

Maharashtra gets a new state tree

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Sonneratia alba

Board for Wildlife declares the Sonneratia alba, a mangrove tree, as official state tree.

The Board for Wildlife on Friday declared the *Sonneratia alba*, a mangrove tree, as Maharashtra's state tree. The decision was taken during the first meeting of the state wildlife board held under the chief ministership of Uddhav Thackeray.

The meeting also discussed the issue of migration of tigers in Chandrapur District. The CM ordered the formation of a study group to look into the issue "sensitively" and "carefully".

Maharashtra was the only state to agree in principle with the Centre over the need to declare the Western Ghats as an environmentally sensitive area, Thackeray said, adding that while submitting proposals on reserved forests and jungles, it should also be studied if public opinion matches the recommendations.

The CM expressed satisfaction that the state forest department was doing its best to preserve wildlife.

Thackeray said there was a need to increase forest cover in the state. He also called for expansion of the Thane Creek Flamingo Sanctuary and renewed impetus to turtle conservation projects.