



FOREST DEPARTMENT

CITIZEN CHARTER

2019

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TAMILNADU FOREST DEPARTMENT

Forests comprise of complex ecosystems, and have a very important role to play in environmental protection. Forests provide significant income and livelihood options for millions of forest-dependent people. Forests provide a wide range of goods and services. Degradation of forests will have adverse impact on various life support systems such as water resources, agriculture, bio-diversity and environment. Vast sections of the rural society, including a majority of the tribal, are dependent on forests for their livelihood. Forests have to be managed sustainably for the livelihood security of the humanity.

The Forest Department offers a variety of services to the citizens. Some of which are listed below:

Sl. No	Services offered	Benefits	Eligible persons	Required document	Authority to be contacted	Sanctioning authority
1.	Tree cultivation in private lands (Raising of Casuarina and timber trees)	Brings back productivity in fallow land in the form of profitable trees;	Small and marginal farmers	Ownership deed, patta, chitta, adangal	Forest Range Officer concerned	District Forest Officer concerned
2.	Tank foreshore plantations (Raising of plantations)	Meets the fuel and small timber requirements of the State; 75% of the net revenue realised through sale of these plantations is paid to the panchayats towards their share for taking village developmental works	Members of local panchayats	Raised only on panchayat and panchayat union tanks	Forest Range Officer concerned	District Forest Officer concerned
3.	Free supply of seedlings to institutions	Mitigates air, noise pollution etc	Schools, Colleges, Institutions etc.	Application in plain paper	Forest Range Officer concerned	District Forest Officer concerned
4.	Grazing (G.O.Ms.No.47, E&F (FR13) Dept. dt. 03.03.2000) (G.O.Ms.No.78, E&F(FR-13) Dept. dt. 08.08.2006)	Cattle Grazing	Public	Fee Goat - Not allowed Sheep - Free Bullock - Free Buffalo - Free Donkey, Horse Rs.10/- Elephant - Rs.100/-	Forest Range Officer concerned	Forest Range Officer concerned
5.	Possession of Scheduled Timber	Can possess < 0.5 cu.m. quantity of scheduled timber	Public	-	-	-
		> 0.5 cu.m. quantity of Scheduled Timber	Public	Apply for licensing the possession with the certificate of origin	Forest Range Officer concerned	District Forest Officer concerned

Sl. No	Services offered	Benefits	Eligible persons	Required document	Authority to be contacted	Sanctioning authority
6.	Red sanders retail sale (G.O.Ms.No.169, E&F (FR-IV) dept. dt. 10.11.2010	Not more than 10 Tonnes by any individual through department sale. (Rate 10% above last highest sale price)	Public / Any individual	Application in plain paper	Principal Chief Conservator of Forests	Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
7.	Timber transit	Moving of Timber from or to by public 41 species have been exempted from Timber Transit Rules, 1968 vide Government Gazette No. 41 dated 11.10.2017 Silver oak has been exempted from Timber Transit Rules, 1968 as per G.O.Ms.No. 194, E&F (FR-13) dept. dt. 01.08.2012. (stay granted by Hon'ble High Court vide W.P No. 27405/2012 filed by Jayachandran dated 28.4.2016 against this order)	Public	Application in a plain paper with payment of the prescribed fee one cart load Rs.10/-, per lorry Rs.50/- for karuvel timber and for other timber Rs.100/-	Forest Range Officer concerned	District Forest Officer concerned
8.	Supply of teak at concessional rates to temple authorities for flag mast and maintenance	Temple authorities under the control of Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments, 70 cft. for maintenance flag mast irrespective of height	Temple authorities under the control of Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowment	Application received with recommendation from Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments	Principal Chief Conservator of Forests	Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
		> 70 cft. upto 350 cft. for maintenance	Temple authorities under the control of Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowment	Application received with recommendation from Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments	Principal Chief Conservator of Forests	Government of Tamil Nadu
9.	Sandalwood possession	Possess or store sandalwood in excess of 5 kilograms	Public	Apply for form 1 permit in plain paper with prescribed fee with origin certificate	District Forest officer	District Forest officer
10.	Sandal wood Sale	-	-	1. No matured sandal wood trees are available at present for extraction by the department. 2. At present a quantity of about 190 metric tonnes available in sandalwood Depot which has to be used for about 40 years. Therefore the action sale of Sandalwood not conducted in Tamil Nadu Forest Department.		
11.	Sandalwood retail sale	-	Individual /Temple/Medicinal companies	Retail sale of sandalwood to the individual is restricted up to 2 kilograms and sale for Temples and for other religious purpose up to 20 Kilograms as per G.O.(Ms).No:17 Environment and Forests (FR.4) Department, dated:20.02.2017		

Sl. No	Services offered	Benefits	Eligible persons	Required document	Authority to be contacted	Sanctioning authority
				Based on the applications for the sandalwood supply received from the temples with recommendations of the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowment Department and application from Medicinal companies / Individuals, necessary proposal is sent to Government for approval and after receipt of Government order the sandalwood is issued to the applicant.		
12.	Sandalwood Transit	Import of sandalwood into or export of sandalwood from or to move sandalwood from one place to another place in the State	Public	Apply for form I / II or III permit in plain paper with prescribed fee with origin certificate	Forest Range Officer concerned	District Forest officer
13.	Minor Forest Produce (MFP) in Forest Management Watersheds	Collection of MFP from Forest areas in TAP villages.	Village Forest Councils 25% of sale proceeds to be credited to VFC Fund and balance distributed among the VFC council members. Village Women's Council MFP allotment will be given as per fair price fixed by the VFCs (G.O. Rt. No. 286, E&F Dept, dt. 25.09.1998)	-	Forest Range Officer concerned	District Forest Officer concerned
	Forest produce from Protected Areas ,Eco-tourism	Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP), small timber, fuelwood etc. eco system services	Local people in and around the sanctuary area. Subject to section 29 of Wildlife (Protection) Act	Certificate for bona fide use only and not for any commercial activities to be obtained. Subject to section 29 of Wildlife (Protection) Act	Concerned Forest Range Officer/Wildlife Warden/District Forest Officer	Principal Chief Conservator of Forest & Chief Wildlife Warden (As per Section 29 of Wildlife Protection Act 1972)
14.	Firewood in Joint Forest Management watersheds	Collection of firewood free of cost from Government forest areas attached to TAP villages	VFCs landless and poor households	-	Forest Range Officers	District Forest Officers concerned
15.	Fodder and green leaf manure	Collection of fodder and green leaf manure free of cost from forest attached to TAP villages	VFCs members	-	Forest Range Officers	District Forest Officers concerned
16.	Minor Forest Produce (MFP) to tribals (G.O.Rt. No.79, E&F Dept, Dt 29.04.2003)	Free of cost to tribals	Tribals	Application in plain paper	Forest Range Officer concerned	District Forest Officers concerned
17.	Film shooting	Film Shooting in non-	Students,	Application in	Principal Chief	Director of

Sl. No	Services offered	Benefits	Eligible persons	Required document	Authority to be contacted	Sanctioning authority
		sensitive areas of RF	individuals, institutions, Organizations and Film production units	plain paper	Conservator of Forests (HoFF) for issue of NOC regarding areas other than those notified as protected areas under Wildlife Protection Act 1972) Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Chief Wildlife Warden - within the protected areas (issue of NOC)	Information and Public Relation
18.	Wildlife Possession	No member of the public can own a wild animal, trophies or articles made from wild animals except with the previous permission of Chief Wildlife Warden.	-	-	-	-
19.	Wildlife transport (G.O.Ms.No.447, E&F (FRV) Dept. dt.19.07.1991)	No person shall transport any wild animal within the State or outside the State without the permission of CWLW	Public	Application in the prescribed form	Principal Chief Conservator of Forest & Chief Wildlife Warden.	Principal Chief Conservator of Forest & Chief Wildlife Warden.
20.	Wildlife Hunting	Hunting of animals is completely prohibited. However Hunting of wild animal is permitted in certain cases under section 11 and 12 of Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 by CWLW	-	-	-	-
21.	Compensation to Wildlife damages (G.O.Ms.No.141, E&F dept. dated 25.11.2016)	<p><u>1. Human death / Permanent incapacitation</u> Rs.4,00,000/-</p> <p><u>2. Major injuries</u> Rs.59,100/-</p> <p><u>3. Damage to crop</u> Rs.25,000/-per acre or as per actual whichever is less. Coconut tree Rs.500/- per tree.</p> <p><u>4. Damage to Tiled /RCC House / Thatched House</u></p> <p><u>Fully damaged house</u> Pucca house Rs.95,100/- per house</p> <p>Kutch house Rs.10,000/- per house</p> <p><u>Severely damaged house</u> Pucca house Rs.95,100/- per house</p> <p>Kutch house Rs.5,000/- per house</p> <p><u>Partially damaged house</u></p>	Affected Public	FIR, certificate of legal heir and other relevant records	Forest Range Officer Concerned	Conservator of Forests Concerned

Sl. No	Services offered	Benefits	Eligible persons	Required document	Authority to be contacted	Sanctioning authority
		Rs. 5200/-per house <u>5. Damage to Vehicle, loss of cattle of live stock</u> Milch cattle Rs.30,000/- Bullock Rs.25,000/- Goat Rs.3,000/- Sheep Rs.3,000/- Poultry Rs.100/- per bird Pig Rs.3,000/- or actual value whichever is less.				
		<u>6. Damage to Cloth / House hold articles other house hold</u> Actual loss or Rs.2000/- whichever is less 7. Damage to shop Rs.4000/- 8. Damage to irrigation or drinking water wells, electric motor Rs.2000/- 9. Vehicle compensation Rs.2000/-				
22.	Visit to sanctuaries	Wildlife awareness creation through low impact eco –tourism.	Tourists, Students, Indian citizens	-	Concerned Wildlife Warden/ District Forest Officer	-
23.	Visit to Tiger Reserve	Wildlife awareness creation through low impact eco –tourism	Tourists, Students, Indian citizens	As per NTCA guidelines	Concerned Chief Conservator of Forests & Field Director	-
24.	Research Study	Undertaking research study by students institutions and scholars.	Students, Researchers , institutions etc.	Application in prescribed format in https://www.forests.tn.gov.in	Concerned Chief Conservator of Forests & Field Director/ Chief Conservator of Forests/ District Forest Officer/ Wildlife warden/ Deputy Conservator of Forests	PCCF (Head of Forest Force) in Forest areas PCCF & CWLW - within the protected areas
25.	Trekking (Regulation of Trekking Rules 2018) issued in G.O.(D) No.296, E & F (FR14) Dept dt. 12.10.2018.	Regulation of Trekking in Reserved Forests and Wildlife Areas	Students, Trekkers, Trekking Clubs, Tour operators	Apply in the prescribed format. Remit the fee prescribed as below for each day / person Easy trek- Rs.200/- Moderate trek – Rs.350/- Tough trek- Rs.500/- For foreigners	District Forest Officers/ Wildlife Wardens/ Deputy Directors concerned	PCCF and CWLW for Registration

Sl. No	Services offered	Benefits	Eligible persons	Required document	Authority to be contacted	Sanctioning authority
				Rs.1500/-, Rs.3000/- and Rs.5000/- respectively		
26.	Tamil Nadu Eco tourism Policy 2017 (G.O.(Ms).No.87, E&F(FR.5) Dept. Dated 28.06.2018	To create ecotourism opportunities for strengthening the conservation of the rich natural and cultural heritage of Tamil Nadu State and enhancing suitable livelihoods of the dependent communities.	Does not arise	Does not arise	The Member Secretary, Tamil Nadu Eco-Tourism Board, Panagal Building, Saidapet, Chennai.15	The Chairman/ PCCF & CWLW, Eco-Tourism Board, Chennai-15

While extending services to the public, the citizens are expected to adhere to the following rules and regulations:-

2. Timber Transport

2.1. The following Acts and Rules regulate the tree felling and transport of timber in Tamil Nadu.

- Tamil Nadu Forest Act, 1882.
- Tamil Nadu Preservation of Private Forest Act, 1949.
- Tamil Nadu Hill Areas (Preservation of Trees) Act, 1955.
- Tamil Nadu Rosewood (Conservation) Act, 1994.
- Tamil Nadu Timber Transit Rules, 1968.
- Tamil Nadu Sandalwood Transit Rules, 1967.
- Tamil Nadu Sandalwood Possession Rules, 1970.
- The Tamil Nadu Sandalwood trees on Patta land Rules, 2008.
- Tamil Nadu maintenance of Accounts in respect of scheduled Timber for industrial or commercial purposes Rules, 1988.

2.2. To cut any tree in the areas notified under Tamil Nadu Preservation of Private Forest Act, 1949 and Tamil Nadu Hill Areas (Preservation of Trees) Act, 1955, prior permission should be obtained from the Committee constituted under the said Act, under the Chairmanship of District Collector concerned. Petitions for cutting trees are decided by the Committee, which may meet as often as necessary and there shall not be more than two months interval between two meetings.

2.3. There is a ban on felling of trees of spontaneous growth in forest areas as per the interim directions of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in W.P. 202/95 dt. 12.12.96.

2.4. According to Tamil Nadu Forest Act, 1882, the following tree species are notified as Scheduled Timber.

1. Blackwood
2. Red Sanders
3. Rosewood
4. Sandalwood
5. Teakwood

2.5. To remove the dead or wind fallen rosewood tree from any forest, which includes waste land or community land containing trees, shrubs and roads, pasture land and any other class of land declared by notification by the Government to be a forest, prior permission should be obtained from the Collector under Tamil Nadu Rosewood (Conservation) Act, 1994.

2.6. A permit in Form-II issued by the Tamil Nadu Forest Department shall be obtained to move timber into or from or within the State. The permit shall be valid only for the specified time mentioned in the permit by the permit issuing authority. No permit is necessary for the transport of timber within the limit of Municipality or Corporation. The following classes of timber which are exempted from the purview of Tamil Nadu Timber Transit Rules and therefore, permit under Timber Transit Rules is not required to transport them.

- (1) Small wood for fuel and bamboo in head load.
- (2) Firewood purchased from depot/market for domestic consumption

List of exempted species which do not require permit under the Tamil Nadu Timber Transit Rules is exhibited in the forest department website <https://www.forests.tn.gov.in>

2.7. No royalty is payable for teakwood and rose wood trees in Kanyakumari District and Shenkottah Taluk of Tirunelveli District and also in the rest of the State.

Collection of road permit fee at check posts was abolished to enable the unhindered usage of forest roads by general public.

2.8. Sandalwood sale, possession and transport

Sandalwood occurs extensively in the Eastern Ghats ranging from Vellore district in the North East of Tamil Nadu to the Nilgiris in the west in the dry deciduous

forests of the region. In Tamil Nadu, only dead and drying sandal trees are uprooted and brought to depots for rough and final cleaning.

The possession and movement of sandalwood in Tamil Nadu is regulated under Tamil Nadu Sandalwood Transit Rules, 1967 and Tamil Nadu Sandalwood possession Rules, 1970. As per Tamil Nadu Sandalwood possession Rules, 1970 Rule 3(1), if any person intends to possess or store sandalwood in excess of 5 kilograms, he shall apply to the District Forest Officer in Form I and obtain a licence after paying the fees prescribed in sub rule (7) of rule 4.

According to Tamil Nadu Sandalwood Transit Rules, 1967, no person shall import sandalwood into or export sandalwood from or move sandalwood from one place to another place in the State unless such sandalwood is accompanied by either Form I / II permit referred to in Rule 4 or by a Form III way permit referred to in rule 6. The sandalwood must bear the mark of the Government Origin as provided in rule 7 of the property mark in respect of such sandalwood.

The Forest Department issues the permits mentioned above after collection of necessary fees.

2.9. Sandalwood trees in patta lands

Every person who grows trees on any patta land held by him as owner, tenant, lessee and mortgage with possession or otherwise shall be the owner of such sandalwood trees. The sandalwood tree grown on any patta land shall be sold only to the Government. In order to encourage the private owners to grow more sandal wood trees in their land, the Government notified separate rules called the Tamil Nadu Sandal Wood Tree on Patta Land Rules, 2008. (G.O Ms. No140 Environment and Forests (FR-4) Department dated 27.11.2018.

2.10. Sale of Timber

In Tamil Nadu, the trees from natural forests are not felled to cater to the needs of timber. However, the dead, wind fallen trees are sent to Forest Depot, and sold in public auction. The teak trees from plantation raised along canal banks in Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Nagapattnam and Villupuram districts, which have attained 30 years of age and above, are extracted and sold in auction. The pulpwood plantations raised in forest areas of Kodaikanal division and Nilgiris district are allotted to pulpwood industries for harvest subject to the prescriptions in the approved working plan of the concerned division.

2.11. Lifting the ban on movement of Timber outside the State of Tamil Nadu

Government have lifted the ban on movement of Timber outside the State of Tamil Nadu. Hence any person can transport timber outside the State duly obtaining the permit under Timber Transit Rules. There is a ban on movement of pulpwood from Tamil Nadu to other States. The ban on movement of pulpwood to other states was lifted vide G.O.No. 81 Environment and Forests (FR-4) dated 28.3.2018. All species of Bamboo are fully exempted from requirement of transit permit vide Government Gazette No.353, dated 13.10.2018.

2.12. Biological Diversity Act, 2002

The Biological Diversity Act, 2002 was enacted by Parliament as part of commitment to United Nations Convention on Biological diversity signed at Rio-de-Janeiro on 5th day of June, 1992. The main objective of the enactment is '*Conservation of Biological diversity, sustainable use of its components and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of utilization of the genetic resources*'.

Salient features of the act,

- (1) As per Section (3), previous approval of National Biodiversity Authority is to be obtained for any biological resources occurring in India or knowledge associated thereto for resources or for commercial utilization or for bio-survey and bio-utilization.
- (2) As per Section (58), all offences under this act are cognizable and non-bailable.
- (3) As per Section (55), the maximum punishment under the act is imprisonment upto 5 years, or with fine upto Rs.10 lakhs.

The Tamilnadu Biological Diversity Rules 2017 was notified in G.O Ms. No.137 Environment and Forest (FR-5) dated 9.11.2017 and the rules came into effect from 6.12.2017 when it was published in the Tamilnadu Gazzette.

2.13. Tamil Nadu Regulation of Wood Based Industries Rules, 2010

The main objective is to regulate the functioning of sawmills. This rule has been framed as per the direction of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in its judgement in IA No.276 dt. 29.10.2002 ordered to close all unlicensed saw mills in the country. Further Supreme Court ordered that before granting of license for running sawmills, previous concurrence of Central Empowered Committee constituted by Hon'ble Supreme Court of India is mandatory. Now the

Government of India issued guidelines during 2016 for wood based industries and subsequently amendments to the guidelines were issued during 2017.

As per these guidelines, the Licensing Authority of saw mills is District Forest Officer / Wildlife Warden / Deputy Director of Tiger Reserve and the licensing authority will issue license etc. only after the decision taken by the State Level Committee in their meeting and no license for setting up new wood based industries within a distance of two kilometers from the boundary of any forest. The license is valid for maximum period of 5 years.

3. FOREST CONSERVATION ACT, 1980

Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 was enacted for the Conservation of Forests and for matters connected therewith which came into effect from 25.10.1980.

Diversion of forest land under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 is required for many purposes such as Electric Transmission line, Hydel, Irrigation, Mining, Roads, Water supply etc. The concerned User Agencies are applying to the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests directly for such diversion. After thorough scrutiny, the applications are processed and orders are obtained from the competent authorities for the diversion. Forest areas have been diverted in the State mainly for various Government projects.

As per the guidelines issued in Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (Forest Conservation Division), New Delhi F. No. 11-232/2014-FC (pt) dated 24.07.2014, from 15th August 2014 onwards, all new/renewal forest clearance proposals will be accepted through online mode only through the web portal designed by the Ministry. The District Forest Officers/Conservator of Forests have been informed about this Government of India guidelines and guide the User Agencies whenever they approach them for Forest Clearance.

Steps to be followed for getting clearance under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980

For Stage I approval

1. The User Agency has to file application through online with all necessary details/undertakings/certificates.
2. If the proposal is in full shape, the proposal will be forwarded to the District Forest Officer concerned for processing the proposal.

3. The User Agency has to enclose Certificate obtained from the District Collector about non availability of Non forest land for the project and completion of process of Forest Rights Act under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006.
4. After field inspection, the District Forest Officer has to record his recommendation in the prescribed format along with necessary details and forward the proposal to Conservator of Forests.
5. The Conservator of Forests has to record his recommendation and forward the proposal to Nodal Officer of Forest (Conservation) Act, Office of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests.
6. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests has to forward the proposal along with the recommendation of Nodal Officer of Forest (Conservation) Act to the State Government.
7. The State Government has to forward the proposal to the Government of India, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change. If the diversion area is below 40 hectares, the proposal has to be taken up at Regional Office at Chennai or otherwise it will be forwarded to Government of India, New Delhi office.
8. If the diversion area is below 5 hectares, the proposal will be considered by the Regional Office. For the proposal of forest area diversion of above 5 hectares, the Regional Empowered Committee constituted at Regional level will consider and approve the proposal and issue Stage I clearance with certain conditions if the proposal is viable.

Normally the following conditions are imposed.

- a) The User Agency has to hand over and mutate Compensatory land of Non forest land twice in extent in favour of Forest Department.
- b) The User Agency has to deposit Compensatory Afforestation cost along with maintenance and protection of plantation as fixed by the Forest Department.
- c) The User Agency has to deposit the Net Present Value of the Forest land to be diverted as per the orders of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

- d) The User Agency has to demarcate the forest land by erecting cement concrete pillars at an interval of 20 meters and to furnish Geo reference reading of the site.
- e) The User Agency has to furnish undertakings to deposit additional Net Present Value of forest land if any revised by the Supreme Court of India.
- f) If tree felling of Spontaneous tree growth available in the proposed forest area, orders of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India has to be obtained by the User Agency for processing the forest clearance proposal.

Stage-II approval.

After fulfillment of Stage I conditions by the User Agency, compliance report will be sent to Government of India for getting Stage II final approval.

Government of India will accord Stage II final approval, after reconciliation of funds deposited by the User Agency with State CAMPA Account.

State Government will accord Government Orders for forest area diversion.

After issue of State Government orders, enter upon permission will be issued by the District Forest Officer to the User Agency.

If the forest land diversion is below 1 hectare for the works specified for critical development and security related works, the State Government will accord permission.

SECTIONS PERTAINING TO NOTIFYING AN AREA AS RESERVED FORESTS UNDER TAMIL NADU FOREST ACT, 1882

CHAPTER	SEC	TITLE	SALIENT CONTENTS
II Reserved Forests	3	Power to Reserved Forests	The Government may constitute any land at the disposal of Government as a Reserved Forests (RF) in the manner hereinafter provided.
	4	Notification by Government	Publication of notification of the proposal, in the Official Gazette and Official Gazette of the District to constitute any land as Reserved Forests (a) specifying the situation and limits of such lands (b) declaring that it is proposed to constitute such land as Reserved Forests (c) appointing a Forest Settlement Officer (FSO) to enquire into and determine the existence and nature of any rights

CHAPTER	SEC	TITLE	SALIENT CONTENTS
			claimed by or alleged to exist in favour of any person over the said land or to any forest produce and to deal with the same as provided in this chapter.
	5	Suits barred	Except a hereinafter provided, no Civil Court shall between the dates of publication of notification under Section 4 (U/S 4) and the notification to be issued under Section 16 entertain any suit to establish any right in or over any land or to the forest produce of any land, included in the notification published U/S 4.
	6	Proclamation by FSO	<p>On notification Under Section 4, Forest Settlement Officer shall publish in the Official Gazette of the district at headquarters of each taluk in which the land included in such notification is situated and in every town and village in the neighbourhood of such and,</p> <p>a) proclamation specifying the situation and limits of the land proposed to be notified as Reserved Forests</p> <p>b) setting forth the substance of the provisions of Section 7</p> <p>c) explaining the consequences which will ensure on the reservation of such forest and</p> <p>d) fixing a period of not less than three months from the date of publication of the proclamation, requiring every person claiming any right referred in Section 4 either to present a written notice, or to appear before him within such period and state the nature of such right, along with producing all proofs in support thereof. The Forest Settlement Officer shall also serve a notice to the same effect on every known or reputed owner or occupier of any land included in or adjoining the land proposed to be constituted as Reserved Forests.</p>
	7	Bar of accrual of forest rights, prohibition of	During the interval between the publication of proclamation Under Section 6 and the date fixed by notification Under Section 16, no right shall be

CHAPTER	SEC	TITLE	SALIENT CONTENTS
		clearings etc.	acquired in or over the land included in the proclamation, except under a grant or contract in writing, made or entered into by or on behalf of the Government or by on behalf of such person whom such right or power to create the same was vested when the proclamation was published, or by succession from such person. No fresh clearings or cultivation shall be made on such land. No patta shall, without the previous sanction of the Board of Revenue be granted on behalf of Government in such land.
	8	Enquiry by FSO	The Forest Settlement Officer shall take down in writing all settlements made Under Section 6 and shall enquire into all claims made, recording the evidence in the manner prescribed by the Code of Civil Procedure (CCP) in appealable cases. Forest Settlement Officer shall at the same time consider and record any objection, which the Forest Officer (if any) appointed Under Section 4 may make to such claim.
	9	Powers of FSO	For the purpose of such enquiry, the Forest Settlement Officer may exercise a) power to enter by himself or his authorized office for the purpose upon any land, and to survey demarcate and make a map of the same b) the powers conferred on a Civil Court by the CCP for compelling the attendance of witness and the production of documents.
	10	Claims to rights of occupancy and ownership	In the case of a claim to a right in or over any land other than the following rights a) right of way, b) right to a water course or to use of water, c) right to pasture or d) right to forest produce, the Forest Settlement Officer shall pass order, specifying the particulars of the claim, either admitting or rejecting the same wholly or in part. 1) Admitted claims: The Forest Settlement Officer may 1) come to an agreement with the claimant the surrender of the right 2) exercise the land from the limit of the forests 3) proceed to

CHAPTER	SEC	TITLE	SALIENT CONTENTS
			<p>acquire the land in the manner provided by the Land Acquisition Act, 1870.</p> <p>2) Appeals on Rejected claims: In case of rejected claims, the claimant may, within 30 days from the date of order, prefer an appeal to the District Court in respect of such rejection only provided that the Government may extend the period for such an appeal as may seem just and reasonable by an order under the signature of one of the Secretaries to Government.</p> <p>3) Appeal by a Forest Officer: In case of admitted claims, a like appeal may be preferred on behalf of Government by the Forest Officer appointed Under Section 4.</p>
	11	Claims to rights of way, watercourse pasture and to forest produce	in the case of claims referred in a) to d) Under Section 10, Forest Settlement Officer shall pass an order admitting or rejecting the claim wholly or in part, specifying the nature, incidents and extent of the rights. If such admitted right is for the beneficial enjoyment of any land or buildings, he shall record the designation, position and extent of such land and the designation, position of such buildings.
	12	Provision for rights to pasture or to forest produce admitted	In case of rights admitted Under Section 11, the Forest Settlement Officer shall provide for the exercise of such right by defining the extent of the right, which is continued and the mode in which it may be exercised.
	13	Communication of such rights	Whenever any right to pasture or to forest produce admitted Under Section 12 is not provided for in one of the ways prescribed in Section 12, the Forest Settlement Officer shall commute such right by paying a sum in lieu thereof or with the consent of the claimant, by the grant of right in or over land or in such other manner as such officer thinks fit.
	14	Appeal for order passed U/s11,12 and 13	The claimant or the Forest Officer appointed Under Section 4 may within 60 days from the date of order passed by the Forest Settlement Officer

CHAPTER	SEC	TITLE	SALIENT CONTENTS
			Under Section 11, 12 and 13 present an appeal to a forest court, If constituted, or to such officer of the Revenue Department appointed by the Government to hear appeals from such orders.
	15	Appeal Under Section 14	Appeal Under Section 14 shall be made in writing and to be delivered to the Forest Settlement Officer, who shall without delay forward it to the appellate authority.
	16	Notification declaring as Reserved Forests	When the following events have occurred, namely a) if period fixed Under Section 6 for preferring claims has elapsed and claims made have been disposed by the Forest Settlement Officer. b) if such claims have been made, the periods fixed by Sections 10 and 14 for appeal has elapsed and all appeals presented have been disposed by the appellate authority. c) All the proceedings prescribed in Section 10 have been taken; the Government may publish a notification in the official Gazette declaring the area to be reserved from the date to be fixed by such notification. The Forest Settlement Officer shall, before the date so fixed, publish such notification for the date so fixed. Such forest shall be deemed to be a Reserved Forests from the date so fixed.
III. Protection of land at the disposal of Government not included in RF	26	Power to make rules	The Government may, for any district or portion of a district make rules to regulate the use of pasturage of the natural produce of land at the disposal of Government and not included in the Reserved Forests.

4. DOs & DON'Ts in PROTECTED AREAS

4.1. Restriction on entry into a Sanctuary:

Under section 27 of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 No person other than,

- (a) A public servant on duty
- (b) A person who has been permitted by the Chief Wildlife Warden or the authorized officer to reside within the limits of the sanctuary.

(c) A person who has any right over immovable property within the limits of the sanctuary.

(d) A person passing through the sanctuary along a public highway and

(e) The dependents of the person referred to in Clause (a),(b) or (c)

Shall enter or reside in the sanctuary except under and in accordance with the conditions of a permit granted under section 28

DOs

- Every person shall, so long as he resides in the sanctuary, be bound to prevent the commission of an offence in the sanctuary, against this Act and where there is reason to believe that any such offence against this Act has been committed in such sanctuary to help in discovering and arresting the offender.
- To report the death of any wild animal and to safeguard it remains until the Chief Wildlife Warden or the Authorized Officer takes charge thereof.
- To extinguish any fire in such sanctuary of which he has knowledge or information and to prevent from spreading by any lawful means in his power, any fire within the vicinity of such sanctuary of which he has knowledge or information.

DON'Ts

- No person shall tease or molest any wild animal or litter the grounds of sanctuary.
- No person is allowed inside the sanctuary to destroy any wildlife or forest.
- No person is allowed inside the sanctuary to set fire or kindle any fire, or leave any fire burning inside the sanctuary.
- No person is allowed inside the sanctuary with a weapon without the previous permission of the Chief Wildlife Warden.
- No person shall use chemical explosives or any other materials which cause injury to endanger / wild animals.
- No grazing is permitted inside the sanctuary.
- No damage to habitat be done by littering, use of plastic, consumption of liquors and smoking etc.

4.2. Transit permission

- As per Wildlife (Transit) (Tamil Nadu) Rules, 1991, G.O.Ms.No.447, E&F (FR-V) Dept. dt. 19.07.91, no person shall transport any wild animal within the State or outside the State unless the previous permission of the Chief Wildlife Warden or an authorized Officer.
- The applicant should fill up the prescribed form mentioning the place from where the animal is to be transported along with date from which transported, route, etc.
- If the Chief Wildlife Warden is satisfied with the applicant's authenticity, the Chief Wildlife Warden may grant permission to transport the wild animal with prescribed time limit.
- As per G.O.Ms.No.11, E&F (FR-V) dept. dt. 08.02.2018, transit fee for elephant Rs.600/- and Rs.300/- for other Scheduled-I animals which will be effective from 12.2.2018.

5. TRANSPARENCY

Right to Information Act 2005

The Right to Information Act was passed by Parliament to enable citizens to exercise their fundamental right to information held by public authorities all over the country (except Jammu and Kashmir.) The Right to Information Act aims to bring about transparency in the functioning of public authorities to contain corruption and hold Government and their instrumentalities accountable to people. It creates a process for providing information to people. The Right to Information Act places duty on offices to provide information to people both proactively and upon request. It provides for a two – tier appeal mechanism to deal with complaints of unreasonable denial of information by public authorities. This law will have an overriding effect vis-a-vis the official Secrets Act, 1923 and all other laws and orders passed by Government that restrict information flow to people.

Right to Information Act, 2005

Designation	Office of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests	O/o the Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests /Chief Conservator of Forests / Conservator of Forests	Office of the District Forest Officer / Wildlife Warden, etc.,
Public Information Officers	Joint Director	Superintendent	Superintendent
Appellate Authorities	Conservator of Forests (Forest Extension and Publicity)	Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests /Chief Conservator of Forests /Conservator of Forests concerned	District Forest Officer/Wildlife warden concerned

Time limits: Section – 7

- 30 days from the date of application.
- 48 hours for information concerning the life and liberty of a person.
- Time taken for calculation of fees and intimation of the same to the applicant will be excluded from the 30 days period.

Fees:

For providing the information under sub–section (1) of section 7 of the Act, a fee shall be charged by way the of proper receipts or by demand draft or banker's cheque payable in the head of account, as specified by the Public Authority for followings rates

- rupees two for each page (in A-4 or A-3 size paper) created or copied;
- actual charge or cost price of a copy in large size paper;
- actual cost or price for samples or models ; and
- for inspection of records, no fee for the first hour, and a fee for rupees five for every one hour (or fraction thereof) thereafter.

For providing the information under sub-section (5) of section 7, the fee shall be charged by way of cash against proper receipts or by demand draft or cheque payable in the head of account, as specified by the Public Authority for following rates:-

- for information provided in diskette or floppy rupees five per diskette or floppy;
- for information provided in printed form at the price fixed for publication.

Publicity on project execution

In all the scheme execution areas, hoardings are erected providing information of the respective schemes, cost of the scheme, progress made etc.

Open auction

Sales of timber, minor forest produce, fuel wood, etc., are conducted in open auction and total transparency is maintained in all aspects.

6. GRIEVANCES REDRESSAL MECHANISM

Grievances Day

In order to redress the grievances of the public, "*Grievance day*" is being conducted in the Forest Department, as indicated below:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) O/o Forest Range Officer | - Once in 15 days |
| 2) O/o District Forest Officer | - Once in a month |
| 3) O/o Chief Conservator of Forests | - Once in two months |
| 4) Head quarters
Deputy Director,
O/o the Principal Chief Conservator of
Forests | - Every month: First
Friday of the month
3.00 PM to 5.45 P.M
at 9th floor (Library) |

Grievance Cell

Grievance cell has been opened at district / circle / head office level to redress the grievances.

Chief Minister's Cell Petitions

All petitions / grievances received from Chief Minister's Cell are being followed up and reviewed by Deputy Director, O/o the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests who has been nominated as Nodal Officer in respect of Chief Minister's Cell petitions.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMMITTEE

Under the provision of section of the Sexual Harassment of women at work place (Prevention, prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, a committee known as Internal Complaints Committee has been formed as follows.

Chairperson	:	MITA BANERJEE ,IFS Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Information Technology)
Members	:	1. Tmt. C. Kasturi Personal Assistant (Establishment) O/o the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Chennai- 15 2. Tmt. A. Thiripurasundari Superintendent, O/o the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Chennai- 15
Member from amongst NGO/ associates		Dr. R.Sujatha, Women and Child Development Specialist, Karupa Institute of Development Initiatives

The committee is to effectively address work place sexual Harassment, complaints, enquire into the same as per relevant act and prepare the report with findings /recommendations to the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Head of Forest Force/Head of Department).

7. WEBSITE OF FOREST DEPARTMENT

Information about Tamilnadu Forest Department can be accessed from department's website at <https://www.forests.tn.gov.in/>

DINDIGUL C.SREENIVASAN
MINISTER FOR FORESTS