

Project Pasumai Tamil Nadu Growth Update 2025

From COO's Desk

"At SankalpTaru Foundation, we always believe that planting a tree is just the beginning. What truly matters is nurturing the planted saplings along with the community around it, until it grows into a symbol of change.

Our work through Project Pasumai is yet another reminder of what's possible when purpose meets participation. Every sapling planted, represents not just a greener landscape, but a stronger rural livelihood, healthier air, empowered women farmers, and a more resilient tomorrow. We are proud to witness the impact unfold – one orchard, one farmer, one contribution at a time. And we are deeply grateful to each supporter who has chosen to be part of this journey.



To our donors and well-wishers: thank you for walking this path with us. Your trust and generosity are not just nurturing trees, but transforming lives in ways that are both visible and deeply rooted. Together, let's continue to grow roots that sustain generations, not just seasons."

Warmly,
Priyanka Negi Bhandari
Chief Operating Officer
SankalpTaru Foundation

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Introduction

Tamil Nadu, located in South India, is known for its rich cultural heritage, diverse landscapes, and abundant biodiversity. Bordered by Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and the Bay of Bengal, with Chennai as its capital. The state experiences a tropical climate that is hot and dry inland, humid along the coast, and influenced by the northeast monsoon.

Renowned for its ancient temples, traditional arts, crafts, and monuments, Tamil Nadu's cultural legacy reflects a civilization that has flourished for thousands of years. Archaeological findings reveal early settlements and powerful dynasties that shaped the region's heritage and traditions.

Geographically, the state spans varied terrains, from the lofty Western and Eastern Ghats to fertile river plains and coastal ecosystems. The Western Ghats, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the Eastern Ghats together support exceptional biodiversity, including several endemic and endangered species.

Major rivers such as the Cauvery, Vaigai, and Palar sustain fertile agricultural zones, while the 1,076 km coastline along the Bay of Bengal is home to estuaries, lagoons, and mangroves. Pulicat Lake, one of India's largest brackish water lagoons, and the Pichavaram mangrove forest, among the world's most intricate mangrove ecosystems, are key ecological treasures. Hill stations like Ooty, Kodaikanal, and Yercaud offer cool climates, scenic beauty, and thriving biodiversity. With its extensive network of national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, and biosphere reserves, Tamil Nadu continues to uphold a fine balance between cultural vibrancy, ecological preservation, and sustainable development.

Why Project Pasumai Tamil Nadu: The Urgency for Greening

Tamil Nadu faces a range of environmental challenges driven by its geography and climatic shifts. Rising air and water pollution, changing rainfall patterns, and increasing temperatures due to climate change threaten public health, water security, and the stability of ecosystems across the state.

Strategic plantation activities play a key role in mitigating these challenges. They act as natural air filters, absorbing pollutants and reducing dust levels to improve air quality. Plantations also enhance groundwater recharge, regulate the microclimate, and sequester carbon, thereby reducing the impacts of climate change. In urban and industrial regions, green buffers created through plantations help reduce heat islands and improve soil infiltration, providing resilience against flooding.

Expanding green cover in Tamil Nadu is a practical, cost-effective, and long-term strategy to restore degraded lands, protect biodiversity, and create habitats for native flora and fauna. Strengthening plantation initiatives not only safeguards health and water resources but also supports ecological balance and climate resilience across the state.

Flora And Fauna

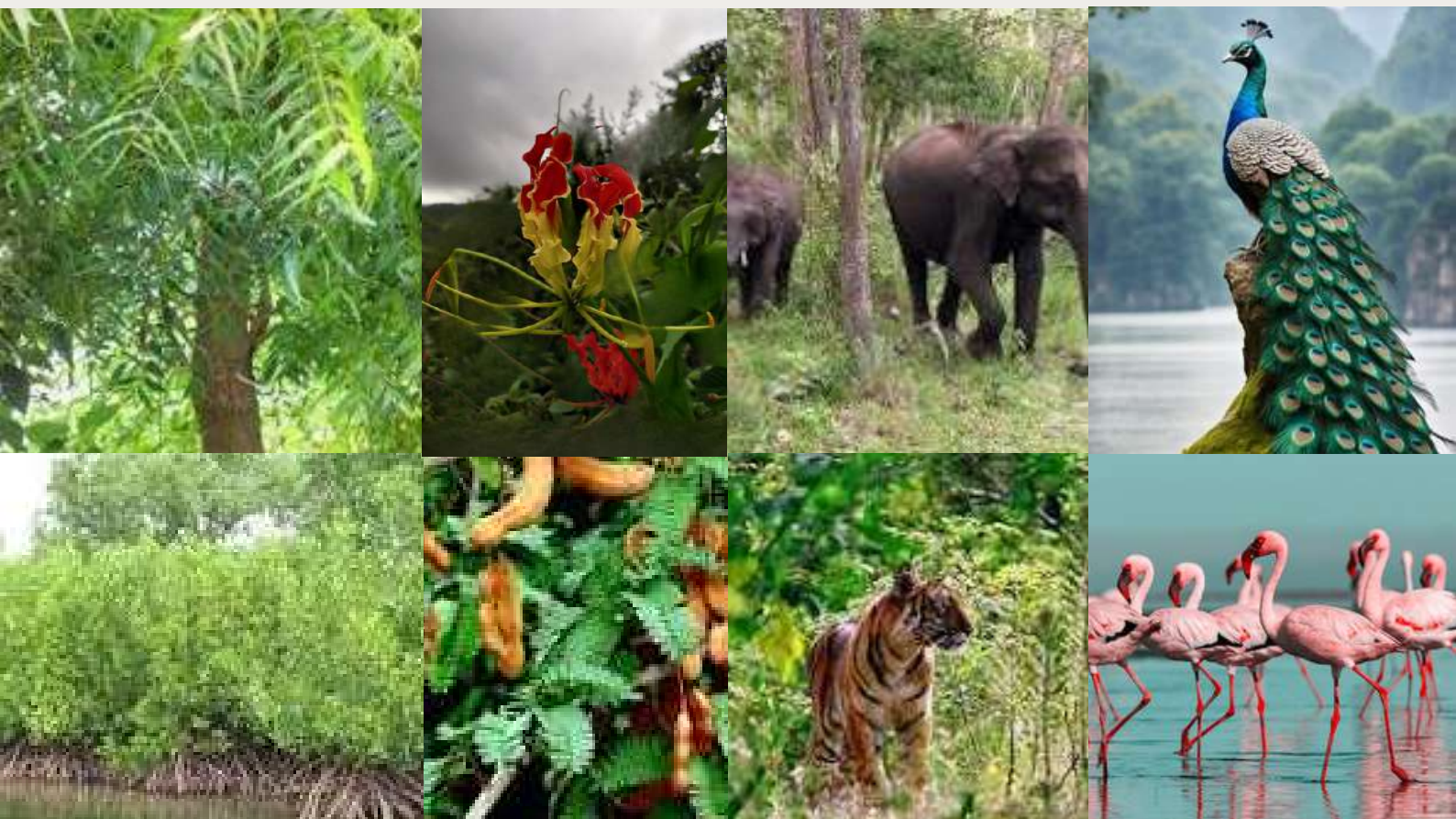
Flora Diversity

Tamil Nadu has a rich biodiversity with around 5,640 plant species and approximately 2,000 wildlife species. There are around 533 endemic species, 230 red-listed species, 1,559 species of medicinal plants and 260 species of wild relatives of cultivated plants in Tamil Nadu.

The state's biodiversity spans a variety of ecosystems, including forests, coastal regions, and wetlands. It is home to a wide range of plant life, from primitive non-flowering species to advanced angiosperms, encompassing flowering plants, bryophytes, lichens, and algae. The state has 64 species of gymnosperms, with 4 being indigenous and 60 introduced species. There are around 184 species of pteridophytes. The fauna diversity includes groups like freshwater fish (165 species), amphibians (76 species), reptiles (177 species), birds (454 species) and mammals (187 species).

Fauna Diversity

Fauna diversity of Tamil Nadu ranges across mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and freshwater fish. The state's faunal diversity includes a variety of Mammals like the Asian elephant, tiger, leopard, sloth bear, and gaur. It also boasts a rich avian population including flamingos, gulls, and terns as well as a diverse collection of reptiles and amphibians. The Western Ghats are home to rich biodiversity, including 230 species of freshwater fish, 118 of which are endemic and notable faunal species such as the Nilgiri tahr, tigers, elephants, and a variety of reptiles and birds.



Ecological Background & Challenges of Afforestation in Tamil Nadu

Despite its rapid development, Tamil Nadu faces critical environmental challenges that threaten ecological balance and public health. Water scarcity is one of the most pressing concerns, driven by erratic monsoons, over-extraction of groundwater, and poor water management practices. Urban centers like Chennai, struggle with shrinking wetlands and heavily polluted rivers such as the Cooum and Adyar, burdened by untreated sewage and industrial discharges. The state's forests and biodiversity are under increasing pressure due to deforestation, mining, and unplanned development. This is especially true in the fragile ecosystems of the Western and Eastern Ghats. These pressures have resulted in significant habitat loss for many endemic species.



Climate change further compounds these issues. In recent years, Tamil Nadu has witnessed a rise in extreme weather events, including cyclones like Vardah (2016), Ockhi (2017), Gaja (2018), Michaung (2023), and Fengal (2024) and devastating floods in 2015 and 2017. The state's average mean temperature has risen by 0.68°C per century, accompanied by a noticeable decline in annual rainfall. Coastal regions are increasingly vulnerable to sea-level rise, erosion, and intense cyclonic activity, endangering livelihoods and degrading protective ecosystems such as mangroves.

Industrial and vehicular emissions, coupled with construction activity, are worsening air quality in cities and industrial hubs. Solid waste management remains inadequate, with poor segregation and rising plastic pollution contaminating land and water sources.

Alongside environmental challenges, Tamil Nadu continues to encounter persistent social issues that impede inclusive and sustainable development. The urban-rural divide remains evident, with rural areas lacking sufficient access to quality education, healthcare, and employment opportunities, prompting migration to cities and straining urban infrastructure. Agrarian distress is widespread, particularly in drought-prone regions. Smallholder farmers face rising costs, water shortages, market volatility, and heavy debt burdens. These challenges sometimes lead to instances of farmer suicides.



Ecological Background & Challenges of Afforestation in Tamil Nadu

Specific Issues	Challenges Faced
Water Scarcity	- Erratic monsoons and frequent droughts in several districts (e.g., Ramanathapuram, Dharmapuri) - Over-extraction of groundwater for agriculture and industries - Salinity intrusion in coastal aquifers due to sea-level rise
Soil Degradation	- Declining soil fertility due to overuse of chemical fertilizers - Soil erosion in hilly areas like Nilgiris - Waterlogging and salinization in delta regions
Climate Change Impacts	- Rising average temperatures and heat waves - Increasing frequency of cyclones and floods in coastal areas - Shift in rainfall patterns affecting crop cycles
Urbanization & Industrialization	- Loss of green cover due to rapid urban expansion - Air and water pollution from industries and vehicles - Solid waste management issues leading to degraded lands
Biodiversity Loss	- Habitat destruction in wetlands, forests, and grasslands - Decline of native species and pollinators - Human-wildlife conflict in forest fringes

Ecological Background & Challenges of Afforestation in Tamil Nadu

Specific Issues	Challenges Faced
Geographical Variability	- Diverse terrain (coastal plains, dry zones, hilly regions) requires location-specific plantation strategies - Seasonal flooding in delta regions hampers survival of saplings
Community Engagement & Awareness	- Limited awareness of long-term benefits of plantation - Pressure on farmers to grow cash crops over trees - Need for incentives and capacity building for rural participation

From Challenge to Change: Plantation Pathways

Afforestation and Reforestation	- Prioritize planting native, drought-tolerant, and salt-tolerant species (e.g., neem, pongamia, tamarind, mangroves). - Reforest degraded forest patches, river catchments, and barren lands to reduce soil erosion and improve microclimate.
Agroforestry	- Integrate tree species with crops in dryland and delta regions to improve soil fertility and moisture retention. - Promote fruit-bearing and timber-yielding species (e.g., guava, mango, teak) to enhance farmers' income and food security
Community Participation	- Engage local communities, women's self-help groups, and schools in plantation drives. - Build capacity through training in nursery management, tree care, and sustainable harvesting to create local ownership
Innovative Irrigation Techniques	- Promote micro-irrigation methods such as drip and sprinkler systems to conserve water. - Use treated wastewater for urban plantations. - Establish farm ponds and rainwater harvesting structures for supplemental irrigation
Eco-Restoration Projects	- Restore wetlands like Pallikaranai marsh, riverbanks (Cauvery, Vaigai) and coastal belts with native vegetation. - Plant mangroves along vulnerable coastal zones to protect against cyclones and sea-level rise
Socio-Economic and Environmental Benefits	- Livelihood Generation: Agroforestry and nursery activities generate jobs for rural communities. - Biodiversity Conservation: Expanding native green cover supports pollinators, birds, and wildlife corridors. - Climate Resilience: Tree plantations mitigate heat islands, sequester carbon, and regulate local rainfall patterns.

Project Pasumai Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu, with its diverse geography from coastal plains to hilly regions, faces serious environmental and socio-economic challenges, making plantation activities crucial for sustainable development. Plantations address climate change, mitigate soil degradation, and help manage water scarcity, while also supporting rural livelihoods and maintaining ecological balance. They regulate local microclimates, reduce heat, increase humidity, and act as carbon sinks by absorbing greenhouse gases. In hilly areas like the Nilgiris, they prevent soil erosion and landslides, while in coastal regions they serve as natural barriers against cyclones and sea-level rise.

Plantations also play a key role in biodiversity conservation by creating green corridors and habitats for birds, pollinators, and small mammals. In urban areas, they help reduce air pollution, cool the environment, and improve quality of life. Since 2019, SankalpTaru has planted 3,00,000 saplings across Tamil Nadu, including coconut, guava, jackfruit, cashew, and lemon, with an additional 1,00,000 plantations carried out in 2024. These efforts make plantations both an environmental necessity and a socio-economic imperative, strengthening climate resilience, conserving water, supporting livelihoods, and promoting a greener, healthier future.

Sl.No	Fruit Saplings Planted	Scientific Name	Significance
1	Coconut	<i>Cocos nucifera</i>	Provides food, oil, fiber, and building materials; tree of life
2	Guava	<i>Psidium guajava</i>	Highly nutritious, rich in vitamin C, and aids digestion.
3	Jackfruit	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>	Large tropical fruit, rich in fiber, vitamins, and minerals.
4	Cashew	<i>Anacardium occidentale</i>	Source of protein-rich nuts and valuable cashew apple for beverages.
5	Lemon	<i>Citrus limon</i>	Source of vitamin C; used for culinary and medicinal purposes.

LIST OF SPECIES PLANTED

Project Pasumai Tamil Nadu – Impact

Since 2019, our retail plantation program in Tamil Nadu has focused on restoring green cover, improving rural livelihoods, and combating climate change. We have planted Coconut, Guava, Jackfruit, Cashew, and Lemon saplings across multiple locations, chosen for their climate resilience, soil benefits, and income potential for farmers.

Sustainable practices such as using organic manure, compost, and efficient irrigation through borewells and drip systems have ensured healthy growth. Today, these plantations have matured into thriving green zones that sequester carbon, prevent soil erosion, conserve water, and support biodiversity. Beyond environmental gains, the trees generate sustainable livelihoods by providing fruits, nuts, and coconuts that boost farmers' incomes. We extend heartfelt gratitude to our donors for making this initiative possible together, we are nurturing ecosystems, empowering communities, and creating a greener, more resilient Tamil Nadu.

Your Impact in Numbers

Indicators	Values
Number of trees planted (2024-2025)	1,00,000 (1 Lakh)
Total number of plantation done since 2019	3,00,000 (3 Lakh)
Survival Rate	95%
Oxygen Produced	37,000 tons
Carbon dioxide sequestered	50,000 tons
Area greened	220 acres
Fruit Production per season	7000 tons per season
Economic Value for Farmers per season	Rs.5.25 crore

Note: All figures given are approximate, unless specified. The estimated oxygen and CO2 values are theoretical values based on the study done; actual values may vary from these. These values are calculated for the entire life span of tree species estimated to be 20-25 years.

Sustainable Development Goals We Achieved Together

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as Global Goals, are a set of 17 integrated and interrelated goals to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that humanity enjoys peace and prosperity by 2030. Sustainable Development Goals which are related to the Rural Livelihood plantation program are given below.



SDG 1 – No Poverty

- ✓ Providing training and resources for sustainable farming techniques.
- ✓ Creating opportunities for income generation through agriculture.
- ✓ Facilitating access to microfinance and credit facilities



Zero Hunger – SDG 2

- ✓ Promoting organic farming practices
- ✓ Providing education and resources on nutrition and dietary diversity



Good Health and Well-being – SDG 3

- ✓ Plantations purify air, reduce heat, and provide medicinal resources.
- ✓ Green spaces promote mental and physical well-being in communities.



Climate Action – SDG 13

- ✓ Plantations act as carbon sinks, mitigating climate change impacts.
- ✓ They reduce soil erosion, floods, and extreme heat effects



Life on Land – SDG 15

- ✓ Tree plantations restore degraded lands and habitats for wildlife.
- ✓ They conserve biodiversity and maintain ecological balance.



Partnerships for the Goals– SDG 17

- ✓ Collaborative plantation projects unite governments, NGOs, and communities.
- ✓ Partnerships ensure long-term funding, technical support, and scalability.

The Story Today

SankalpTaru's journey began in 2012 with a historic moment, when the then President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, planted the foundation's very first sapling. Since then, the organization has grown into a nationwide movement, planting over 10,000,000 (10 million) trees across India and transforming landscapes and communities.

In 2019, SankalpTaru extended its vision to the Southern part of India, aiming to rejuvenate the barren terrain and empower its local communities. By planting native tree saplings suited to the region's unique environment, the foundation set out to restore ecological balance while supporting the people who depend on the land. Since then, SankalpTaru has planted approximately 3,00,000 (3 Lakh) native plantations across Tamil Nadu. It planted around 1,00,000 (1 Lakh) plantations in 2024.

In this regard, SankalpTaru Foundation undertook a plantation project on a 7-acre site near the seashore in Mahabalipuram. A diverse mix of crops and fruit-bearing saplings, carefully chosen for their suitability to the local climate and market demand, were planted. The initiative addressed long-standing challenges of coastal erosion and saltwater intrusion. By anchoring the soil, the plantation reduces erosion, while the root systems enhance groundwater recharge by improving soil permeability. This model not only supports eco-friendly agricultural practices but also sets a benchmark for sustainable land use, positioning Mahabalipuram as a pioneering example of climate-resilient plantation.

Representatives from SankalpTaru Foundation actively engaged in the 19th National Convention of the United Nations Global Compact Network India (UNGCNI), held on February 14, 2025, in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, with the theme 'Accelerating India's Green Goals: The Path to 2030, Forward Faster'. The convention emphasized driving sustainable growth, climate action, and responsible business practices to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They participated in contributing to the dialogue on advancing India's green transition.

In addition, SankalpTaru Foundation participated in the Tamil Nadu Climate Summit 3.0, organized by the Department of Environment, Climate Change, and Forests, Government of Tamil Nadu. This pioneering summit convened changemakers from across the nation to address the climate crisis and discuss pathways toward a sustainable future. The summit served not just as a platform for discussion but as a collective movement to accelerate climate action.

One of our notable initiatives in Tamil Nadu was the transformation of a former dumping yard in Coimbatore into a thriving green landscape. The site, previously filled with nearly 15ft of plastic, medical waste, and sewage, was rehabilitated by adding a one-foot layer of soil. In 2024, a pilot plantation of 600 saplings was carried out, which showed promising results. Building on this success, 4,000 saplings were planted, and after one year, the plantation has shown remarkable growth, with healthy and well-established saplings now flourishing on the site.

Transforming Mahabalipuram's Coastline

In Mahabalipuram, to combat soil erosion and prevent saltwater intrusion, SankalpTaru Foundation undertook a plantation project covering 7 acres of coastal land. A diverse mix of native fruit-bearing and other indigenous tree species was planted to restore the area's natural ecosystem. Over the years, the transformation has been remarkable, with the once-barren stretch now flourishing into a thriving green cover. The visible change in the landscape, captured in the pictures below, stands as a testament to the impact of sustained plantation

2019



2020



2021



2022



2023



2024



Changing Coimbatore's Dumpyard to Green Haven

Initiated in 2024, the Coimbatore dump yard plantation has successfully revitalized a degraded site. Within just one year, the previously barren area has been transformed into a thriving green landscape, showcasing the tangible impact of targeted plantation efforts. The transformation is clearly visible in the accompanying images, highlighting the success of sustainable land restoration.



Changing Coimbatore's Dumpyard to Green Haven

From Landfill to Lush Forest – A Transformation Story

Not long ago, this corner of Periyannayakanpalayam in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, was nothing more than a dumping ground. Today, it stands as a thriving green oasis, where birds sing, the air feels fresher, and the community finds renewed hope. During his recent visit, Hon'ble Collector Thiru Pavankumar G. Giriappanavar, IAS, commended how our SankalpTaru Foundation Forest Force, with the power of technology, meticulous planning, and active community participation has turned waste into life.

For Sankalp Taru Foundation, this is more than just planting trees. It is about healing the land, inspiring the people, and restoring balance to nature.



Farmer Beneficiary – Sapling Distribution



From Hands to Land: Saplings Take Root



From Hands to Land: Saplings Take Root



From Hands to Land: Saplings Take Root



From Hands to Land: Saplings Take Root



Gramyum product and Torch distribution

From Hands to Land: Saplings Take Root



Update Pictures



Mr. Kalidhass, Kovilpathu Village, Nagapattinam Dt, Tamil Nadu



Mr. Kainthasami Pushpavanam, Manadimankalam Village, Sholavandhan Taluk, Madurai Dt, Tamil Nadu

Update Pictures



Mr. Kainthasami Pushpavanam, Manadimankalam Village, Sholavandhan Taluk, Madurai Dt, Tamil Nadu



Mr. Gunaseakaran, Nalivedhapathy Village, Nagapattinam Dt, Tamil Nadu

Stories of Change from the Ground



"I am truly grateful to the SankalpTaru Foundation for their support in helping me plant sweet lemon and guava saplings on my land. Their guidance has been invaluable, assisting me at every step to ensure proper plantation practices and healthy growth of the saplings. With their help, I successfully planted 1,300 saplings- 1,200 guava and 100 sweet lemon. I am delighted to see that, under their careful supervision, the saplings have begun thriving and is growing healthy."

Name: Rajeswari Palanisamy

Location: Panneerkulam Village, Kovilpatti Taluk, Thoothukudi District, Tamil Nadu

"I am sincerely grateful to the SankalpTaru Foundation for their unwavering support in helping me establish my guava plantation. Their guidance has been exceptional, assisting me at every stage to ensure proper planting techniques and the healthy growth of the saplings. With their expert help, I successfully planted guava saplings on my land.

I am delighted to share that, under their careful supervision, the plantation has flourished and is now providing me with a steady income of Rs. 7,000 per month. SankalpTaru's support has truly transformed my farming experience and improved my livelihood."



Name: Vijayan

Location: Maningampatti Village, Palameadu Taluk, Madurai District, Tamil Nadu

Stories of Change from the Ground

"I am truly grateful to the SankalpTaru Foundation for their support in helping me plant 1,600 guava saplings on my 4-acre land. Their guidance has been invaluable, assisting me at every step to ensure proper plantation practices and healthy growth of the saplings. With their help, I successfully planted all 1,600 guava saplings. I am delighted to see that, under their careful supervision, the saplings have flourished. I also deeply appreciate the additional assistance provided, especially guidance on using manures and techniques to increase productivity, which has been instrumental in the strong growth and vitality of my plantation.."



Name: Selvi N Padmasri

**Location: Veerapandiyapuram Village,
Thoothukudi District, Tamil Nadu**



"I am truly grateful to the SankalpTaru Foundation for their support in helping me plant 600 coconut saplings on my farm. Their guidance has been invaluable, assisting me at every step to ensure proper plantation practices and healthy growth of the saplings. With their help, I successfully planted all 600 coconut saplings. I am delighted to see that, under their careful supervision, the saplings have begun thriving. I also deeply appreciate the additional support provided, including guidance on improving plant growth and increasing productivity, which has been instrumental in enhancing the productivity of my farm and securing a more sustainable livelihood for my family.."

Name: R.K.Raja

**Location: Poochampatti Village, Vadipadi
Taluk, Madurai District, Tamil Nadu**

From Local Community to Global Goals

UN Global Compact 19th National Convention

Accelerating India's Green Goals: The path to 2030 with Forward Faster

SankalpTaru Foundation participated in the 19th UNGCNI National Convention in Chennai on February 14, 2025, which focused on accelerating India's green goals and advancing the UN SDGs through sustainable growth and climate action. We made sure, our plantation initiatives and our commitment to climate action and UN Sustainable Development Goals were duly represented in the convention.



From Local Community to Global Goals

Tamil Nadu Climate Summit 3.0, 2025

The Department of Environment, Climate Change, and Forests, Government of Tamil Nadu, organized the Tamil Nadu Climate Summit 3.0, bringing together key stakeholders to address pressing climate challenges. Our representative participated in the summit and engaged with CSR leaders from various corporate organizations and made them aware of our plantation programs, promote potential collaborations for impactful climate action.



The Way Forward

Despite Tamil Nadu's rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, depleting groundwater, and increasing soil degradation, our plantation efforts have steadily flourished, thanks to your unwavering support. Guided by SankalpTaru's commitment and the participation of local farmers and communities, these initiatives have transformed vulnerable lands into thriving green zones of hope and sustainability. With every sapling planted, we move closer to restoring ecological balance, enhancing groundwater recharge, improving biodiversity, and strengthening the state's resilience to climate change. These plantations stand as living solutions—protecting the soil, sequestering carbon, and securing a greener future for generations to come.

Your contributions have turned barren patches into fruit-bearing orchards and green havens that sustain both people and wildlife. They now serve as environmental buffers and vital sources of livelihood for rural families. As we look ahead to Vision 2030, SankalpTaru Foundation aims to expand these efforts—scaling up plantations across Tamil Nadu, creating green corridors, and empowering more farmers with sustainable income opportunities.

Yet, much more remains to be done. With Tamil Nadu's ecosystems under increasing pressure, your continued support will be key to nurturing every sapling into a tree and making the state a model for climate-smart, sustainable development.

Get in Touch with us

Visit our website

<https://sankalptaru.org/>

Plant with us

<https://sankalptaru.org>

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Our Social Media

