

Press Release

Tamil Nadu leads the way on climate action, promises net-zero well ahead of 2070

Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission launched, First State to unveil GHG Inventory & Pathways for Net-Zero Transition

February 28, 2024 | Chennai: Tamil Nadu today announced a number of steps that take the state closer to its Net Zero goal at its two-day Climate Summit 2.0 in Chennai. The Government of Tamil Nadu's Summit aims to address critical climate issues, share best practices and foster collaborative efforts for sustainable solutions.

Speaking at the Summit's inaugural session, **Hon'ble Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Thiru. Siva. V. Meiyyanathan** said, "The state has made commitments towards positive climate action and have undertaken several programmes to help get there. We will continue to make efforts to achieve the goals faster. By 2030, Tamil Nadu will reduce its carbon emissions by 70 percent and also work towards making Chennai a climate resilient city."

Translating strong intent into action, **Thiru. Udhayanidhi Stalin, Hon'ble Minister for Youth Welfare and Sports Development, Government of Tamil Nadu** said, "Going ahead, every event organised by the State Government will result in the establishment of a forest, with the planting of native species aimed at mitigating carbon emissions. This initiative aligns with the Green Tamil Nadu Mission, fostering the development of green spaces. Additionally, engaging a sustainability consultant for every event underscores GoTN's commitment to eco-friendly practices."

To begin with, the Mission is planting a native tree for every attendee of the Tamil Nadu Climate Summit 2.0 to counterbalance the carbon emissions generated by the event. "Your participation has contributed to the establishment of a new forest, and you're invited to visit your tree located at Jerusalem College of Engineering, Pallikaranai, Chennai," he added. The tree will be geotagged and uploaded on www.greentnmission.com.

Thiru. Stalin also launched the **Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission** to protect the state's rich and long coastline. The mission will be implemented over the next five years with assistance from the World Bank at an estimated cost of Rs 1,675 crores. . Aimed at protecting and enhancing the resilience and sustainable utilisation of coastal resources through a multi-pronged approach, the project will work through five thematic prioritized investments. The five areas include: Enhancing coastal biodiversity, coastal protection, improving livelihoods, pollution abatement and project management. The mission will include programmes like setting up turtle conservation centres, biodiversity parks, and wetlands restoration centres and protecting the livelihoods of those living along the coast.

The Tamil Nadu Climate Summit will bring together government officials, experts, and stakeholders, to foster dialogue and set the stage for collaborative actions towards a sustainable and resilient future. **Tmt. Supriya Sahu, Additional Chief Secretary to Government, Environment, Climate Change and Forest Department, Government of Tamil Nadu, said,** “The government of Tamil Nadu has walked the talk on Climate Change. Over the last two and a half years, we have taken every idea to implementation. While we began alone, we are now supported by over 25 partners across sectors. Our state has also taken pride in doing things differently. We led with setting up the Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company (TNGCC) and now are the first state to prepare a GHG emissions inventory.”

The Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company, Department of Environment, Climate Change and Forest, and its technical partner, the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), revealed the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory for the state and identified pathways for its long-term net-zero transition. Establishing an emissions inventory for Tamil Nadu is the first step towards identifying areas for interventions to mitigate carbon emissions. CEEW has updated Tamil Nadu’s emissions inventory using the methodology established through the GHG Platform India (GHGPI) for the calendar year (CY) 2019 based on certain state-specific data provided by the Government of Tamil Nadu. Estimates in the study suggest that Tamil Nadu needs nearly 475 GW of solar and 90 GW of wind power (including offshore) to achieve Net Zero by 2070. On the other hand, the overall energy sector emission intensity of Tamil Nadu’s Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) needs to reduce by 46 percent in 2030 and 87 percent in 2050 to achieve Net Zero emissions.

In its report, CEEW has presented multiple policy scenarios under which Tamil Nadu could achieve net-zero emissions – while accommodating the developmental needs of the state and its people. The Business-As-Usual (BAU) scenario that assesses the state’s emissions trajectory within the existing policy framework will serve as the reference for the state. The Net-Zero (NZ) scenario analysed by CEEW, imposes a carbon constraint on the BAU, in line with India’s ambition of reaching NZ emissions by 2070. For this, the peak year considered for emissions is 2040.

“As we look at the challenges of climate change and the opportunities for investment and progress, we have to also look at Net Zero as an economic transformation. Understanding when could the state’s emissions peak is as important as the choice of NZ year. While the state continues to develop and progress, we must ensure the journey is clean as well,” **said Thiru Arunabha Ghosh, CEO, CEEW.**

With 16 Ramsar sites in the state, Tamil Nadu has the highest number of such sites in the country. A compendium on the Ramsar sites of Tamil Nadu, with detailed profiles, including their location, size, significance, criteria, biodiversity, and ecosystem services, will also be unveiled at the Summit.

Four major baseline studies that can help map the state’s current climate challenges and opportunities will also be released at the Summit. These include baseline studies on Climate Literacy, Reducing emissions from mass transport, Sustainable Habitat - Energy-saving

measures in building to reduce the impact of climate change, and on Rehabilitation of Coastal Habitats for climate change adaptation through eco–friendly solutions.

Thiru Oliver Ballhatchet, British Deputy High Commissioner – Tamil Nadu & Puducherry launched the Climate Literacy Game module during the Summit. “Tamil Nadu has been champion of the work in Climate Change over the past few years and it is promising to see the progress it has made in battling the problem,” he said.

Thiru A.R. Rahul Nadh, Chief Mission Director, Tamil Nadu Climate Change Mission concluded the inaugural session with a vote of thanks. opening up the Summit’s rich discussions over the next two days.

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