



GOVERNMENT OF KERALA

Abstract

Forest&Wildlife Department-'Tree Banking Scheme'- incentivisation for planting trees in private lands - Administrative Sanction accorded - Orders issued.

FOREST&WILDLIFE(E)DEPARTMENT

G.O.(Rt)No.137/2025/F&WLD Dated,Thiruvananthapuram, 29-03-2025

Read 1 Letter No.SW2-1415/2024, dated 04/03/2024 from the Chief Conservator of Forests(Social Forestry), Forest Headquarters, Thiruvananthapuram.

2 Minutes of the Departmental Working Group meeting held on 15/01/2025.

3 Minutes of the meeting on Tree Banking Scheme held on 24/03/2025.

ORDER

The Chief Conservator of Forests (Social Forestry), as per letter read 1st above, had submitted a proposal on '*Tree Banking Scheme*' with the objective of incentivising the planting trees in private lands to offset carbon emissions and thereby promote environmental sustainability, increase the supply of timber in local market etc. with the long term achievement of carbon neutrality and self sufficiency in timber cultivation. It is proposed to meet the expenditure from the budget head 2406-01-101-78-01-00-Extension, Community Forestry & Agro Forestry- EF(Plan) with the financial outlay of ₹ 70.00 lakh as the preparatory cost for the first year, ie FY 2025-26.

2. The proposal including the guidelines on '*Tree Banking Scheme*' had been placed in the Departmental Working Group meeting held on 15/01/2025 wherein, the Chief(Agri), Planning Board agreed to the proposal

as the component "issuance of incentives to private forestry" has been included in the plan write up for the Scheme for the financial year 2024-25. As representatives from Finance department was absent in that department working group, the meeting subsequently held on 24/03/2025 approved and finalized the guidelines regarding utilization of funds of the proposal on "Tree Banking Scheme" .

4. In the circumstances, Government are pleased to accord Administrative Sanction for the implementation of "Tree Banking Scheme", as per the scheme document appended herewith, subject to the following conditions, utilizing funds from the the budget head 2406-01-101-78- 01-00-Extension, Community Forestry & Agro Forestry- EF(Plan); with the proviso that the expenditure in this regard, utilizing the budget provision, will be made from next financial year, 2025-26 onward.

- All seedlings will be supplied free of cost and after completion of 15 years from the date of planting, the owner of the land can fell and sell the planted trees subject to the laws in force and with concurrence from the concerned Social Forestry Division, where the farmer is registered.
- APCCF(Social Forestry) shall develop proper norms/guidelines for the distribution of small bag seedlings and big bag seedlings to the farmers, as specified in the scheme document.

(By order of the Governor)
PRAMOD V R
JOINT SECRETARY

To:

The Principal Chief Conservator of forests & Head of Forest Forces,
Thiruvananthapuram.

The Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests
(Social Forestry and F,B&A), Thiruvananthapuram.

The Principal Accountant General (Audit), Kerala.
The Accountant General (A&E), Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.
Finance (Agri-B)Department (as per remarks in Agri-B1/53/2025-FIN)
Information & Public Relations (Web & New Media) Department
Stock file(E3/73/2024/FWLD).

Forwarded /By order
Signed by

Shaji A

Section Office Date: 29-03-2025 17:20:4

Copy to: Private Secretary to Minister, Forest and Wildlife Department
CA to Additional Chief Secretary, Forest and Wildlife Department



**PROPOSAL FOR
TREE BANKING SCHEME**



**Social Forestry Wing
Kerala Forest Department**

TREE BANKING SCHEME – Proposal

Introduction

Social Forestry Wing is endowed with the target of increasing tree cover outside conventional forest areas. Public land which is under the disposal of Government is limited and scheme being implemented by Social Forestry wing ~~including Vriksha Samridhi scheme primarily caters to the tree planting in public~~ land. There is a huge potential and scope for achieving carbon neutral Kerala by encouraging tree faming outside forest areas. If the farmers are encouraged to undertake tree planting in their own land which shall also ensure additional revenue to the farmers and timber availability in the market.

Aim

The aim of this scheme is to ensure additional revenue to the farmers, make the state carbon neutral and to achieve timber self-sufficiency in the state by encouraging farmers to take up tree planting in their own land. This scheme intends to mitigate the effects of Global warming and climate change. This scheme also envisages substantial improvement of tree cover in the state wherein there is scarcity .This scheme will enable homesteads to substantially supplement the existing farm returns,

Implementation of the scheme

The tree species included in the scheme are 1.Sandal, 2.Teak, 3.Mahagony, 4.Anjili, 5.Plavu, 6.Kumbil, 7.Karimaruthu, 8.Thambakam 9.Venthekku. 10.Veetty.The list can be modified from time to time based on market and other requirements by government.

Those who are interested to plant a minimum of 10 seedlings of the above species in their own land will be eligible for incentivisation under this scheme.Interested tree farmers can register the scheme under Social Forestry Wing of Kerala Forest Department. The incentives proposed are as follow :

A	10-100 plants	:	Rs30 per plant/year
B	101-250 plants	:	Rs25 per plant/year
C	251 to 500 plants	:	Rs20 per plant/year
D	501 to 750 Plants	:	Rs 15 per plant/year
E	751-1000 Plants	:	Rs 10 per plant/year

Incentive amount will be disbursed from the end of the third year of planting on an annual basis . And this shall continue upto 15 years, which is the active

growing phase of the planted tree seedlings, subsequent establishment for yield of fruit & timber and resultant carbon assimilation.

Guidelines

For effective and smooth implementation of the scheme and to safe guard the interest of the public at large, the following guidelines shall be followed in implementing scheme.

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- ✓ The notification inviting applications for tree banking scheme will be issued once in a year from the office of ACF (SF) in all districts of the state. The notification will be published in all the leading newspapers as well as in the website of Kerala Forest Department.
 - ✓ Any applicant under the scheme will have to register with the Range Forest officer (Social Forestry) having jurisdiction over the area by submitting application in the prescribed format. Registration number with date shall be issued by concerned Range Forest officer on scrutiny of the application on a first come first serve basis. The applicant should not be beneficiary under any the ongoing similar scheme of the government. A permanent register with all details shall be maintained by the Range Forest Officer (SF) for registering all the applications received under the jurisdiction of Range.
 - ✓ Tree seedlings covered under the scheme will be supplied free of cost to the farmers who have registered under the scheme. Seedlings will be supplied during June-July every year from nurseries under the Social forestry wing of Kerala Forest Department. Instructions regarding planting/maintenance/espacement for planting etc shall be provided by concerned Range Forest Officer/ Section Forest Officer (Social Forestry).
 - ✓ After the completion of planting, the registered farmer shall intimate the concerned Range Forest Officer/ Section Forest officer who in turn will keep the records of the supplied seedlings, planted seedlings, date of planting, GPS location of planting, extent of planting etc. in the form of a plantation journal for each farmer.
 - ✓ After the field verification of the lands of registered farmers under the scheme, RFO shall recommend the amount for incentivisation at the end of third year.
 - ✓ This shall continue for a period of 15 years based on the no. of trees retained. In any case, incentive will be stopped upon felling more than 10 % of the total

trees planted under this scheme. Trees felled due to Dangerous/dead/diseased condition and those trees removed as part of cultural operations is not included in the above 10% .Casualty replacement shall be carried out as per the instructions of Range Forest Officer/ Section Forest Officer (Social Forestry).

- ✓ The applicant should be the owner of the land or holder for a long lease with a minimum of 15 years remaining lease period as on the date of application. The documents related to ownership, land tax receipt, possession, lease agreement, sketch and all other relevant documents shall be produced along with the application to the satisfaction of ACF, before registration under the scheme.
- ✓ On submission of self certified copy of land document either under ownership or lease by the registered farmer, Range Forest Officer (Social Forestry) shall inspect the land in question and finalize the number of seedlings, based on the availability of land for planting. Also an undertaking should be given by the tree farmer for utilizing the supplied seedlings under the scheme. .
- ✓ The disbursement of money under this scheme will be subject to availability of fund and the limits decided by the government and shall be paid to the beneficiary account (DBT) by the Assistant Conservator of Forests (SF) upon the recommended amount by concerned RFO. RFOs recommendation will be based on the field inspection to the planted site of registered farmers each year.
- ✓ After determination of the incentive amount, intimation to the beneficiaries shall be given from the O/o Assistant Conservator of Forests (SF). In case of complaints if any, shall be decided by the Regional level Conservator of Forests (Social Forestry) and the decision shall be final.
- ✓ Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) shall be executed between the agreeing farmers and the Department. MoU is signed when the farmer gets registered under the scheme. It is applicable for the next 15 years from the day of planting. The tree farmer must adhere to the conditions envisaged under the guidelines of the scheme in order to get incentives continuously for 15 years.
- ✓ After completion of 15 years from the date of planting, the owner of the land can fell and sell the planted trees on obtaining concurrence from the concerned Social Forestry Division, where the farmer is registered under the

⑧ scheme. Land owner can use the timber for own purpose or for obtaining commercial/ financial returns.

- ✓ The continuance of the scheme can vary according to the decision of the Government and no claim shall be entertained if the Government decides to discontinue the scheme.
- ✓ The owners also can have the option of (Trees attaining 15 years of age) bought back by the Department. Minimum rate will be assured/fixed by the forest department(existing norms followed by the timber sales divisions) for each tree according to the maturity & yield of the tree. This buy back mechanism shall help in the farmers to sell the products departmentally and the revenue shall be remitted to the beneficiary (DBT) after deduction the working cost and handling cost of Forest department But this option shall be explored subject to the time and resource availability of Timber sales division in addition to their regular mandate of selling timbers of Forest plantations.
- ✓ The possibility of exploring the carbon credit market/related climate mitigation market shall also be explored, as it provides additional revenue to the farmers This shall encourage farmers to invest in better farming practices or expand their agroforestry systems. The benefit from the carbon credits and carbon trading shall go the beneficiary after deducting administrative cost by the department or the accredited consultant /agency if so engaged by the department .

Implementation

The project will be implemented in phases. During the first phase (2025-26), Sandal species is only selected. One year old big bag saplings of Sandal [Rs 55/basket] or small bag seedlings [Rs 23/Basket] will be supplied by the Department. The cost of small bag seedlings & big bag seedlings have been arrived based on the latest GO(RT) No 233/2024 F&WLD Dated 17/05/2024. The farmer can also have the option to purchase the Seedlings/Saplings from private nurseries and claim the reimbursement for the same. The rates of the said saplings/seedlings can be modified based on the latest GO being issued from government from time to time . Other species apart from Sandal will be included for the project/Scheme in the subsequent phases (which shall be decided by government in due course of time)


Financial Outlay

Tree banking scheme will be implemented in all districts. Rs.5.00 lakh/ district shall be earmarked for each district under BH: 2406-01-101-78Extension,

Community Forestry & Agro Forestry –EF(Plan) and the total requirement for financial year 2025-26 is Rs 70 Lakh (Rs 5 lakh per district). This Project is being envisaged as a modified and improved version of already existing programme of Incentivisation of trees as per G.O (Rt) No. 99/2012/F&WLD dated 17.02.2012 and already approved in the existing Budget head of Extension Forestry. Hence it is not required for a fresh plan write up and shall qualify in the existing scheme of Incentivisation of trees in private areas under same Budget Head.

Conclusion

The concept of the tree banking scheme involves planting trees in land under private ownership to offset carbon emissions and thereby promote environmental sustainability as also to increase the supply of timber in local market. This scheme is routed in a multi-pronged approach wherein state can reach the target of carbon neutrality in long run, achieve self-sufficiency in timber production by encouraging farmers to take up tree cultivation and ensuring additional returns and revenue to the farmers.


Chief Conservator of Forests
Social Forestry, Thiruvananthapuram

ടി ബാങ്കിംഗ് പദ്ധതി

1.	അപേക്ഷകന്റെ പേരും, പൂർണ്ണമായ മേൽവിലാസവും			ഫോട്ടോ
2	ആധാർ നമ്പർ			
3	ഫോൺ /മൊബൈൽ നമ്പർ			
4	വാർഡ് നമ്പർ			
5	പഞ്ചായത്ത്/മുൻസിപ്പാലിറ്റി/കോർപ്പറേഷൻ			
6	ജില്ല	താലൂക്ക്	വില്ലേജ്	
7	ടി ബാങ്കിംഗ് പദ്ധതി നടപ്പാക്കാനുദ്ദേശിക്കുന്ന ഭൂമിയുടെ വിവരങ്ങൾ	ജില്ല :		
		താലൂക്ക് :		
		വില്ലേജ് :		
		വിസ്തൃതി :		
		സർവ്വേ നമ്പർ :		
8	വനം വകുപ്പിന്റെ മറ്റേതെങ്കിലും ധനസഹായ പദ്ധതിയിൽ ഉൾപ്പെട്ട വ്യക്തി ആണോ;	അതെ (വിശദ വിവരം)	അല്ല	
9	സ്ഥലത്തിന്റെ തരം (കര/നീലം)			
10	ഉടമസ്ഥാവകാശം a) സ്വന്തം/ലീസ് b) ലീസ് കാലാവധി	a) b)		
11	ബാങ്ക് അക്കൗണ്ട് വിവരങ്ങൾ a) അക്കൗണ്ട് നമ്പർ b) IFSC കോഡ് c) ബ്രാഞ്ച്			

12. അപേക്ഷയോടൊപ്പം സമർപ്പിക്കേണ്ട രേഖകൾ (സ്വയം സാക്ഷ്യപ്പെടുത്തിയ പകർപ്പ്)

- a) ആധാർ/വോട്ട്‌ഷേസ് ഐ.ഡി.
- b) വസ്തു സംബന്ധമായ രേഖകൾ - ഉടമസ്ഥാവകാശം തെളിയിക്കുന്ന രേഖകൾ, കരം അടച്ച രസീത്, ലീസ് എഗ്രിമെന്റ് മുതലായവ
- c) ബാങ്ക് പാസ്സ് ബുക്കിന്റെ അക്കൗണ്ട് വിവരങ്ങൾ അടങ്ങിയ പേജിന്റെ പകർപ്പ്

സ്ഥലം :
തീയതി : അപേക്ഷകന്റെ പേരും, ഒപ്പും

സത്യപ്രസ്താവന

ടി ബാങ്കിംഗ് പദ്ധതിയുമായി ബന്ധപ്പെട്ട മാർഗ്ഗനിർദ്ദേശങ്ങൾ അനുസരിച്ചുകൊള്ളാമെന്നും, കാലാകാലങ്ങളിൽ സർക്കാർ വരുത്തുന്ന മാറ്റങ്ങൾക്ക് അനുസരിച്ച് പദ്ധതിയുമായി സഹകരിക്കുന്നതിന് സമ്മതമാണെന്നും, മേൽ പ്രസ്താവിച്ച വിവരങ്ങൾ എന്റെ അറിവിലും വിശ്വാസത്തിലും പൂർണ്ണമായും സത്യമാണെന്നും ഇതിനാൽ ബോധിപ്പിച്ചുകൊള്ളുന്നു.

സ്ഥലം :
തീയതി : അപേക്ഷകന്റെ പേരും, ഒപ്പും

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ഓഫീസ് ആവശ്യത്തിന്	
റെയിഞ്ച് :	ഡിവിഷൻ :
അപേക്ഷ ലഭിച്ച തീയതി :	
റിമാർക്സ് :	

റെയിഞ്ച് ഫോറസ്റ്റ് ഓഫീസർ