

**CITIZENS CHARTER OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ADMINISTRATION**

THIS CHARTER IS THE STATEMENT OF THE MISSION AND COMMITMENTS OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS, ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR
ADMINISTRATION

MISSION

We sincerely commit ourselves to the service of the people and long-term conservation of nature and natural resources of these islands. We also commit ourselves to totally safeguard the tropical forests of these islands in such a way that the conservation of biodiversity can be ensured along with sustained availability of goods and services from the forests.

1 OBJECTIVE:

- i) To conserve the biodiversity of the forests of these Islands
- ii) To protect wild flora and fauna found in these islands especially the endemic species which are found only in these Islands.
- iii) To establish and manage protected area network for long term conservation of biodiversity and gene pool resources in-situ.
- iv) To conserve marine biodiversity of these islands specially coral reefs around these islands.
- v) To manage the forests of these islands on the basis of sound principles of silviculture and sustainability.
- vi) To provide raw material to the local forest based industries.
- vii) To provide sawn timber to public and artisans at reasonable rates from government saw mills.
- viii) To carry out silviculture research for sustainable management of our forests.
- ix) To protect the forest and wildlife wealth from local and foreign poachers.
- x) To enforce Indian Forest Act 1927, Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972, Environment (Protection) Act 1986, Forest (Conservation) Act 1980 and Coastal Regulation Zone Notification, 1991 and rules made there under in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

2 Basic Statistics

A. Basic Statistics on Forestry and Wildlife Sector

Sl.No	Particulars	Andaman Group of Islands	Nicobar Group of Islands	Total in sq.km.	Percentage
1	Total Geographical area	6408.00	1841.00	8249.00	
2	Area under Forest (Recorded forests)	5628.62	1542.07	7170.69	86.93%
	i) Reserved	2928.86	-	2928.86	35.50%
	ii) Protected	2699.86	1542.07	4241.93	51.43%

B. DIVISION WISE AREA STATISTICS

Sl.No	Forest Division	Geographical area	Reserved forest area	Protected forest area	Total forest area
1	South Andaman	1665	1208.28	111.66	1319.94
2	Baratang	721	646.51		646.51
3	Middle Andaman	965	53.07	804.05	857.12
4	Mayabunder &	2325	314.41	1784.15	2098.56
5	Diglipur				
6	Nicobar	1841	-	1542.07	1542.07
7	Little Andaman	732	706.49		706.49
	Total	8249	2928.76	4241.93	7170.69

3 Programmes being run by the Department:

The Department of Environment & Forests is implementing following plan schemes to achieve the above objectives.

- i) Direction, Administration and Management of Forests
- ii) Silviculture and Forestry Research
- iii) Training and Human Resource Development
- iv) Forest Regeneration
- v) Forest Settlement and Consolidation
- vi) Forest Resources Survey and Working Plan
- vii) Development of Non-Timber Forest Produce
- viii) Forest Extension & Publicity
- ix) Forests Utilisation
- x) Forest Buildings and Roads
- xi) Bio-diversity and Wildlife Conservation and Eco-Development
- xii) Improvement of Govt. Saw Mills
- xiii) Protection of Forests and Coastal Eco-System
- xiv) Conservation and Development of Mangroves & Littoral Forests
- xv) Eco-Tourism

Brief details of the above 15 schemes are as under:

Scheme-I (Direction, Administration and Management of Forests)

The scheme aims to strengthen the forest administration and management in the Union territory of Andaman & Nicobar Islands with a view to conserve, develop and manage the rich biodiversity of the islands. About 87% of the geographical area of these islands is notified forests. and 84% of geographical area is under forest/tree cover as per SFR 2003. There are also some grass lands in Nicobar group of Islands. Rich biodiversity comprising of 5100 animals, including 52 mammals, 244 birds and 76 reptiles with high degree of endemism (found only in these Islands). These are susceptible to illicit exploitation by local as well as foreign poachers. To meet increasing challenges of protecting this wealth of flora and fauna, strengthening of

this department with manpower and equipment has become essential. It is proposed to procure LMVs for mobility of staff and strengthening VHF/HF communication network .

Application of Remote Sensing & Information Technology has brought qualitative changes in the administration and management of forests during last few years. Keeping in view this fact, GIS Cell with digital image processing facility was established during X Five Year Plan, which was upgraded as Andaman & Nicobar Space Application Cell after combining with NRIS Node. These facilities are available to all user departments of the Administration. Monitoring of the status of forest resources and micro level planning has become essential ingredient of the forest administration. The regular upgradation of skills of the officers and staff as well as upgradation of the machines, e.g. hardware and software of computers is also essential. This scheme has provision to meet out such requirement of forest administration. Under this scheme, an Island Development & Training Institute was established in August, 2004 with the major objective of conducting and promoting research and training in all sectors of management of islands and coastal ecosystem especially applied research of direct relevance to planning and management. This Scheme also has provision to promote e-governance in forestry and wild life sector.

Scheme-II(Silviculture and Forestry Research)

Silviculture research is the foundation of scientific management of the forests. Under this scheme research projects have been formulated which are to be carried out over a period of 5-10 years and broadly cover the establishment of seed production areas to produce quality seeds, standardization of nursery techniques, evolving technique and practice for natural regeneration of forests, study growth of important species, evolving farm forestry models for the A & N Islands, biodiversity conservation and studies on mangroves.

Scheme-III (Training and Human Resource Development)

To manage the forest resources scientifically, technically trained manpower is prerequisite. Responsibility for training the lower forest Executive staff lies with the State Forest Department. The scheme aims to improve human resources at executive level. Forestry being a technical subject, the staff have to be trained necessarily before they are deployed in the field. The forest Executive Staff at the level of Forest Guards and Foresters undergo training at department run Forest Training School, Wimberlygunj. Besides imparting the induction training, special refresher course for continuous up-gradation of skill and capability of the staff are also conducted

Scheme-IV (Forest Regeneration)

After harvesting of timber the forest areas are required to be regenerated by under taking tending of already remaining natural forest crop in the area as per prescriptions in the approved working plans. The operation also includes planting in big gaps. Besides it also includes undertaking plantations in degraded forest areas to enrich their growing stock. Under the scheme the old Teak plantation area will be thinned and gap will be planted with natural species as per approved working plans.

In addition, it also has provision for planting of forest areas evicted by forest encroachers.

Scheme-V (Forest Settlement and Consolidation)

In order to manage forest resources scientifically, survey demarcation and consolidation of forest boundaries and settlement of rights is very essential. This scheme deals with forest boundary management, demarcation of boundary between revenue and forest lands, establishment of forest land system and reconciliation of revenue record with forest notifications.

Scheme-VI (Forest Resources Survey and Working Plan)

To manage the forest resources judiciously on scientific principles, resources survey and preparation of Working Plan is a prerequisite. The Working Plans prepared for each territorial division are to be revised periodically. Hon'ble Supreme Court (W.P. (C) No.202 of 1995 dated 12.12.1996) in its order dated 07.05.2002 directed to revise all existing Working Plans and timber harvesting to be confined in already worked forest areas. Accordingly revision work of Working Plans was undertaken. Working Plan revision involves demarcation, survey, forest inventory, collection of data and analysis of growth and yield of forest produce, etc. Revision of Working Plan of South Andaman, Middle Andaman, Mayabunder, Diglipur and Baratang have been completed. The revision for remaining divisions -Little Andaman and Nicobar will be taken up.

Scheme-VII (Development of Non-Timber Forest Produce)

The forest of these islands are rich in cane and Bamboo. There are about 300 cane and Bamboo based small scale/cottage/tiny units in the islands. These Non-timber forest produce provide livelihood to large number of people engaged in these units. The demand of these produce is ever increasing with the increase in population, as these are also required for fencing, Hut making and various domestic use by the settlers. To meet the demand, plantation of Cane in forest area is undertaken under this scheme.

Scheme-VIII (Forest Extension & Publicity)

The main objective of the scheme is to promote extension of tree cover beyond the conventional forests area and to educate the masses about the need for conservation and protection of forests and wild life. Now there is a considerable biotic pressure on natural forest with increasing population. The sustainable yield available from the forests is not enough to cope up the demand fully for various needs of the society. In order to reduce the pressure on natural forests, this scheme envisages programmes to extend forest cover by promoting raising plantation of fuel wood, fodder and fruit bearing trees by farmers on their own land as well as community land etc. To involve the Panchayati Raj Institution on extension forestry, the department provide grant in aid for implementing the area specific social forestry projects. The scheme also includes programme on Joint Forests Management (JFM)

by formation of Village Forests Protection Committee with people's participation to enable them meet their requirement of forest produce.

Scheme-IX (Forests Utilisation)

Forest resources are also required to meet the requirement of the society for various purpose mainly timber which is harvested as per the Working Plan. This scheme makes provision for expenditure towards harvesting and transportation of timber from outlying division to feed the two Govt. Saw Mills at Chatham and Betapur.

Scheme-X (Forest Buildings and Roads)

The forest officials and workers work in the interior forest areas. It is obligatory on the part of the department to provide appropriate residential accommodation to the field staff and workers, and also the non-residential accommodation for office purpose. Besides this, fair weather forest roads to facilitate transportation of harvested timber as well as patrolling to keep vigil to protect forest and wildlife are required to be constructed and maintained.

Scheme-XI (Bio-diversity and Wildlife Conservation and Eco-Development)

These islands are known for its rich biodiversity and very high endemicity which need to be conserved, protected as national natural heritage. To achieve this object A&N Islands has constituted 96 Sanctuaries and 9 National Parks covering an area of 1620 Sq.Km which is 23 % of the total forest area. These are scattered all over the length and breadth of the islands and protection is a daunting task. This scheme provides strengthening the infrastructure for protection and conservation of these (Protected Area Network) Sanctuaries & National Parks. Besides the scheme make provision for establishment of Biological Park at Chidiyatapu including construction of road, buildings, animal enclosures etc. Procurement of vehicles, boats and other equipments is also made under the schme for protection and patrolling of sancuaries and national parks.

Scheme-XII (Improvement of Govt. Saw Mills)

Two Government saw mills at Chatham and Betapur are run and maintained by Forest department to cater the needs of islanders for sawn timber. Most of existing machinery are quite old and requires to be replaced in a phased manner. To meet the demand of sawn timber the scheme makes provision for procurement of new machineries for replacing and also maintenance of saw mills. In these mills timber seasoning /treatment units form important component of saw mills. At Chatham, there is a Machanical and Electrical work shop to support the two mills. The scheme also envisages maintenance of building(saw mills) and other infrastructure.

Scheme-XIII (Protection of Forests and Coastal Eco-System)

The islands are very rich in biodiversity but have very fragile ecology. With the increase in population and other biotic interference in forests from forest

encroachers, illegal removal of forest produce and poaching require to be contained effectively. There are innumerable creeks which need to be patrolled against any damage to the forests. The scheme envisages augmenting the facilities in the area of mobility, communication to the protection staff to enable them to discharge their duty in effective manner

Scheme-XIV (Conservation and Development of Mangroves & Littoral Forests)

These islands have extensive open coastline and inland creeks which are fringed with littoral forests and mangrove forests respectively. Protection and development of these forests ecosystems are very important from ecological point of view. They protect the shores from the erosion by tidal waves. They also provide breeding homes to various marine life. This scheme envisages raising of mangroves and coastal belt plantation in suitable areas. This also provides for procurement of boats for patrolling to these fragile eco system and execution of the works.

Scheme-XV (Eco-Tourism)

According to world Conservation Union, (IUCN 1998), Eco-tourism is environmentally responsible travel to natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature and accompanying cultural features; both past and present that promote conservation, have low visitors impact and provide for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local people.

The Islands landscapes -hill covered from top to coast with lush green tropical forests, rich bio-diversity, extensive beaches, corals and other marine life, National Parks/wild Life sanctuaries; live volcanoes and above all pollution free peaceful surroundings attracts tourists both from home and abroad. The scheme therefore provides for eco-friendly facilities for tourists at potential sites, preparation of publicity material.

4 The Interface the ordinary citizen has with the department:

The Citizen ordinarily has to go to the Range Offices/Divisional Offices for various services provided by the department. These offices are well distributed throughout different islands including the interior areas and are accessible to the people on all working days during working hours.

5 Right to Information

Order issued in connection with the compliance of provisions of Section 5(1) and 5(2) of the Right to Information Act, 2005.