

Conserve sandal trees

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Coimbatore: It is important to conserve sandal trees in Tamil Nadu and use these trees to produce quality planting stock, said, Syam Viswanath, the director of the Kerala Forest Research Institute in Peechi. He said there is an increasing demand for sandal as agroforestry tree species across the country, including northeastern parts of India. Quoting Kerala's example, he said if quality planting material is produced, it is possible to meet the wood demand completely from outside the forests.

Delivering the Kedharnath Memorial lecture at the institute of forest genetics and tree breeding on Monday, the director spoke about realigning and reorienting forestry research. Viswanath said the naturally occurring sandal population in Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka was unique and must be preserved. "The demand for sandal has increased. Even a 20-year-old tree can yield 90% heartwood in states like Assam. So we need more quality planting stock," he said. Tnn

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