

# Forest dept moots vegetative barriers to control sea erosion

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Mangaluru: Under the eco-restoration model project, the forest department will take up developing a biological barrier to control sea erosion in coastal areas.

At the meet the press programme organised by the DK Working Journalists Association on Monday, deputy conservator of forest, Mangaluru division Dinesh Kumar Y K said the eco-restoration model project will be taken up in Bengre, Sasihithlu in Dakshina Kannada and Kodi and Byndoor in Udupi at an estimated cost of Rs 3 crore.

He said the project will be an attempt to protect the shoreline. “In the entire coastal belt, we have noticed wherever there is vegetation, sea erosion has not taken place. Hence, we have decided to go for bio-

shielding as a biological barrier to control sea erosion. Four zones - a tall tree zone with casuarina and other plants, a closed herbaceous zone, a small tree and shrub mixed zone and a creeper zone will be developed on the shoreline,” the DCF said.

Meanwhile, the forest department has also written to the government for setting up a permanent nursery in the district so that interested farmers and individuals can get seedlings throughout the year. On the lines of the nursery in Kerala, attempts are being made to develop a district nursery on nearly five hectares.

To promote the cooperation of farmers and the general public in the task of increasing forest and tree cover, the government has set a target of planting 4.41 lakh trees this year and the process will begin from June under the forest department’s ‘Krusha Aranya Protsaha Yojane’ (KAPY), he said.

As per the programme, farmers are provided seedlings at subsidised rates from the nearest nurseries of the forest department. The farmers are paid Rs 35 as an incentive for every surviving seedling at the end of the first year. A sum of Rs 40 and Rs 50 per seedling is provided for each surviving seedling after completion of the second and third years respectively. There is a good demand for seedlings in the district, he said, adding that fruit trees will replace acacia trees on 200 hectares in Mangaluru forest division.