

TAMIL NADU

Tamil Nadu to get 10,000 mini-forests, says Minister

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

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‘Industries and even quarries will be roped in to plant these forests’

Minister for Environment and Climate Change Siva V. Meyyanathan on Sunday said 10,000 mini-forests would come up in the State this year. Industries, including those under the red and orange categories, and even quarries would be roped in to plant these forests, he said.

Speaking at the inauguration of an International Conference on Sustainable Development in Hilly and Coastal Ecosystems at the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) here, he said industries would have to plant saplings of native species about 12 feet in height. “If they do not have space inside their premises, then the Revenue Department officials can help identify land for them to plant and take care of the trees,” he said.

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bamboo, palm trees, mangroves, neem and seaweed would be cultivated to mitigate issues due to climate change. The Minister, who inaugurated the MSSRF 'Every Child A Scientist' Centre (online) at Poompuhar, also released the foundation's annual report on the occasion.

Essam Yassin Mohammed, WorldFish interim director-general & CGIAR acting senior director of Aquatic Food Systems, Malaysia, in his keynote address, established the importance of keeping aquatic creatures safe. "Many of us do not know that like trees, fish too act as a carbon sink. The more fish we have in the sea, the better it is for our environment."

He said that since we have done irreversible damage to the environment, there was a need to ensure livelihood opportunities for everyone.

Agricultural scientist Prof M.S. Swaminathan, in his video telecast, emphasised the need for conserving the genetic heritage and indigenous knowledge of tribal communities and reiterated that coastal and hilly restoration was essential for sustainable health. He said around 97% of water came from coastal areas, and therefore, mindful and sustainable usage of water resources was the key to future food security.

Madhura Swaminathan, Chairperson, MSSRF, said over the last three decades, the MSSRF had been working in the hilly regions of the Eastern and Western Ghats and in the coastal regions of India. It worked with tribal and rural communities to conserve biodiversity and natural resources and develop sustainable and scalable models for food and nutrition security, she added.

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