approved Micro Plan and Project guidelines.
- Maintain the accounts, financial records, and statutory registers of the VMC.
- Promote and support the protection, restoration, and sustainable management of mangrove ecosystems and other coastal natural resources.
- Coordinate plantation, restoration, and maintenance activities in collaboration with the Forest Department and the community.
- Assist the Forest Department in preventing and reporting illegal activities affecting mangroves and other natural resources within the project area.
- Conduct awareness, capacity-building, and community outreach programmes to promote conservation and sustainable livelihoods.
- Maintain digital records and other project-related information as prescribed by the Forest Department.
- Monitor the implementation and progress of Project activities and ensure compliance with the approved plans and guidelines.

9. Meetings

- Executive Committee: Monthly meeting.
- Quorum: 50% members including President and one woman member.
- Meeting Minutes shall be recorded.
- Meeting Frequency : EC shall meet at least once in a month.

10. Roles and responsibilities of Office Bearers

President

- The President shall convene and preside over the meetings of the General Body and the Executive Committee.
- Will sign all documents and agreements on behalf of the VMC
- Along with Member Secretary , the President Shall represent the VMC in all matters relating to coordination, collaboration, and communication with Government Departments, NGOs, local bodies, and other relevant organizations.
- Shall act as a joint signatory for the operation of the VMC bank account and the withdrawal of funds along with Member Secretary .

Members of Executive committee

Each member of the Executive Committee shall exercise the following responsibilities in accordance with the Guidelines:

- **Participate** in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and review of activities undertaken by the Village Mangrove Council (VMC).
- **Recommend** amendments to the VMC Bye-laws for consideration by the General Body.
- **Approve** proposals, action plans, and expenditure placed before the Executive Committee in accordance with the approved financial procedures.
- **Oversee** the maintenance of accounts, records, registers, and community assets of the VMC.
- **Review** the implementation of the Village Micro Plan and recommend corrective measures, wherever necessary.
- **Promote** compliance with the VMC Bye-laws and encourage sustainable management of natural resources.
- **Report** any instances of encroachment, illegal extraction of natural resources, forest fires, pollution, or other violations to the Forest Department or other competent authorities.
- **Support** the Forest Department in community vigilance, awareness generation, and protection of project-supported assets and natural resources.
- **Participate** in meetings, decision-making processes, and monitoring visits, and contribute to the effective functioning of the VMC.
- **Perform** such other functions and exercise such powers as may be assigned by the General Body or delegated by the Forest Department from time to time.

11. Sub-Committees

The Executive Committee may constitute such as

- Women and Livelihood Committee
- Finance Committee
- Ecotourism Committee
- Conflict Resolution Committee

12. Micro Plan

- Each VMC shall prepare a participatory micro-plan outlining restoration targets, livelihood activities, disaster risk reduction strategies, and monitoring indicators.
- The Member Secretary (MS) shall prepare/ assist in the preparation of the micro-Plan for the management unit, after consultation with the members of Village Mangrove Councils. After preparation, the micro plan will require formal approval of the EC and then the technical

approval of District Forest Officer / Divisional Forest Officer / Wildlife Warden concerned after due scrutiny as per the existing laws, JFM guidelines, management plan / working plan.

13. Financial Management

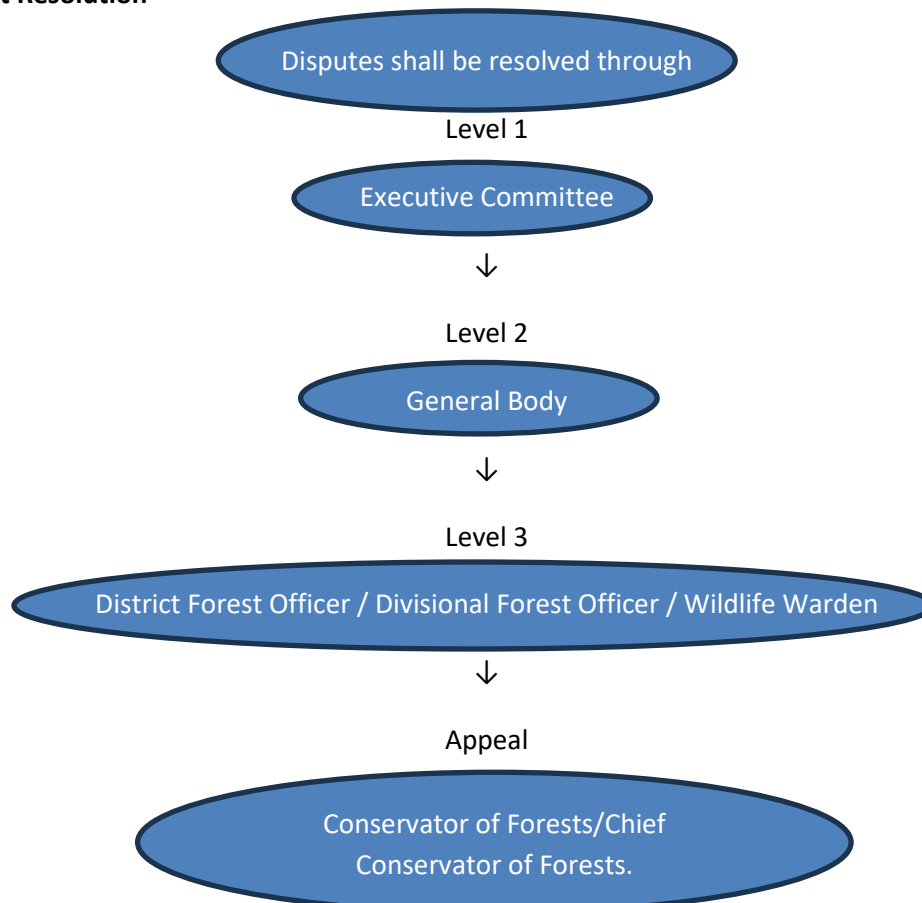
The VMC shall maintain

- Savings Bank Account
- Cash Book
- Ledger
- Asset Register
- Stock Register
- Loan Register
- Minutes Register

Joint Signatories :President and Member Secretary.

Annual audit shall be mandatory.

17. Conflict Resolution



18. Procedure and Removal of Executive Members

The Government Order does not have any provision for mid-term removal of any Executive Committee members, but the VMC can itself decide the procedure for removal of a member due to reasons such as mentioned below,

- Engaging in forest crimes / illegal activities.
- Repeated absence for 3 consecutive meetings of member
- Working against the interests of VMC
- Bankruptcy or mental retardation
- Conviction by Court.

In all such situations, a chance of hearing should be given to the concerned person and notice given before action.

19. Filling up of Vacant Position in the Executive Committee

In case any position in the Executive Committee becomes vacant, a special meeting of the VMC will be convened for conducting a new election for filling the position for the remaining time period.

In case the position of ex-officio NGO member becomes vacant, the Executive Committee can pass a resolution nominating a new NGO and inform the General Body. A person nominated from the approved NGO will then take the charge as an ex-officio member.

20. Dissolution of Executive Committee

The Executive Committee may be dissolved if

- Financial irregularity
- Persistent non-performance
- Violation of Government Orders
- Misuse of funds

Fresh elections shall be conducted within ninety days.

20.1. Procedure for dissolution of Executive Committee

- The District / Divisional Forest Officer / Chief Wildlife Warden shall issue two written notices to the Executive Committee, specifying the deficiencies and providing an opportunity to explain or rectify them within the stipulated period.
- If the Executive Committee fails to take satisfactory corrective action, the General Body, may, by resolution and after recording reasons in writing, dissolve the Executive Committee.

- Upon dissolution, the General Body shall authorize the Forest Department to take charge of the records, funds, and assets of the VMC until a new Executive Committee is constituted.
- Fresh elections to reconstitute the Executive Committee shall be conducted within a reasonable period in accordance with these Bye-laws.

21. Amendments

These Bye-laws may be amended, modified, added to, or repealed from time to time, as necessitated by any Government Order, statutory provision, policy decision, or operational requirement. Any proposal for such amendment shall be initiated by the Executive Committee and placed before the General Body for consideration. The proposed amendment shall be deemed approved only if it receives the support of not less than fifty percent (50%) of the members present and voting at a duly convened General Body meeting, subject to compliance with the applicable Government Orders and guidelines.

22. Pledge

Following the approval of these Bye-laws by the General Body, either unanimously or by the required majority, all members shall collectively affirm their commitment to uphold and implement these Bye-laws. To strengthen community ownership and accountability, members may take the following pledge and sign beneath it as evidence of their acceptance and commitment.

"We, the members of the Village Mangrove Council of _____ Village, solemnly pledge to conserve, restore, and sustainably manage mangrove ecosystems and associated coastal resources entrusted to our care. We commit ourselves to protecting biodiversity, strengthening climate resilience, promoting sustainable livelihoods, ensuring transparency, equity, and community participation, and faithfully implementing the objectives of the TN-SHORE Project for the benefit of present and future generations."

Annexure 10

6. ENVIRONMENT AND FOREST DEPARTMENT SECRETARIAT LETTER ON REVOLVING FUND AND INTEREST RATE

Environment and Forest Department Secretariat Chennai Letter

Environment and Forest Department
Secretariat Chennai – 600 009

Letter No: No:16120 /FR-5/2001-15

Dated:05.03.2003

From

Thiru Jasbir Singh Bajaj I.A.S
Joint Secretary to Government.

To

The Principal Chief Conservator of forest, Chennai-15
The chief Wildlife Warden, Chennai -15
The Conservator of Forest, Chennai-15
The Field Director and Conservator of Forests, Tirunelveli
The Accountant General, Chennai -15
The Accountant General, Chennai-35.

Sir,

- Sub : FOREST- Wildlife – FREEP- Conservation of Biodiversity in Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve – Minutes of VIII SPIC Meeting Follow up action _ amendment Orders _ Issued**
- Ref :**
1. G.O.Ms. NO.288 Environment and Forests, Dated 19.11.96
 2. From the Field Director and Conservator of Forests, Tirunelveli Letter No.P/5364/2000 Dated: 24.5.2001.
 3. From the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Letter No. WL3 /72603/99 Dated: 11.6.2001
 4. Government Letter No. 16120/FR.5/01-12. Dated 29.11.02.
 5. From the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Chennai, Letter No. WL3 /72603/99 Dated: 19.12.02

In Partial Modification of the Orders Issued in G.O.Ms.No.288, Environment and forest, dated 19.11.96 to point Annexure-I of the Constitution of the Village Forest Committee the amendment is issued as follows:-

<u>Existing Bylaw</u>	<u>Amendment Proposed</u>
5. Every Village Forest Committee shall have an Executive Committee whose tenure shall be one year	Every Village Forest Committee Shall have an executive committee whose tenure shall be two years one can hold chairmanship for two terms only in order to ensure opportunities to other members to work as chairman as well as graduation of leaders.

In Annexure-II, After para-1 of the G.O the following para shall be inserted under the heading Eco- Development support fund of the constitution of the Village Forest Committee.

“ The funds disbursed for implementing micro-plan provision which are of credit nature and are returned by the beneficiary with a simple interest of 12% Per Annum will be kept with the Village Forest Committee concerned Permanently and managed as Revolving Fund for all times to come in order to give financial sustainability to the project efforts”.

2. This Order is issued with the concurrence of Finance department vide U.o.No. 12152/EAP.II/2003_1, dated 27.02.03.

Yours Faithfully,

For Joint Secretary to Government

Copy to:

Finance (AH&F)EAP.II department , Chennai-600 009.

The chief Internal Auditor and Chief Auditor of Statutory Board, Teynampet, Chennai-18.

SF/SCs.

Annexure 11

JFMC Guidelines

REF. NO. TAP8/50658/02

Dated: 31.08.2005

Office of the Principal Chief
Conservator of Forests,
Panagal Building, Saidapet,
Chennai-600015.

Dr. Sukh Dev, IFS.,
Principal Chief Conservator of Forests

Sub: Forests - OECF Japan assisted TAP - Implementation of the project from 1997-98 - Through Joint Forest Management - Draft guidelines and Draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) approved - Amendments issued from time to time - Incorporated - Regarding

- Ref: 1) G.O.Ms.No.342 Environment and Forests (FR.VI) Department dated: 08.08.1977.
2) G.O.Ms.No.343 Environment and Forests (FR.VI) Department dated: 08.08.1977.

In the G.O. first cited guidelines for implementation of JFM in Tamil Nadu under TAP has been approved by the Government. In the G.O. second cited, Draft Memorandum of Understanding to be entered into between the Forest Department and the Village Forest Council has been approved.

2) Subsequently, various amendments have been issued by the Government to the above two G.Os from time to time

3) Hence, updated copy of the above G.Os incorporating the amendments (as on 16.08.2005) is enclosed for necessary action. The Conservators of Forests are requested to communicate the same to all the implementing officers for further action, obtain their acknowledgement and file it in the office.

4) The Conservators of Forests are requested to acknowledge receipt of this reference at once.

Encl:

Sd. C.K.Sreedharan
for Principal Chief Conservator of Forests

To
The Conservator of Forests,
Chennai / Vellore / Salem / Dharmapuri / Erode / Coimbatore / Trichy / Dindigul /
Madurai / Virudhunagar / Tirunelveli.

Copy to TAP1 / TAP2 and S.O. I

/true copy / by order/

UNRECORDED
SUPERINTENDENT
1905

11/10/05

(as amended as on 01.08.2005)

**GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU
ABSTRACT**

FORESTS - Overseas Economic Co-operation Fund, Japan assisted "Tamilnadu Afforestation Project" - Implementation of the project from 1997-98 - Draft Guidelines - Approved - Orders - Issued

ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (FR. VI) DEPARTMENT

G.O.Ms.No.342

Dated: 08.08.1997.

Read:-

From the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Lr.No.VSI(1)/16448/97, Dt. 31.03.97, 02.05.97, 08.05.97, 30.05.97 and 02.06.1997.

-:o:o:o:-

ORDER:

The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, in his letters read above, has sent a set of guidelines for approval of the Government towards implementation of the "Tamil Nadu Afforestation Project" through Joint Forest Management concept and formation Village Forest Councils to involve the local people fully in the tree growing activities in degraded forests, Government lands, Community and individual lands, as per the norms approved by the Government of India/Overseas Economic Co-operation Fund Mission.

2. The Government have examined the guidelines carefully and have decided to accept them with slight modifications. The guidelines both in English as well as in Tamil, as approved by the Government are appended to this order. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests is requested to instruct the subordinate officers suitably to create awareness among the local villagers regarding the objectives, significance of the programmes, the project and modes of implementation as per the approved guidelines.

3. This order issues with the concurrence of Finance Department vide its U.O.No.3776 /FS/P/97, Dt. 31.07.1997.

(BY ORDER OF THE GOVERNOR)

**K.S. SRIPATHI,
SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT.**

/ true copy /

To

The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Chennai-15 (with encl.)

The Chief Conservator of Forests (Planning & Development) / Wildlife / Social Forestry / Territorial / Research / TAP, Chennai-15.

The Accountant General, TamilNadu, Chennai-18/35 (BNC)

The Pay and Accounts Officer, Chennai-9/35 (BNC)

The Commissioner, Government Data Centre, Chennai-25

Copy to

All members of the High Level Empowered Committee.

The Secretary to Government of India, Ministry of Environment and Forests,
Parayavaran Bhavan, C.G.O. Complex, Lodi Road, New Delhi-110 001.

The Secretary to Government of India, Ministry of Finance,
Department of Economic Affairs, Parayavaran Bhavan,
C.G.O. Complex, Lodi Road, New Delhi-110 001.

The Overseas Economic Co-operation Fund(OECF), 2nd Floor.
D.L.F. Centre, Sansad Marg, New Delhi.

The Special Commissioner and Commissioner for Revenue
Administration / Land Administration, Chepauk, Chennai-15.

The Special Secretary to Hon'ble Chief Minister, Chennai-9.

The Senior P.A. to Hon'ble Minister for Forests and Printing, Chennai -9

The Revenue Department, Chennai-9.

The Rural Development Department, Chennai-9.

The Finance (AH&F)/(EAP) Department, Chennai-9.

The Information and Tourism Department, Chennai-9.

// Forwarded - By Order //

sd / x x x

SECTION OFFICER.

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF JOINT FOREST MANAGEMENT (JFM) IN TAMIL NADU

(as amended as on 01.08.2005)

Vide: 1. Govt. Lr.No.10960/FR.6/99-2 E&F dt.12.10.1999

2. Govt. Lr.No.11113/FR.6/99-1 E&F dt.03.04.2000

3. G.O.2(D) No.45 E&F (FR.6) dt.11.11.2002)

1. Objective

The National Forest Policy envisages people's involvement in the development and protection of forests. The Government of Tamil Nadu stand committed to involve local people in reforestation and protection of degraded forests and to share with them the sustainable benefits from these forests. This arrangement will be known as "*Joint Forest Management*" and the involvement of people will be ensured through Village Forest Council.

In case the land belongs to Government, the approval of the concerned District Collector shall be obtained and in case of lands within the jurisdiction of the Panchayats, the approval of the concerned Panchayat shall be obtained before implementing the project.

2. Selection of Area

The unit of management under Joint Forest Management will be a hamlet / group of hamlets / entire village, the abuttant degraded forests, community and private lands so as to make it a cohesive and manageable unit. The unit of management will also be on watershed basis. The area covered under each unit of management will be decided by the District/Divisional Forest Officers concerned in consultation with local communities and the local field staff of the Forest Department.

3. Village Forest Council

3.1. In each of the identified Management Unit, the people's representative body called Village Forest Council (V.F.C.) will be formed which will be fully involved in the planning and execution of works, protection, harvesting and benefit sharing in the management unit with focus on the degraded forests. The Forester concerned will initiate the process of formation of V.F.C.

3.2. The V.F.C. will have as its members, one male member and one female member from each household provided that they are willing. The Forester / Ranger / District Forest Officer / Divisional Forest Officer concerned will explain the concept of Joint Forest Management to the villagers and motivate the maximum number of people to become

members of V.F.C. V.F.C. membership annual non-refundable fee will be Re.1/- for SC / ST and Rs.2/- for other categories. Any person who opts out from the membership of V.F.C. will not be entitled for any benefit.

3.3. The Forester / Ranger / District Forest Officer / Divisional Forest Officer concerned will conduct Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) exercises with the members of V.F.C. and decide the basic thrust areas of the management unit in consultation with the members of the V.F.C.

3.4. The V.F.C. will meet as and when called for but in any case, atleast once in three months.

3.5. "Every Village Forest Council immediately after its constitution, shall register its name with the Chief Conservator of Forests (Tamilnadu Afforestation Project), after paying a non-refundable fee of Rs.10/- (Rupees ten only), before undertaking works on Tamilnadu Afforestation Project. The Village Forest Councils already constituted shall also register their names with Chief Conservator of Forests (Tamilnadu Afforestation Project) accordingly".

(Para 3.5 added vide Government Lr. No.10960 / FR 6 / 99-2 Dated: 12.10.1999 and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Ref.No.TAP1 / 24865/99)

4. Executive Committee

4.1. Each V.F.C. will elect an "*Executive Committee*", in such a manner that one hamlet elects atleast two members, one of whom is a woman. Each V.F.C. will elect a minimum of 5 (five) and a maximum of 15 (fifteen) members to the Executive Committee. The Village Panchayat members of the management unit will be co-opted as ex-officio members of the Executive Committee (E.C.). The members of E.C. (both elected and ex-officio) will elect its President from among themselves, who will also be ex-officio President of V.F.C. The Forest Ranger concerned who will be the Member Secretary of the E.C., will also facilitate the election process of the members and President of E.C.

4.1.1. The Block Development Officer under whose jurisdiction the Village Forest Councils fall shall be Ex-Officio Member of the Village Forest Councils.

(Para 4.1.1 added vide G.O (2D) No. 45 Environment and Forest (FR-VI) Department Dated: 11.11.2002 and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Ref.No.TAP1 / 50658 / 02)

4.2. If necessary, the District Forest Officer/ Divisional Forest Officer concerned may nominate one representative of a Development Department of the Government and one N.G.O. as member of E.C.

7
7
4.3. "The term of Executive Committee will be ten years or till the completion of the project period. It will meet atleast once in a month"

(Para 4.3 amended vide Government Lr.No.11113 / F26 / 99-1, Dated: 03.04.2000 and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Ref.No.TAP1 24976 99)

4.4. The E.C. will be responsible for day-to-day activities of the V.F.C.

4.5. Constant efforts will be taken by E.C. to bring about unanimity in its decisions. However, in case of difference of opinion, the decisions of the E.C. will be taken by majority vote of the members present (elected members and ex-officio members).

4.6. The Member Secretary (M.S.) will prepare the Micro Watershed Plan for the management unit, after consultation with the members of Village Forest Council. After preparation, the micro plan will require formal approval of the E.C. and then the technical approval of District Forest Officer/Divisional Forest Officer concerned.

4.7. As per the micro plan so approved, the Member Secretary will prepare the detailed estimates, for various items of works to be executed, based on Forest Schedule of Rates / Public Works Department Standard Schedule of Rates/ Agricultural Engineering Standard Schedule of Rates and get them sanctioned by District Forest Officer/ Divisional Forest Officer or Conservator of Forests, depending on the financial powers vested with District Forest Officer/Divisional Forest Officer and Conservator of Forests.

4.8. For executing the works as per the sanctioned estimates, the Forest Ranger (Member Secretary) will submit fund application to District Forest Officer/Divisional Forest Officer. In the fund application, the signature of the President of the V.F.C. will be obtained by the Member-Secretary in order to keep him informed about the details of the works to be undertaken. District/Divisional Forest Officer will release the funds to the Forest Ranger for taking up the works. Subsequent funds will be released only after the receipt of the accounts for the previous funds released and such accounts should be signed by both the President and M.S. The expenditure incurred for works should be only for those items for which the funds were released by the District Forest Officer/Divisional Forest Officer unless prior written permission of the District Forest Officer/Divisional Forest Officer is taken for the deviation and the amount of money released for each item should not be exceeded without prior written permission of the District Forest Officer/Divisional Forest Officer.

4.9. The execution of works will be done by M.S. with the assistance of the Foresters working under him by engaging local people on Muster Roll. In case, adequate local labour is not available for engaging Muster Roll any other system as prescribed in Tamil Nadu Forest Code/Tamil Nadu Financial Code (petty contract or scheduled contract, etc.) as decided by E.C. / V.F.C. may be followed. In execution of works and in rendering accounts, the M.S. will follow the Tamil Nadu Forest Code, Tamil Nadu Financial Code, Tamil Nadu Accounts Code and the existing rules and regulations in force, in respect of items, which are not specifically mentioned in these guidelines.

4.10. The E.C. can also impose fines against erring individuals/hamlets for illicit removal of firewood or illicit grazing of cattle. The fine amount collected will be credited to the Village Forest Development Fund to be created for the Village Forest Council. If persuasive efforts fail, it may request the District/Divisional Forest Officer concerned to invoke the provisions of Forest Act for protecting the management unit.

4.11. The E.C. will have the right to expel any of its member or member of V.F.C. after providing an opportunity of defence.

4.12. The E.C. if need be, may constitute sub-committees from among its members, for any specific purpose.

5. Benefit sharing

5.1. Sharing the sustainable benefits from the degraded forests, Government lands and community lands lying within the management unit, with the members of V.F.C. and among them is the most important component of J.F.M. scheme. The guiding principle of this benefit sharing will be equitable distribution and the individual beneficiaries will be decided by the E.C. bearing in mind the parameters outlined in paras 5.2.1. to 5.2.4.

5.2.1. District/Divisional Forest Officer will conduct sample survey of the unit of Management and decide about the quantity of firewood available for supply to landless and poor households. Firewood for their own use to the extent possible will be supplied free of cost to poor and landless households, subject to the availability on sustained basis.

5.2.2. Fodder and green leaf manure will be given free of cost to members of V.F.C.

9
except big farmers, subject to availability. Sustainable quantities of fodder and green leaf manure, etc. available will be decided by the District / Divisional Forest Officer from time to time and will be given free of cost.

5.2.3. Grazing will be allowed free of cost depending on the carrying capacity except in regeneration areas which will be closed for grazing for 3 years. The carrying capacity will be decided by the District Forest Officer.

5.2.4. All Non-Wood Forest Produce (Minor Forest Produce) for domestic consumption will be given free of cost to the members of V.F.C. subject to availability. Any surplus quantity will be sold by E.C. Sustainable N.W.F.P. available will be decided by District/Divisional Forest Officer. Any other sustainable yield from the Management Unit as decided by District/Divisional Forest Officer will be sold by E.C. The sale proceeds so received will be distributed equitably among the members of V.F.C. by the E.C. after remitting 25% (Twenty Five percent) to Village Forest Development Fund.

5.2.5. Surplus benefits likely to be available from the management unit can be extended to others by the District/ Divisional Forest Officer in consultation with V.F.C.

5.2.6. Revenue from forest produce other than Non Timber Forest Produce (NTFP) like timber, poles, bamboo etc. will be shared between the Forest Department and the Village Forest Council (VFC) 90% of such revenue shall be credited into the accounts of the Village Forest Development Fund (VFDF) and the remaining 10% shall be remitted to the Forest Department. The harvesting and extraction of timber, poles, bamboo etc. shall be done by the District Forest Officer concerned as per the existing procedures and rules of the Forest Department with the participation of Executive Committee (EC) Members.

(Para 5.2.6 added vide G.O (2D) No. 45 Environment and Forest (FR-VI) Department Dated: 11.11.2002 and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Ref.No.TAP1 / 50658 / 02)

6. How are V.F.C. finances managed?

6.1. A Joint Account in the name of the V.F.C. will be opened in a local or nearest bank or post office with the President and Member-Secretary as signatories. All the V.F.C. funds will be kept in this account. The President and Member Secretary will together be responsible and accountable to the V.F.C. for all financial transactions.

The Member-Secretary will be specifically responsible for the proper maintenance of accounts and shall have in his/her possession all records relating to finance. These records include the Cash Book, Accounts Register, Pass Book, Cheque Book and a Record of harvest, sale and share of JFM produce with a list of beneficiaries.

The Village Forest Development Fund shall be maintained as a separate account head, into which will be credited:

- ❖ 25% (Twenty five percent) of sale proceeds realized in accordance with para 5.2.4.
- ❖ Membership money.
- ❖ Initial expenditure provided from the Forest department.
- ❖ Grants and loans obtained for JFM activities from authorized sources as per the MOU.
- ❖ Money levied as fines and penalties.

6.2. The Village Forest Development Fund (VFDF) created for the Village Forest Council (VFC) will be utilized in the following manner:

- i) For maintenance, protection and improvement of the forest area managed by them.
- ii) For extending assistance to forest dependents and poor for alternate employment and poverty alleviation.
- iii) For community asset creation.
- iv) For meeting any contingent and ancillary expenditure by the Executive Committee.

The accounts of the Village Forest Development Fund will be maintained by the Member-Secretary which will be audited by the District / Divisional Forest Officials annually.

(Para 6.2 amended as above vide G.O (2D) No. 45 Environment and Forest (FR-VI) Department Dated: 11.11.2002 and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Ref.No TAP1 50658 02)

7. Decisions of E.C. to be placed before V.F.C.

The President of E.C. will inform the V.F.C., once in three months, the decisions taken/activities undertaken by E.C. and a general consensus obtained.

8. Monitoring

8.1. The District/Divisional Forest Officer concerned will monitor the functioning of the E.C. of the V.F.C. in his jurisdiction and send monthly report to the Conservator of Forests. He will also have the authority to disband the committees and order for reconstitution if in his view, the committees are not discharging their duties properly. He will do so only after giving adequate opportunities to the committee members, except the Member Secretary, who may be dealt with under disciplinary rules. He will also be the Appellate authority against the orders of E.C. expelling a member of E.C. / V.F.C.

8.2. The Conservator of Forests is the Appellate authority whose decision on the appeals against the District/Divisional Forest Officer's order will be final. The Conservator of Forests will also send monthly report on the working of these committees, benefit sharing system and Village Forest Development Fund to the Chief Conservator of Forests

8.3. The Chief Conservator of Forests (TAP) or any other Chief Conservator of Forests incharge of TAP will take up review, once in three months on the reports of the Conservator of Forests. The Chief Conservator of Forests will have supervisory control and will be empowered to modify any of these guidelines, include or exclude specific items of Non-Wood Forest Produce and other Forest Produce to suit specific local conditions subject to a report to the Government through the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests.

Updated copy

Sd. C.K.Sreedharan
for Principal Chief Conservator of Forests

/true copy /

UNSWAN
SUPERINTENDENT

31.8.05

31/8/05

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→
(as amended as on 01.08.2005)

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU

ABSTRACT

FORESTS - Overseas Economic Co-operation Fund(OECF) Japan assisted TamilNadu Afforestation Project(TAP) - Implementation of the project from 1997-98 - Draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to be entered into between the Forest Department and Village Forest Council - Approved - Orders _ Issued

ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (FR.VI) DEPARTMENT

G.O.Ms.No.343

Dated:8-8-1997.

Read:-

From the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Chennai,
Lr.No.VSI(1) / 22442 / 97, Dt. 8.5.97 and 30.5.97.

-:o:o:-

ORDER:-

The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, in his letters read above, has sent a draft Memorandum of Understanding for approval of the Government to be entered into between the Forest Department and Village Forest Council for implementation of the "Tamil Nadu Afforestation Project" through Joint Forest Management concept and formulation of Village Forest Councils to involve the local people fully in the tree growing activities in degraded forests, Government lands, community and individual lands, as per the norms approved by the Government of India/Overseas Economic Co-operation Fund Mission.

2. The Government have examined the Memorandum of Understanding carefully and have decided to accept them with slight modifications. The Memorandum of Understanding both in English as well as in Tamil, as approved by the Government are appended to this order. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests is requested to take action to constitute Village Forest Council in every programme village and to create awareness among the local villagers regarding the significance of the programmes, objectives of the project and mode of implementation, as per the approved Memorandum of Understanding.

3. This order issues with the concurrence of Finance Department vide its U.O.No.3262/FS/P/97 Dated.14.7.97.

(BY ORDER OF THE GOVERNOR)

K.S. SRIPATHI,

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT.

/ true copy /

To

The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Chennai-15 (W.E)

The Chief Conservator of Forests(Planning & Development) / (Wildlife) / (Social Forestry) / (Territorial) / Research / TAP. Chennai-15.

The Accountant General, TamilNadu, Chennai-18/35 (BNC)

The Pay and Accounts Officer. Chennai-9/35 (BNC)

The Commissioner. Government Date Centre, Chennai-25.

Copy to

All members of the Empowered Committee.

The Secretary to Government of India, Ministry of Environment and Forests,
Parayavaran Bhavan, C.G.O.Complex, Lodi Road, New Delhi-110 001.

The Secretary to Government of India, Ministry of Finance,
Department of Economic Affairs, Parayavaran Bhavan,
C.G.O.Complex, Lodi Road, New Delhi-110 001.

The Overseas Economic Co-operation Fund (OECF).
2nd Floor, D.L.F. Centre, Sansad Marg, New Delhi.

The Special Commissioner and Commissioner for Revenue
Administration/Land Administration, Chepauk, Chennai-15.

The Special Secretary to Hon'ble Chief Minister, Chennai-9.

The Senior P.A. to Hon'ble Minister for Forests and Printing, Chennai -9.

The Revenue Department, Chennai-9.

The Rural Development Department, Chennai-9.

The Finance (AH&F) + EAP) Department, Chennai-9.

The Information and Tourism Department, Chennai-9.

//Forwarded - By Order//

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SECTION OFFICER.

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**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) BETWEEN THE
FOREST DEPARTMENT AND THE VILLAGE FOREST COUNCIL
(VFC) VILLAGE FOR TAMIL NADU AFFORESTATION
PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION.**

(as amended as on 01.08.2005)

*Vide: 1.Govt. Lr.No.10960/FR.6 99-2 E&F dt.12.10.1999
2.Govt. Lr.No.11113/FR.6 99-1 E&F dt.03.04.2000)*

1. PARTIES:

The following MOU is entered between the two parties viz. Forest Department and the Village Forest Council (VFC) village.

a) FIRST PARTY:

Tamil Nadu Forest Department represented by the District/Divisional Forest Officer division of circle and his successor in office having the office at

b) SECOND PARTY:

Represented by the President of the Village Forest Council (VFC) village and his successor in office having the address

2. OBJECTIVES:

The MOU is signed on with the following objectives:

i) To evolve an effective Joint Forest Management (JFM) system with local communities by the Tamil Nadu Forest Department through Village Forest Council (VFC).

ii) To conserve and develop natural forests with the vast variety of flora and fauna in and around the village (management unit) through Village Forest Council (VFC).

iii) To involve local people through Village Forest Council (VFC) in planning, planting, protection, harvesting, managing and benefit sharing in management unit with focus on degraded forests.

iv) Creating public awareness in the management unit for better rapport and motivation towards JFM through Village Forest Council (V.F.C).

v) Providing incentives for tree cultivation in private lands in the management unit.

vi) Promoting homestead, farmstead and community planting through Village Forest

Council (VFC) to increase the green cover of the State besides improving people's life support and environment.

vii) To ensure flow of employment generation and benefits to local people living in the management unit

3. THE AREA OF OPERATION/STATUS:

a) (The map of the management unit comprising programme village/villages including Reserved Forests, Reserve Land, patta and community lands, clearly demarcating each, should be furnished at this para).

b) Extent of the management unit

Reserve Forest ha.

Reserve Lands ha.

Community Lands ha.

Patta lands ha.

c) Boundaries of the management unit to be specified

North Boundary

South Boundary

East Boundary

West Boundary

4. ORGANISATION AND ACTIVITIES:

Each management unit will have a Village Forest Council and both the parties agree to abide by the guidelines for implementation of J.F.M. in Tamil Nadu as approved by the Government of Tamil Nadu in G.O.Ms.No 342 E & F dept. dt.08.08.1997. These guidelines are appended in this MOU as Annexure which will form part and parcel of this MOU (both President of VFC and DFO should affix their signature in the Annexure as a token of their agreement).

5. RESPONSIBILITY AND ROLE OF THE FOREST DEPARTMENT:

i) To utilize the co-operation of Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) and the local community to the best advantage in involving an effective Joint Forest Management (JFM) technique in the management unit (programme village/villages).

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ii) To conduct PRA exercises in the programme village and create awareness among people regarding forests, ecology and environment.

iii) To provide technical guidance and advise the local community in the implementation of Tamil Nadu Afforestation Project.

iv) The Forest Ranger (Member Secretary of VFC) will prepare the Micro Plan with the advice of the VFC and get the approval from the District/Divisional Forest Officer concerned. The required funds will be released for the various works prescribed in the Micro Plan.

v) To exercise disciplinary control over Member Secretary of Executive Committee:- Any misconduct, financial or otherwise, on the part of Member Secretary will be dealt with under Tamil Nadu Civil Services (Discipline and Appeal) Rules. Appropriate action will be taken immediately against the Member-Secretary, by the District/Divisional Forest Officer, if any irregularity in execution of work, both in quality and quantity, is brought to his notice.

vi) The concerned District/Divisional Forest Officer will frequently inspect the works executed by the Member Secretary and ensure correctness of the quantity and quality of works. The concerned District/Divisional Forest Officer will also checkmeasure the works of Member Secretary as per the norms of the Forest Department. Superchecking of works executed by Member Secretary will be done by Conservator of Forests as per norms of Forest department.

vii) The District/Divisional Forest Officer will closely monitor the involvement and the co-operation of the VFC in executing the TAP works and orient them in the proper way. He will also send a monthly report in this regard to the Conservator of Forests.

viii) The District/Divisional Forest Officer shall have the authority to disband the committees which are not discharging their duties properly. He will do so only after giving adequate opportunities to the committee members.

ix) The District/Divisional Forest Officer will also lend his advice in the use of the Reserve Fund.

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x) The District/Divisional Forest Officer will also be appellate authority against the orders of the E.C. expelling a member of EC/VFC.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROLE OF THE VILLAGE FOREST COUNCIL:

i) To extend co-operation to the Forest Department in evolving an effective Joint Forest Management (JFM) for the management unit with active participation of the local community.

ii) To actively participate in the afforestation activities by arranging required laborers and protecting the afforested area from cattle grazing, illicit cuttings, forest fire etc.,

iii) To abide by the guidelines for implementation of JFM in Tamil Nadu as approved by Government of Tamil Nadu in G.O.Ms.No. E & F dept., dated .97.

iv) To agree to transfer unspent amount at the close of the financial year to the Forest department account.

v) To agree to produce accounts, vouchers for audit to an officer not below the rank of District Forest Officer or a representative of Overseas Economic Co-operation Fund (O.E.C.F.) Japan.

vi) Members of VFC/E.C. are free to bring to the notice of its President or the District Forest Officer, any irregularity in the execution of works, who will take immediate remedial measures.

vii) The VFC shall have the power to expel the members of VFC/EC if the member is found to be erring from his responsibilities.

viii) The VFC will decide about the sharing of benefits.

ix) The VFC will arrive at a consensus in the utilisation of Reserve Fund for the benefits of the village. It will send the accounts to the District Forest Officer.

x) The VFC will convene the General Body meeting once in three months and the members will be informed about the performances of the VFC.

(xi) Every Village Forest Council immediately after its constitution, shall register its

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name with the Chief Conservator of Forests (Tamilnadu Afforestation Project), after paying a non-refundable fee of Rs.10/- (Rupees ten only), before undertaking works on Tamilnadu Afforestation Project. The Village Forest Councils already constituted shall also register their names with Chief Conservator of Forests (Tamilnadu Afforestation Project) accordingly.

(Para 6(xi) added Vide Govt. Lr. No.10960 FR.6/99-2 dt.12.10.1999 and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Ref. No. TAPI/24865/99)

7. PERIOD OF AGREEMENT:

This agreement will be in force for a period of ten years or till the end of the project period

(Para 7 amended vide Govt. Lr.No.11113 FR.6/99-1 dt.03.04.2000 and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Ref. No. TAPI 24976/99)

8. IMMUNITY OF BIRTH CIVIL AND CRIMINAL ACTS:

If one party commits any criminal misconduct or tort, that party alone will be liable for such acts and other party will be totally immune from the liability

9. ABOUT TO SUE OR TO BE SUED:

In the event of any litigation arising from third parties, the Member Secretary is empowered to sue on behalf of both parties and can be sued by third parties and the legal expenses will be borne from the Reserve Fund

Updated copy

Sd. C.K.Sreedharan
for Principal Chief Conservator of Forests

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in English
SUPERINTENDENT
31.8.05


31/8/05

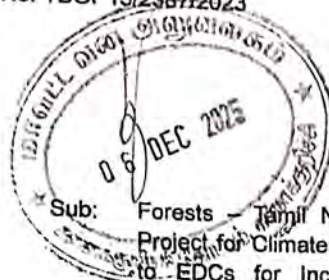
Annexure 12

Eco Development Committee (EDC) Guidelines

F.m. date: 06.12.2025

SPECIAL ATTENTION

Ref. No. TBGP13/2387/2023



Office of the Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Chief Project Director Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Conservation and Greening Project for Climate Change Response, Velachery Main Road, Medavakkam, Chennai – 600 100.
Dated: .12.2025

Sub: Forests – Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Conservation and Greening Project for Climate Change Response – Provision of Micro-Credit to EDCs for Income Generation Activities – Guidelines to implement micro-credit - Discussion - Regarding

It is informed that reallocation of funds for the activity 4.2.8(2)2) "Stone paving of paths, steps and community utility area" towards the provision of micro-credit and seed money for Income Generation Activities of the Eco-Development Committees (EDCs), has been completed and funds have been deposited in the bank accounts of EDCs.

It is further informed that of training programme to Forest personnel / Eco-Development Committee members on Micro-credit has also been provided through DHAN Foundation and only very few batches are remaining to be completed. Therefore, presumably, a broad enlightenment has also been provided to the concerned DMUs as well as Eco-Development Committee Members on utilization of Micro-Credit with the main objective of enhancing the livelihood opportunities thereby, substantial increase in household annual income of the tribal communities living the forest fringes, especially in Eastern Ghats.

The guidelines for effective use of the funds provided under Micro-credit has been prepared and communicated herewith alongwith the handbook. The DMUs are requested to go through the guidelines and in also enlighten the members of Eco-Development Committees. They are also requested to ensure that micro-credit programme is implemented and make efforts to bring it as a very successful programme.

Encl: As stated above

Sd/ S. Ramasubramanian
Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests &
Chief Project Director (TBGPCCR)

To
All Divisional Management Units
Copy to all Controlling Units

//True copy//
For Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests &
Chief Project Director (TBGPCCR)

5/12/25

MICROCREDIT POLICY FOR EDC UNDER TBGPCCR

Besides adhering to the broad functioning of the Microcredit system as conceptualized under Tamil Nadu Afforestation Project (TAP), the salient features of microcredit policy for the Ecodevelopment Committees (EDC) falling in the remote 155 villages in Eastern Ghats for TBGPCCR would envisage as follows:

I. OPERATIONALISATION:

a. Objective

Establish a sustainable and transparent microcredit system within the EDC to support income generation, reduce poverty, and enhance livelihood security in forest-fringe communities.

b. Source of Funds

- Funding Source: JICA funded TBGPCCR
- Initial corpus: Rs 7.63 lakhs / per EDC maintained in a separate EDC bank account

c. Eligibility

- Registered Self-Help Groups (SHGs)
- Individual members of the EDC (with SHG or community endorsement)
- Priority to women, SC/ST, and youth

d. Loan Terms

Table 1: Components of Loan

Parameter	Details
Loan amount	Upto Rs. 20,000 for individuals with viable income generating activities (Subject to revision, depending on the need and decision of the CPD) and upto Rs. 2,00,000 for SHGs with viable collective income generating activities (Subject to revision, depending on the need and decision of the CPD)
Interest rate	12% p.a. (or as revised by the EDC)
Repayment period	10 to 12 months for both individual and SHG loans
Repayment frequency	Monthly
Grace period	Maximum 1 month for seasonal activities
Execution of bond	Security bond with surety
Penalty on default	Rs 100 + temporary bar on future loans

e. Application Process (Detailed procedure prescribed in Handbook)

- Submit simple loan request form with activity plan
- Reviewed and approved by EDC Microcredit Subcommittee
- EDC will pass resolution and Member Secretary will submit to District Forest Officer for approval and amount shall be disbursed via bank transfer

f. Utilization & Monitoring

- Spot checks and usage verification within 30 days

- Repayment tracked via EDC ledger and SHG pazaabooka – Mobile –app and web portal
- Annual internal audit and public display of fund status

g. Fund Rotation

- Recovered funds are re-loaned to new or existing beneficiaries

h. Additional fund

- Additional funding from lead banks will be based on the performance of the EDC
- District Forest Officer / Member Secretary shall facilitate mobilising additional funds from lead banks, based on the performance of the EDC

II. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN IN BRIEF:

The plan for the utilization of Rs 1183.18 lakhs of seed money by Ecodevelopment Committees (EDCs) in Tamil Nadu, particularly relevant to forest fringe and tribal areas in the Eastern Ghats includes phasing, timelines and implementation guidelines, ensuring transparency, sustainability and alignment with forest conservation and livelihood goals.

a. Overview

- Total Seed Fund: Rs 1183.18 lakhs
- Purpose: To support skill development and enterprise development for livelihood improvement by providing micro credit through EDCs for sustainable income generation.
- Implementation Period: Initially 24 months (2 years), in 4 phases. Later the EDCs will continue to perform their duties even after the project period.

b. Implementation Timeline

Table 5: Timeline of the Project

Phase	Period	Key Activities
Phase 1	Month 1 - 3	Baseline survey, Awareness, Micro-plan preparation, Formation/ strengthening of EDCs
Phase 2	Month 4 - 9	Capacity building Seed fund disbursement, start of microcredit and IGAs (that will include infrastructure, tools and equipment in place if needed for that activity and market tie-ups as needed)
Phase 3	Month 10 - 18	Monitoring, mid-term review and correction, scale-up of successful activities
Phase 4	Month 19 - 24	Repayment cycle strengthening, documentation, social audit, reporting

c. Fund Allocation Structure

Table 2: Fund Allocation

Component	% Allocation (Approximately)	Amount (Rs In Lakhs)	Description
Microcredit Revolving Funds	90%	1064.86	Low-Interest loans for SHGs/ Individuals
Cluster Facilitator Support (shared) / Administrative & Monitoring Costs	10%	118.32	Contribution toward honorarium, mobility, and supervision Excess can be used to fill-in shortage in the budget heads related to microcredit, Infrastructure and training MIS, data management, third-party reviews To be used for unforeseen expenses including shortage in the budget heads related to microcredit and training

d. Guidelines to be followed by EDCs

i. Planning & Governance

- Prepare / revise EDC Micro-plans in consultation with Forest Department & community.
- Constitute a Seed-money subcommittee within EDC for fund governance.
- Open a joint bank account with EDC president and Member Secretary as signatories.

ii. Microcredit Disbursement

- EDC will act as a community banker, issuing loans upto Rs .20,000 for individuals and upto Rs.2,00,000/- for SHGs.
- Maintain clear loan ledgers, repayment schedules, and usage verification (Refer Handbook for detailed guidelines).
- Resolution for Revolving fund rules must be passed in the EDC meeting and to be approved by District Forest Officer.

iii. Livelihood Selection Criteria

- Must be sustainable, forest-compatible (e.g., NTFP, eco-tourism, agriculture, etc.).
- Preference for women, tribal youth and SHG-linked proposals.
- Activities must be backed by capacity or market linkage (e.g., livestock/goat rearing, poultry, tamarind processing, mushroom cultivation, automobile repair etc.).

iv. Monitoring & Reporting (Refer Handbook for detailed guidelines)

- Monthly reporting to Member Secretary.
- Maintain a Seed Money Register, Loan Register and Expenditure Register .
- Conduct a social audit every 12 months and display fund use on public notice boards.

v. Capacity Building

- Each EDC must undergo following training modules on:
 - Livelihood/enterprise development
 - Financial literacy and book-keeping

e. Indicative Activities Under IGA (Examples)

Activity	Fund Mode	Potential places and groups
NTPF collection (Eg. Tamarind) Other than protected area	Microcredit	Jawadhu, Kalrayan hills
Livestock/goat/poultry rearing Stall feeding	Microcredit	Short-cycle income enhancement supportive loans for SHGs and individuals
Mushroom cultivation, / Honeybee or other nature-based activities	Microcredit	Women SHGs in tribal villages
Herbal nurseries and Medicinal & Aromatic plant cultivation/collection and processing	Microcredit	Medicinal plant propagation
Products from local bioresources Eg. Leaf plate / bamboo craft)	Microcredit	Youth and women craft groups
Eco-guide training & homestays	Microcredit	Nature-based tourism
Market linkages	Line Department	DHAN Foundation Madurai

f. Monitoring, Evaluation & Impact Tracking

- **Key Indicators:** No. of SHGs supported/ Repayment rate of loans/ Income increase per household / percentage of EDC fund rotated successfully/ Increase in forest-friendly enterprise
- **Mid-term Evaluation:** At the end of the 1st year done internally for course correction, if any
- **Third-party Evaluation:** At end of 2nd Year by an agency which does Monitoring & Evaluation

III. ENGAGEMENT OF CLUSTER FACILITATORS

Comprehensive plan for the engagement of Cluster Facilitators to support implementation across 155 EDC villages, particularly for managing seed money, microcredit, livelihood planning, and capacity building envisages as under:

a. Role of Cluster Facilitators (CFs)

Cluster Facilitators will act as local coordinators and community mobilizers responsible for ensuring smooth implementation, documentation, and monitoring of IGA/ EDC activities across groups of villages.

b. Geographic Deployment Plan

Total EDC Villages	Proposed Cluster Size	No. of Facilitators Required
155 villages	1 CF per 8 - 10 villages	16 - 20 Cluster Facilitators

Each facilitator will cover a geographic cluster (within a range of 2 - 3 adjacent panchayats), ensuring local knowledge and efficient travel.

c. Key Responsibilities

- Community Mobilization - Organize SHG/EDC meetings, awareness drives, support micro-plan preparation
- Microcredit Oversight - Assist in loan documentation, track repayments, help beneficiaries record usage
- Livelihood Support - Facilitate IGA training, vendor linkage, market exposure
- Monitoring & Reporting - Submit monthly reports, photos, progress indicators to RO
- Capacity building - Conduct financial literacy/ skill sessions, support training institution
- Digital & MIS - Help EDCs maintain registers, optionally collect mobile data
- Liaison - Serve as bridge between Forest Dept., EDC, SHGs, and technical NGOs

d. Qualifications & Profile

- Min. Education - Secondary or Higher Secondary

e. Remuneration & Support

- Monthly Honorarium - Rs 12,000
- Travel Allowance - Rs 1000 to 2000 per month
- Training Support - Initial 3-day orientation + quarterly refresher sessions
- Duration of Engagement - 24 months (Phase-wise review after 12 months)
- Supervision - Member Secretary or NGO Partner assigned as supervisor

h. Expected Outputs Per Facilitator (Over 24 Months)

- Micro plans prepared - 8 to 10
- SHGs linked to seed fund - 20 to 25
- Livelihood trainings supported - 10 to 15
- Monthly reports submitted - 24

- Loan recovery / repayment records verified - 100% of disbursed cases

IV. UTILIZATION PLAN

Comprehensive utilization plan for seed money allocation of Rs 7.63 lakhs per village across 155 EDC villages (total of Rs 1183.18 lakhs), focusing on income generation activities, microcredit systems and the engagement of Cluster Facilitators, all aimed at sustainable livelihood improvement.

a. Fund Utilization Breakdown per Village (Rs 7.63 lakhs)

EDC-wise allocation as per overall budget

Component	Amount per EDC (in Rs)	% per EDC amount
Microcredit Revolving Funds	6,86,000	90 %
Cluster Facilitator Support (shared) / Administrative & Monitoring Costs	77,000	10%

b. Utilization Strategy (Stepwise Plan)

Phase 1: Planning & Capacity (Months 1 - 3)

- Micro plan finalization by EDC with Cluster Facilitator support
- Training of Cluster Facilitator and EDC office bearers
- SHG selection and bank linkage

Phase 2: Disbursement & Livelihood Start-Up (Months 4 - 9)

- Rs 6.86 lakhs per village disbursed to SHGs as revolving loans
- Business & IGA training in coordination with KVK/NGOs and all line departments

Phase 3: Market & Enterprise Strengthening (Months 10 - 18)

- Cluster-level branding/packaging support
- Eco-tourism product setup (guide training, local products)
- Track repayment, re-lending from SHGs

Phase 4: Review & Sustainability (Months 19 - 24)

- Evaluate income increase per HH/SHG
- Conduct social audit and display accounts publicly
- Report outcomes and prepare for potential Phase-II

c. Guiding Principles for EDCs

- The EDCs being registered under Registration of Society's act shall maintain all books of accounts as required and obtain renewal every year.
- The accounts of the EDC shall be audited through a Chartered Accountant annually.
- Exclusive Revolving Fund: Individuals / SHGs must repay to EDC fund account; re-loan to next group.
- Inclusion Priority: Focus on women, tribal youth, forest-dependent families.
- Approved Activities: EDCs must select activities aligned with micro plan only.

- Records & Transparency: Use of loan registers, audit by community or external team.
- Sustainability: Emphasis on low-cost, replicable models with local market access.

d. Expected Outcomes

- SHGs receiving microcredit - 350+ across 155 villages
- Income-generating units started - 3 to 4 per village (approx. 500 - 600 total)
- Trained community members - up to 4,000 persons
- Villages with re-loan cycles completed - At least 80% by end of 2 years
- Average household income increase - 10% (As per MoD it is 25% by 2032 two years after completion of the project period).

Output	Outcome	Impact
350+ SHGs from 155 villages receiving microcredit support	Increased income of the community	Better living standards, improvement in health, literacy
3 to 4 Income-generating units supporting 500 - 600 people	Diversified incomes of the community Easier value addition of livelihood activities Sustainable livelihoods based on local bioresources	Decrease on unsustainable use of forests Wider market presence Brand building of value-added products
4000 Trained community members-	Increased skill amongst community members	Decrease in migration Decrease/stopping of unsustainable forest dependent practices

(E) Instructive and circular issued by CPD TBGPCCR then and there.

Sd/- S.Ramasubramanian

Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
& Chief Project Director (TBGPCCR)

//True Copy//


For Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
& Chief Project Director (TBGPCCR)

Annexure 13

G.O. (Ms) No. 11, dated 10.01.2024



ABSTRACT

Environment, Climate Change and Forest Department – Sanction of the “Tamil Nadu Sustainably Harnessing Ocean Resources and Blue Economy (TN-SHORE)” Project/Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission – With World Bank Assistance – Orders Issued.

ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND FOREST (EC.4) DEPARTMENT

G.O.(Ms) No.11

Dated: 10.01.2024

சோபகிருது, மார்ச்சு - 25

திருவள்ளூர் ஆண்டு -2054

Read:

1. G.O.(Ms).No.101, Environment, Climate Change & Forests (EC.2) Department, Dated. 03.11.2021.
2. Budget Speech Announcement for the year 2023-2024.

ORDER:

The Hon'ble Minister (Finance & Human Resources Management), in his Budget Speech in the year 2023-2024, made the following announcement on the floor of the assembly: -

“Due to increasing vagaries of climate change and pressure caused by the burgeoning population, the coastal ecosystem and the livelihood of coastal population are likely to be severely affected in the near future. The Government will implement the “Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission” with the objective of preventing sea erosion, reducing marine pollution and conserving marine biodiversity. The mission will be implemented with World Bank assistance at an estimated cost of Rs.2,000 crore in the next 5 years.”

2. In accordance with this announcement, this department approached the World Bank and submitted a concept note which was discussed by the World Bank team during their visit in August 2022. The concept note was agreed to by the World Bank and Government of Tamil Nadu was advised to prepare a Preliminary Project Report (PPR) which was prepared and uploaded.

3. The Ministry of Finance, Department of Economic Affairs reviewed this project in their meeting held on 28th April 2023. The Ministry of Finance, Department of Economic Affairs through their letter dated 18th May 2023 approved the project and posed the project proposal of Government of Tamil Nadu to World Bank for funding. The World Bank has provided approval to the project proposal. Details of the project are as below:-

Project Objectives

The “Tamil Nadu Sustainably Harnessing Ocean Resources and Blue Economy (TN-SHORE)” project aims to enhance the resilience and sustainable utilization of coastal resources through a multi-pronged
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approach. It envisions a holistic integration of various sectors to drive a resilient and circular blue economy, enhance local livelihoods, and capacities for a greener future. To achieve these objectives, the project identifies five thematic prioritized investment areas;-

Component 1: Enhance Coastal Biodiversity

This component focuses on strengthening institutional capabilities for comprehensive Conservation of Coastal and Marine Biodiversity. Key activities include;-

1. Biodiversity Conservation Park at Kadambur, Chengalpattu District
2. Sea Turtle Conservation Centre at Nagapattinam and Chennai
3. International Dugong Conservation Centre at Manora, Thanjavur District
4. Coastal Wetlands (including Pallikaranai) Conservation and Restoration

Component 2: Coastal Protection

This component focuses on establishing a comprehensive coastal protection strategy, with a strong emphasis on the pivotal role of adopting an Ecosystem-based Approach (EbA) and promoting the development of green infrastructure (living shorelines). The strategic implementation of initiatives within this framework encompasses mangrove and seagrass plantation and restoration, coral reef restoration, all directed to effectively mitigate erosion concerns along the entire coastline.

To specifically address erosion, the component advocates for adoption of Green or Hybrid erosion control measures, prioritizing an Ecosystem-based Approach (EbA) that places emphasis on safeguarding coastal wetlands and estuaries. Identified erosion hotspots will receive particular attention for mangrove and seagrass plantation and restoration activities. A Special Purpose Vehicle viz., the “**Tamil Nadu Blue Carbon Agency**” (TNBCA) shall be set up under the project to ensure a dedicated and focused attention on overseeing the preservation and restoration of targeted coastal ecosystems, including mangroves, seagrass, and salt marshes. This initiative will not only enhance ecosystem services but will also create a framework for trading of carbon credits. Key activities under this component will include;-

1. Enhancing Coastal Resilience: Mangroves, Seagrass, and Blue Carbon solutions
2. Erosion control and Coral restoration at Kariyachalli Islands, Gulf of Mannar ecosystems
3. Strengthening Coastal Management through Integrated Coastal Zonal Management (ICZM), Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), Coastal Management Plan (CMP) for Critically Vulnerable Coastal Areas (CVCA), Integrated Management Plan (IMP) and Valuing Ecosystem Services with Capacity Building and Outreach Initiatives.

Component 3: Improving livelihoods

This component centers around enhancing livelihoods by endorsing

initiatives that promote alternative and sustainable means of living for coastal communities. These initiatives encompass strategic investments in the establishment of blue flag beaches, eco-tourism centres, preservation of heritage sites and creation of mangrove boardwalk etc. Key activities within this component involve:

1. Blue Flag Beaches
2. Sustainable Tourism
3. Diversified livelihoods for a thriving Blue Economy

Component 4: Pollution Abatement

This component is meant for Pollution Abatement, with a primary focus on the management and reduction of plastic waste in coastal and marine environment. The approach emphasizes the promotion of plastic circularity through an ecosystem-centered strategy. Key activities within this component involve:

- a) Identification of plastic waste hotspots** including identifying and installing plastics capture booms in areas characterized by high levels of plastic waste pollution along the river and coastal ecosystems. Implementation of awareness and incentive programs for communities, to effectively manage discarded plastic and Abandoned, Lost and Discarded Fishing Gears (ALDFG).
- b) River System Investments:** Undertaking strategic initiatives to prevent and combat marine pollution by investing in river systems. This encompasses the enhancement and establishment of Material Collection Facilities (MCF) and Material Recycling Facilities (MRF) to facilitate proper segregation and storage of plastic waste.
- c) Digital Waste Exchange Platform:** Development of a digital waste exchange platform aimed at connecting collection facilities. This platform will promote the upcycling and reuse of collected materials while exploring alternative solutions for effective plastic waste management.
- d) Climate Smart Coastal Villages:** Facilitating development of climate-smart coastal villages involve implementing a comprehensive strategy that integrates sustainable practices to mitigate the impact of climate change. This includes enhancing the resilience of coastal communities through the adoption of eco-friendly infrastructure, such as resilient housing and energy-efficient systems. Additionally, promoting climate-smart agricultural practices, such as drought-resistant crops and efficient water management, contributes to the overall sustainability of these villages. Engaging local communities through awareness programs and skill-building initiatives ensures a holistic approach to climate-smart development, fostering long-term resilience and well-being. The integration of renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind, further positions these coastal villages as model for environmentally conscious living. Key activities include:
 1. Advancing Meendum Manjappai - Strengthening Plastic Circularity
 2. Climate Smart Coastal Villages

3. Ennore Creek Restoration

Component 5: Project Management:

This segment will address the operational needs of the project. This involves engagement of consultancy technical and management services, analytical studies, and administrative matters. This system aims to track ecosystem health effectively. A third-party evaluation will be conducted to ensure accountability and transparency. The project execution and management cost is Rs 100 crore.

A summary of the project components along with financial allocation is provided in the Table I below ;-

(Table – I)

Components	Key Activities	Total Allocation (Rs in Crores)	Implementing Agency
Component 1 Enhance Coastal Biodiversity	1. Biodiversity Conservation Park at Kadambur, Chengalpattu District	345.00	Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Head of Forest Force)
	2. Sea Turtle Conservation Centre at Nagapattinam and Chennai	60.00	Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Chief Wild Life Warden
	3. International Dugong Conservation Centre at Manora, Thanjavur District	90.00	Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Chief Wild Life Warden
	4. Coastal Wetlands (Including Pallikaranai) Conservation and Restoration	275.00	Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Tamil Nadu Wetland Mission Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Chief Wild Life Warden
Total		770.00	

Component 2 Coastal Protection	1. Enhancing Coastal Resilience: Mangroves, Seagrass, and Blue Carbon solutions	240.00	Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Green Tamil Nadu Mission Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Chief Wild Life Warden Department of Environment and Climate Change
	2. Erosion control and Coral restoration at Kriyachalli Islands. Gulf of Mannar Ecosystems	50.00	Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Chief Wild Life Warden
	3. Strengthening Coastal Management through ICZM, MSP, CMP for CVCA, IMP plans, and valuing Ecosystem Services with Capacity Building and Outreach Initiatives	50.00	Department of Environment and Climate Change Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Tamil Nadu Wetland Mission State Project Management Unit
Total		340.00	
Component 3 Improving Livelihoods	1. Blue flag Beaches, Sustainable Tourism, and Diversified Livelihoods for a thriving Blue Economy	250.00	Department of Environment and Climate Change Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Chief Wild Life Warden
Total		250.00	

Component 4 Pollution Abatement	1. Advancing Meendum Majappai-Strengthening Plastic Circularity	100.00	Chairperson, Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board
	2. Climate Smart Coastal Villages	75.00	Department of Environment and Climate Change
	3. Ennore Creek Restoration	40.00	Chairperson, Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Green Tamil Nadu Mission
Total		215.00	
Component 5 Project Management	1. Enabling project execution and Management	100.00	Administrative Unit, Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission
	Total	100.00	
Grand Total		1675.00	

Table II details the financial arrangement

**(Table-II)
(Rs in Crores)**

Tranche	World Bank	State Government	Total Cost
Tranche-1	700	300	1000
Tranche-2	472.5	202.5	675
Total	1172.5	502.5	1675
Percentage	70	30	100

Table III, indicates the Year wise financial projection of allocation – Share of the World Bank and the Government of Tamil Nadu

(Table – III)
(Rs in Crores)

TRANCHE I						TRANCHE II			
2024-25		2025-26		2026-27		2027-28		2028-29	
World Bank	State	World Bank	State	World Bank	State	World Bank	State	World Bank	State
178.5	76.5	297.5	127.5	224	96	280	120	192.5	82.5
255		425		320		400		275	

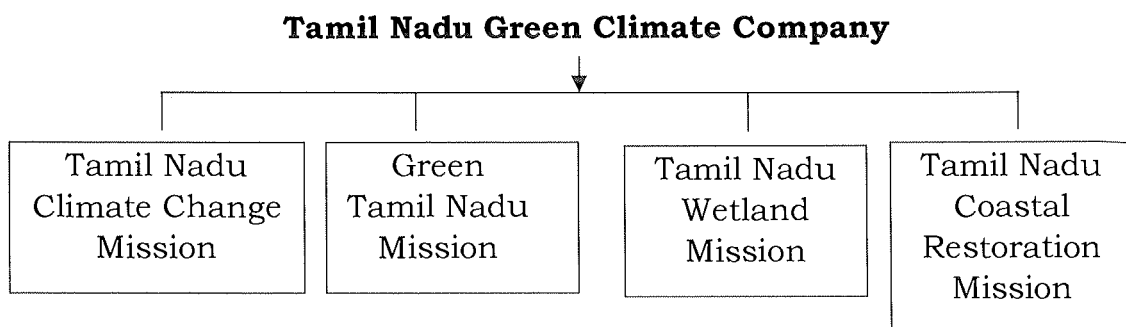
This project will have a multi-disciplinary approach integrating activities from different line departments, which will help to make the coastline more resilient so as to increase its adaptive capacity.

4. In the Government Order 1st read above, the Government has already set up the Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company under section 8 of the Companies Act 2013 to implement the three key missions of the Government viz. Tamil Nadu Climate Change Mission, Green Tamil Nadu Mission and the Tamil Nadu Wetland Mission. It is a not-for-profit Company and a unique platform to respond to Climate Change in the State and it will act as a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to address the climate crisis in the State for creating purposeful and equitable long-term solutions. In order to strengthen the Government's climate response at the grassroots level, the Government has created a special organisational setup at the district level, in which the District Collectors have been designated as District Mission Directors and District Forest Officers (DFOs) have been designated as District Climate Officers. Further, the State has also constituted the Tamil Nadu Governing Council on Climate Change, in order to provide guidance on the implementation of various climate initiatives.

5. Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company has a strong monitoring platform which helps the State to implement climate action projects. A Project Management Unit has also been set up for the Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company. The "Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission" will be monitored by the Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company under the Environment, Climate Change and Forest Department. Chart – I shows Missions under the Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company including the **"Tamil Nadu Sustainably Harnessing Ocean Resources and Blue Economy (TN-SHORE)"** hereinafter referred to as **"Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission"** (தெய்தல் மீட்சி இயக்கம்).

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Chart - I



The Project fund shall be routed through the Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company and other concerned agencies.

6. The Government after careful examination hereby accord sanction for setting up of “Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission” with assistance from the World Bank. The estimated cost of the project is Rs.1675 Crores (World Bank assistance – Rs.1172.5 Crore (+) Tamil Nadu State Component Rs.502.5 Crores) including the State share with activities spread over Financial Years 2024-2029.

7. The Government also accord approval to the Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company and other concerned agencies to receive funds, manage, implement and monitor the Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission.

8. For effective implementation of the project, the Government also accord approval for an amount of Rs 100 crore earmarked towards establishment of Special Project Monitoring Unit (SPMU), manpower infrastructure and related cost for a period of 5 years i.e from 2024-2029. Following administrative unit shall be setup for effective implementation of the World Bank assisted **“Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission”** as below :-

1. Chief Mission Director from All India Service at the level of Super Time scale and above (on deputation basis).
2. Mission Director from All India Service at the level of Senior Time scale and above (on deputation basis).
3. Two posts of Assistant Mission Directors from Group-I Level Officers. (Deputy Collector / District Revenue Officer / Assistant Conservator of Forest Level) (on deputation basis)
4. The following three wings will be created for Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission : -

Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission

<u>Administration</u>	<u>Finance</u>	<u>Technical</u>
Administrative Officer – 1	Finance Officer – 1	Technical Officer – 1
Administrative Executives – 4	Finance Executives – 2	Engineering Consultant – 1
Multitasking Assistant - 1	Multitasking Assistant - 2	Environment Consultant – 1
		Multitasking Assistant – 2
Total - 6	Total - 5	Total - 5

All the above positions shall be deployed from an outsourcing agency on contract basis/ deputation for a period of 5 years. Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company Board shall determine the terms and conditions for deployment of such positions. The entire expenditure in connection with the functioning of administrative unit shall be met out from the Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission Project. This project does not envisage to create any new post.

9. The Government also order for constitution of a High Powered Steering Committee with the following composition for monitoring the Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission Project ;-

1	Chief Secretary to Government of Tamil Nadu	Chairman
2	Additional Chief Secretary to Government, Environment, Climate Change & Forest Department	Member
3	Principal Secretary to Government, Finance Department	Member
4	Additional Chief Secretary to Government, Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Department	Member
5	Additional Chief Secretary to Government, Water Resources Department	Member

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6	Additional Chief Secretary to Government, Fisheries and Fishermen Welfare Department	Member
7	Additional Chief Secretary to Government, Tourism, Culture and Religious Endowments Department	Member
8	Principal Secretary to Government, Municipal Administration and Water Supply Department	Member
9	Secretary to Government, Industries, Investment Promotion & Commerce Department	Member
10	Secretary to Government, Revenue & Disaster Management Department	Member
11	Principal Secretary to Government, Rural Development & Panchayat Raj Department	Member
12	Secretary to Government, Adi-Dravidar & Tribal Welfare Department	Member
13	Principal Secretary to Government, Agriculture & Farmers Welfare Department	Member
14	Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Head of Forest Force)	Member
15	Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Chief Wildlife Warden	Member
16	Chief Mission Director, Coastal Mission	Convenor

10. The Government have already setup the District Climate Change Mission in all the 38 Districts of the State to carry out climate change activities at the district level. Accordingly, the District Collector is the Mission Director of the Climate Change Mission and the District Forest Officer is the District Climate Officer for the Districts under their

jurisdiction. Therefore, at the District Level, the “Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission” project will be implemented by the District Climate Change Missions setup, with the help of line departments.

11. This order issues with the concurrence of Finance Department vide its U.O.No.3588/FS/P/2023, Dated.29.12.2023.

(BY ORDER OF THE GOVERNOR)

SUPRIYA SAHU
ADDITIONAL CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT

To:

The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF), Chennai-15.

The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Chief Wildlife Warden,
Chennai-15.

The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests /Member Secretary,
Tamil Nadu State Wetland Authority, Chennai-15.

The Director,
Department of Environment and Climate Change,
Chennai-15.

The Chief Executive Officer,
Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company, Chennai – 9.

The Accountant General, Chennai-18.

The Pay and Accounts Officer, Chennai-9.

The Country Head, World Bank, New Delhi.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change,
Government of India, New Delhi.

The Niti Aayog, New Delhi.

The Principal Secretary to Government,
Finance Department, Secretariat, Chennai-9.

The Additional Chief Secretary to Government,
Planning, Development & Special Initiatives Department,
Secretariat, Chennai-9.

The Additional Chief Secretary to Government,
Water Resources Department, Secretariat, Chennai-9.

The Additional Chief Secretary to Government,
Animal Husbandry, Dairying, Fisheries
and Fishermen Welfare Department,
Secretariat, Chennai-9.

The Principal Secretary to Government,
Tourism, Culture and Religious Endowments Department,
Secretariat, Chennai-9.

The Principal Secretary to Government,
Municipal Administration and Water Supply Department,
Secretariat, Chennai-9.

The Secretary to Government,
Industries, Investment Promotion & Commerce Department,
Secretariat, Chennai-9.

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The Secretary to Government,
Revenue & Disaster Management Department,
Secretariat, Chennai-9.

The Principal Secretary to Government,
Rural Development & Panchayat Raj Department,
Secretariat, Chennai-9.

The Secretary to Government,
Adi-Dravidar & Tribal Welfare Department,
Secretariat, Chennai-9.

The Principal Secretary to Government,
Agriculture & Farmers Welfare Department,
Secretariat, Chennai-9.

The Chief Mission Director,
Coastal Mission.

Copy to:

The Special Personal Assistant to Hon'ble Chief Minister,
Chief Minister's Office, Chennai-9.

The Special/Senior Personal Assistant to the
Hon'ble Minister (Finance & Human Resources Management),
Chennai-9.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister's Office, Chennai-9.

The Private Secretary to Secretary-I to Hon'ble Chief Minister,
Chennai-9.

The Special/Senior Personal Assistant to the
Hon'ble Minister (Forests), Chennai-9.

The Special/Senior Personal Assistant to
Hon'ble Minister (Environment, Climate Change), Chennai - 9.

The Private Secretary to Chief Secretary to Government, Chennai-9.

The Chairperson,
Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board, Chennai-32.

The Private Secretary to Additional Chief Secretary to Government,
Environment, Climate Change and Forests Department, Chennai-9.

The Private Secretary to Special Secretary (Environment, Climate Change),
Environment, Climate Change & Forest Department, Chennai-9.

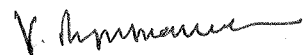
The Private Secretary to Special Secretary (Forests),
Environment, Climate Change & Forest Department, Chennai-9.

Finance (ECC&F/BPE) Department, Chennai-9.

All Sections in Environment, Climate Change & Forest Department,
Chennai-9.

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SECTION OFFICER

