



Maharashtra government includes 961ha mangroves in reserved forest

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MUMBAI: The state forest department has taken over additional 961 hectares of mangroves to be protected as reserved forest under Section 4 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927. State Environment Minister Aaditya Thackeray had tweeted that earlier 1,433 ha mangroves were declared as reserved forest under Section 20 of the Act. With this, the total mangrove area under protection in Ratnagiri is now more than 2,394 ha, Thackeray said in his latest tweet on Friday. Welcoming this, NatConnect Foundation director B N Kumar said thousands of hectares of mangroves in Navi Mumbai are yet to be taken over by the government for conservation as per the orders of Bombay High Court issued in September 2018

Cidco itself has said that it has over 1,000 hectares to be transferred, and a recent declaration by JNPT said it has more than 900 hectares, Kumar tweeted in response to Thackeray's tweet. He pointed out that vast sea forests under Navi Mumbai SEZ are yet to be accounted for. Kharghar-based activists such as Naresh Chandra Singh and Jyoti Nadkarni have been drawing the government's attention to the destruction of mangrove stretches in the node. This delay is only facilitating vested interests to destroy the mangroves for land-grab or illegal crab and prawn farming, greens said.

Meanwhile, landfill and dumping of debris on mangroves in Ulwe and several parts of Uran have also been on the rise, Nandakumar Pawar, head of Shri Ekvira Aai Pratishthan, said. Seawoods-based environmentalist Sunil Agarwal said that while it is good that mangroves are being preserved in other districts, they are being illegally destroyed and encroached upon in Navi Mumbai, where there is a plan to make a golf course. "Due to greed for real estate value, the pockets D and E of the total 35.5 ha land at Seawoods has also got MahaRera approval although it is still under litigation in Supreme Court," Agarwal said.

Source:<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/mumbai-state-govt-includes961-ha-mangroves-in-reserved-forest/articleshow/87379231.cms>