

### **3.1. Environment and Ecology**

Environmental Conservation is an integral part of the socio- economic development. The spiraling population and increasing industrialization, have posed a serious challenge to the preservation of our terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. Conservation of our natural resources like land, water, forest and bio-diversity are important for the ecological security of Tamil Nadu.

Degradation of the environment affects the poor and underprivileged the most. Hence, by protecting the environment, the economic interests of the poorer sections of society are also safeguarded. Sustainable development is the need of the hour and this is possible only by promoting awareness about the need to protect the environment. Several initiatives have been taken by this Government for pollution abatement in the rivers and lakes besides promoting environmental awareness among the school children and the public at large.

The State, while planning for social and economic progress that satisfies the present needs of the citizen, has the moral obligation to pass on the nature's gifts to the future generation. One of the critical activities in this regard is preservation of our environment.

The Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board and the Department of Environment are the two agencies dealing in the environmental concerns of the State.

#### **Performance of the sector during 2008-09**

##### ***1. Department of Environment***

##### **Objectives**

- To evolve environmental policy frame work for sustainable management of the resources of the State
- To integrate conservation and development and to bring out sound resource management for economic development of the State.
- To restore and rehabilitate the ecologically fragile and sensitive ecosystems by ameliorative management
- To deal with all aspects of environment other than those dealt with by Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board from time to time.

- To provide web-based information through Environmental Information System on the Status of Environment of Tamil Nadu.
- To develop environmental awareness and education programmes for all sections of the society
- To coordinate and monitor environmental protocols.

## **Schemes of Department of Environment**

### ***Environmental awareness programme***

To create environmental awareness among the school and college students, 1200 eco-clubs have been formed in 30 districts of the State involving selected educational institutions and NGOs. Tamil Nadu has the distinction of launching eco-clubs in 30 districts of the State with the State Government funds. Environmental exhibitions are being conducted every year at District level through the Eco-clubs. Financial assistance to the extent of Rs.1.00 lakh per district is released for the activities of the Eco-clubs from the year 2007-08. Each District has got Eco-clubs in 40 schools. The scheme is being continued. Further, action has been taken to form eco-clubs in all Government and Government aided higher and higher secondary school during the current year.

### ***Conducting training workshops/seminars through awareness network***

To create awareness among the students and general public seminars and workshops are being conducted at a cost of Rs.2 lakh. This scheme will be continued during the year 2008-09 also and will be taken up as a regular activity during this plan period.

### ***Awards***

NGOs, Experts and individuals are honored with environmental awards in recognition of their excellent contribution in the field of environment. The awards are distributed in the areas of Environmental Awareness & Education, Environmental Management, Environmental Protection and Environmental Research during the World Environment Day celebration as follows:

- a. First Prize - Rs.10000 with a certificate
- b. Second Prize - Rs.7500 with a certificate
- c. Third Prize - Rs.5000 with a certificate
- d. Best Research Paper - Rs.5000 with a certificate

### ***Study on Climate change***

It is proposed to undertake a detailed study on the impact of climate change in Tamil Nadu, which will throw light on remedial strategies to combat this issue. This study is proposed to be taken up through reputed Industries / Institutions. An amount of Rs. 1.00 crore is budgeted for this study.

### ***National Green Corps***

Enthused by the success of school eco-clubs, another 7500 school Eco-clubs have been started @ 250 schools in 30 districts under the National Green Corps (NGC) programme. About 40 to 50 students are enrolled in each school under a teacher coordinator. On the whole, over 300000 school children have been covered under this massive eco-awareness programme covering 7500 schools all over the state. Environmental awareness under this programme is organized through thematic campaigns, tree planting, competitions and eco-camps. The Department of Environment is functioning as the State Coordinator of NGC. A sum of Rs.2.05 crore has been sanctioned for NGC activities during the year 2008-09 by Government of India, and the outlay for 2008-09 is also proposed at Rs. 2.05 crore. The outlay for 2009-10 is yet to be finalized by the GOI.

### ***Environmental information system (ENVIS)***

An Environmental Information System (ENVIS) centre has been functioning in the Department of Environment with grants from Government of India. Department of Environment has been identified as a centre for the Environmental Information System (ENVIS). This ENVIS centre provides web based database on State of Environment and related issues and answers environmental related queries for the policy makers and the user groups. News letters, online quiz, online chat, creation of database and training are other activities covered under ENVIS.

### ***World Bank Assisted Emergency Tsunami Reconstruction Project***

Demarcation of HTL along the Coast of Tamil Nadu from Palar River Mouth to Thengapattinam in Kanyakumari District. The Department of Environment has already undertaken HTL demarcation from Pulicat Lake to Palar

River Mouth through the Chief Naval Hydrographer, Dehradun at a cost of Rs.50.00 lakh. Demarcation of HTL for the remaining stretch of the coastline including tidal influenced water bodies is being undertaken and the HTL reference points will also be superimposed on the village cadastral maps containing survey numbers in 1:5000 scales and also on the village cadastral maps containing survey numbers in 1:5000 scales at a cost of Rs.2.21 crore. This work has been entrusted to the Institute of Remote Sensing, Anna University and would be completed by 2008-09.

***Erection of Stone Pillars on HTL reference points***

In order to facilitate the coastal community to identify the HTL on ground, HTL stone pillars will be fixed along the coast wherever necessary at a cost of Rs.1.00 crore. The work will be completed during the year 2008-09.

***Preparation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan, Coastal Vulnerability Maps & training modules.***

In order to achieve economic prosperity without sacrificing ecological security, Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan (ICZMP) is being prepared for the coastline of Tamil Nadu. Since the ICZMP & vulnerability maps are new in concept, training is to be imparted to the coastal community, stakeholders, Government Departments, & Local Panchayat Officials by preparing suitable training modules. This work is entrusted to DHI Water and Environment, New Delhi. The above works are undertaken at a cost of Rs 4.91 crore and will be completed during the year 2008-09.

***Capacity Building and Awareness Creation***

The concept of ICZMP and coastal vulnerabilities being relatively new, it is important to develop awareness about the actual spirit of these plans among various stakeholders. Therefore, to develop suitable training modules for various stakeholders and also create awareness among the coastal communities about the CRZ, importance and advantage of ICZMP and Vulnerability Maps, a sum of Rs.1.00 crore has been sanctioned. Training programmes at different levels will be taken up for the Panchayat leaders, officials of the Government departments and the local bodies. Special awareness programme on CRZ/ICZMP will be

conducted for better understanding of these concepts by the Coastal community and students of National Green Corps (NGC). The local academicians and NGO's will be involved in conducting workshops/ seminars /street plays/exhibitions, etc. The work will be taken up on completion of preparation of training modules and will be completed during the year 2008-09.

***Formation of One technical Cell at Chennai and two Project Co-ordination units at Nagapattinam and Thoothukudi***

In order to facilitate the smooth progress of the projects and for better co-ordination between the projects preparing consultants and other Government Departments one technical cell at Chennai and two project co-ordination units at Nagapattinam and Thoothukudi have been set up at a cost of Rs.53.00 lakh.

***Conducting awareness programmes on CRZ issues***

In order to create awareness on Coastal Regulation Zone issues to field level functionaries of Government and Non-Governmental agencies in Coastal Districts of Tamil Nadu, sanction has been accorded for Rs.4.84 lakh to conduct awareness workshops /seminars/ programmes. The works were completed during the year 2006 by conducting workshops/seminars at 13 coastal district headquarters.

**2. Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board**

The Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board is enforcing the provisions of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 (a Central Act), the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1981 and the various Rules framed under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

The Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board has been monitoring industries and plays an important role in the establishment of Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs), management of solid wastes, monitoring of vehicular emission, water quality etc. and increasing environmental awareness.

Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board has all along been carrying out most of its activities from the Board funds. Besides, the Board-supported programmes, it also undertakes specific schemes covering Spatial Environmental Planning and Water/ Air Quality Monitoring of critical areas in the State using funds provided by the Central Pollution Control Board. In addition, the Board plays an important role in the establishment of Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs) for clusters of small-scale industries in various parts of the State, for which 25% of the project cost is derived from the Central Government.

To keep pace with the industrial development, the board intensifies its activities through several schemes like upgrading the laboratories, solid waste management, environmental education etc., The board also proposes to upgrade its research and development. The pollution control board proposes to implement these schemes by the board's own resources.

#### ***Monitoring of Compliance as per the National Environmental Policy 2006***

Weak enforcement of environmental compliance is attributed to inadequate technical capacities, monitoring infrastructure, and trained staff in enforcement institutions. In addition, there is insufficient involvement of the potentially impacted local communities in the monitoring of compliance, and absence of institutionalized public-private partnerships in enhancement of monitoring infrastructure.

The TNPCB has taken special efforts in the activities mentioned below

- To collect and analyze the trade effluent/sewage samples and conduct air quality survey to monitor the compliance of standards.
- To monitor the water quality of important rivers, lakes, coastal regions and water sources by conducting periodical inspection and sampling.
- To conduct ambient air surveys in important cities, industrial estates, major Habitations etc., to ensure compliance of air quality standards.

- To conduct research and development activities relating to problems of water, land and air pollution and its prevention, control and abatement thereof.
- To monitor the emission generated by automobiles to ensure the protection of atmosphere from air pollution.
- To impart training to staff of Government organizations, Non-Governmental organizations, Personnel from industries, Local bodies etc., to make them competent and capable of controlling and advising on waste treatment and pollution prevention techniques suitable to the local needs.
- To participate in environmental awareness programmes to create awareness on environmental issues among public, industries etc.

### **Plan Outlay for 2009-10**

A sum of Rs.2.67 crore is approved for the Ecology and Environment sector for the year 2009-10. The Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board implements its schemes with its own resources.