

GOING GREEN: THE HINDU EDITORIAL ON TAMIL NADU'S CONSERVATION, CLIMATE CHANGE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Environmental Conservation, Sustainable Development, and EIA

Ensuring sustainable development requires more than good intentions and verbal commitments. And yet, commitment is that crucial first step. [Tamil Nadu has struck out clearly for a future](#) that would be climate conscious, greener, with a series of announcements this year — in the form of government orders and via the Budget. Apart from getting the [Ramsar Site](#) declaration for a record number of ecological zones as a well-planned and implemented initiative, it has also declared its intention to create green parks in 100 villages, that would cater to local requirements too. Also proposed are an elephant reserve at Agasthiyarmalai in the south, a dugong conservation park in the Palk Bay, a new bird sanctuary at Tiruppur, and establishing India's first-ever wildlife sanctuary for the slender loris in Dindigul and Karur district. While these and similar incremental efforts made possible with political will, if implemented well, will lend themselves to a visibly greener landscape, the bolder initiatives have been conceptualised within the challenging field of climate change, where conviction is the driver. The recently appointed [governing council on Climate Change](#), which has experts including Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Nandan Nilekani and Erik Solheim, for instance, is an example of good intent followed by a solid tool to aid implementation. It will provide policy directives to the Climate Change Mission, advise on climate adaptation and mitigation activities, provide guidance to the State Action Plan on Climate Change and provide strategies for implementation. The setting up of a Green Climate Fund corpus is a further indication of commitment. Additionally, a special purpose vehicle, Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company, has been set up to advise on managing three important missions — Climate Change, Tamil Nadu Green and Wetlands.

But pursuing climate change has not been easy, not now, not ever. As per United Nations data, only 26 of 193 countries that agreed to enhance climate change action last year have followed up with concrete plans. For, indeed, the challenges are daunting. Environmental evangelism will have to drive these projects, so that the passion, urgency and seriousness that the parent institution (Environment and Climate Change department), brings to the table are absorbed by other departments. All modern states are beset by challenges in the sectors of energy transition, mobility transition and agricultural transition. It is crucial to build capacity capable of fashioning local solutions, and ensure that the announcements are all implemented, in a time-bound manner.

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