

Breathing new life into the mangroves

September 19, 2019

Research being carried out on 25 species in core area of Coringa sanctuary. A Mangrove Genetic Resources Conservation Centre has been developed in the core area of the Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary (CWS) in the Godavari estuary with 25 species collected from various places across the country, including the Sundarbans, Bitarkanika in Odisha, and the Krishna Wildlife Sanctuary and Coringa in Andhra Pradesh.

Scientists of the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) spared no effort to make it happen.

A portion of the area (around one acre) has been set aside for the CWS for the centre, which is being funded by the United Nations Development Programme (Global Environmental Finance). The East Godavari River Estuarine Ecosystem Foundation (EGREE) of the State Forest Department has been roped in to help the MSSRF develop the centre.



MSSRF Principal Co-ordinator (Coastal Systems Research) R. Ramasubramanian told The Hindu that the conservation centre is a brainchild of Prof. Swaminathan. Free access is provided to academicians and scientists to conduct research on the genetic resources at one place, he added.

“The centre will become a destination for future research on mangrove genetics. It will also conserve the mangrove species which are dwindling at an alarming rate due to various reasons,” said Mr. Ramasubramanian.

The species planted in the centre are doing well and are expected to be ready for genetic research within three years, according to a team of technical staff charged with the responsibility of conserving these species.

In the Godavari estuary, *Scyphiphora hydrophylacea* has been identified as a vulnerable species, according to the MSSRF research team. The species also figures in the Red List of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Its number has come down to less than 1,000 near the Sacramento Light House, its habitat in the estuary. The threats for the species are yet to be investigated. “A few plants have been collected from the lighthouse area and all have survived,” added Mr. Ramasubramanian.

M. Satyanarayana, caretaker of the species at the centre, told The Hindu that the “air layering method” is proving effective in increasing the number of plants of *Scyphiphora hydrophylacea*.

Source: - <https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Vijayawada/breathing-new-life-into-the-mangroves/article29453142.ece>