

# 13 Steps to Success



A consolidation  
of three years of  
Project ReCAP  
2007-2010



## Project Sites

Three villages viz. Chinnaveerampatinam, Suba Uppalavadi and Devanampatinam constituted the project sites

Spread across the Union Territory of Pondicherry and Cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu, within a straight line distance of 18 kms, the epicentre of each of the villages is well within one kilometer of the High Tide Line rendering them to be part of the Coastal Regulation Zone III

While Chinnaveerampatinam is situated along the northern banks of River Chunnambar, Suba Uppalavadi is on the northern bank of River Ponnaiyar. A part of the estuarine system of River Ponnaiyar marks the northern boundary of Devanampatinam, while on the south it is restricted by River Gadilam.

All three villages are multi-religious and multi-caste in nature with marine and inland fishing and agriculture constituting primary livelihoods

The three villages were intensively impacted by the Tsunami of 2004 not only in terms of loss of lives and property but also considerable damage to the natural system and resources

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The Director

Pondicherry Multipurpose Social Service Society

81, Laporte Street, Pondicherry 605001

[www.pmsss.org.in](http://www.pmsss.org.in), Tel: 0413-2222928

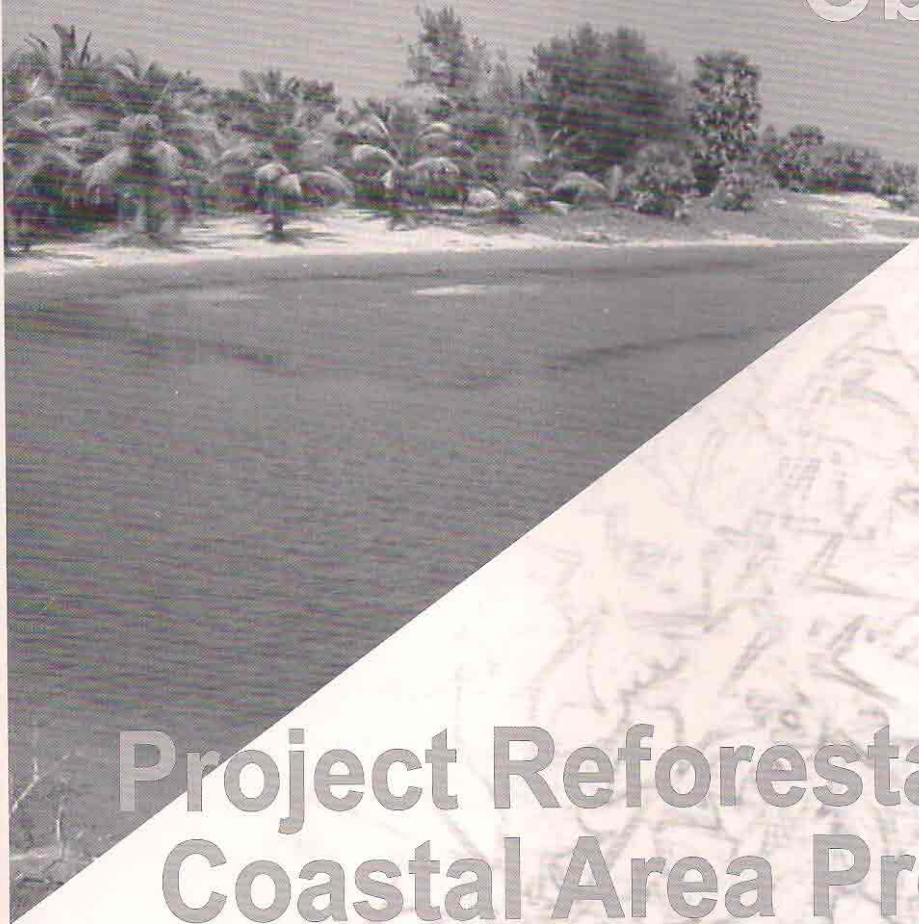


To prepare and enhance the capacities of local communities to promote/sustain coastal ecology as a means of disaster preparedness

To develop a replicable methodology for the implementation and monitoring of socio-ecological interventions that mitigate the effects of disasters

To establish a Centre of Competence for Coastal Protection to support the replication and expansion of the effort

# Objectives



# Project Reforestation and Coastal Area Protection

## Guiding Principles

Coastal landscapes are resilient and therefore capable of reviving their character and function with human intervention

Human intervention is most effective only when it is focused and supported by a system that blends science and community mobilisation

## The Approach

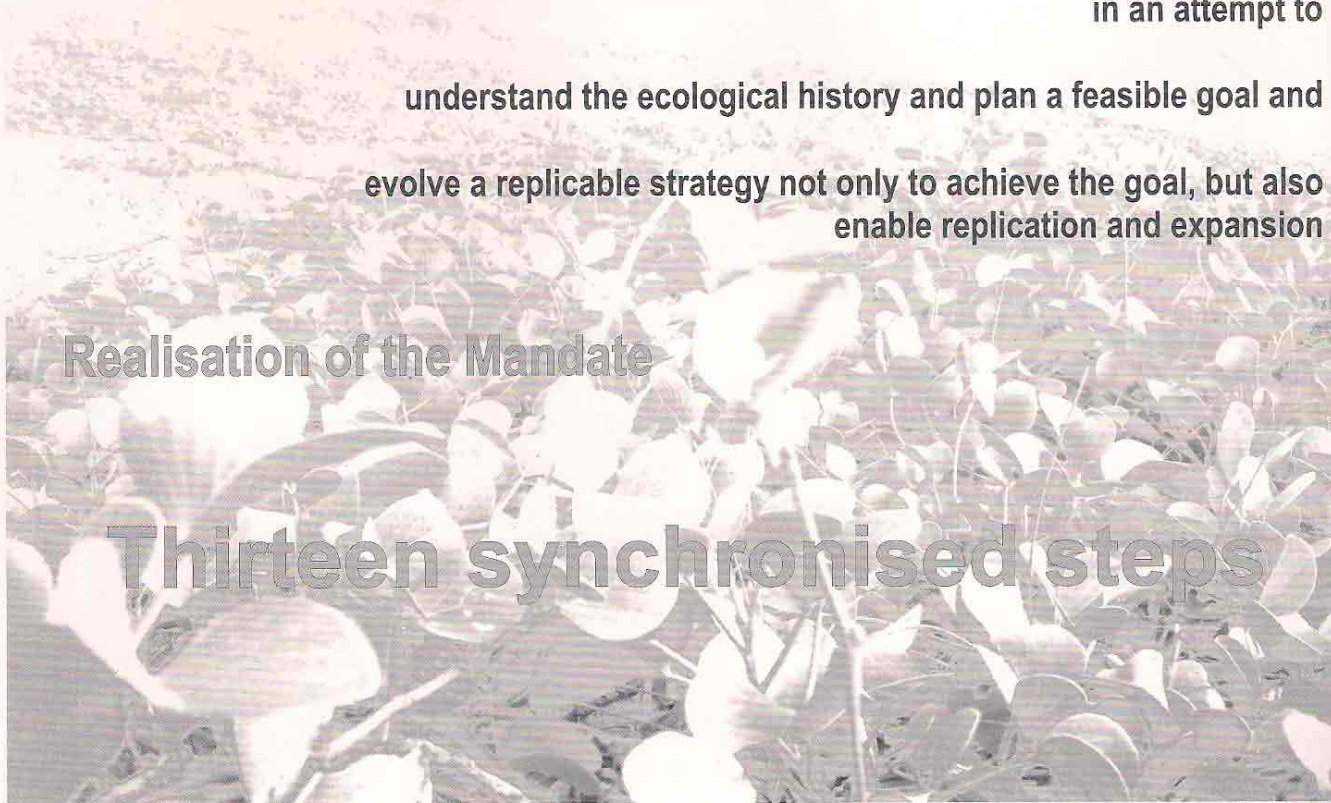
A two pronged approach according equal merit to science and society, in an attempt to

understand the ecological history and plan a feasible goal and

evolve a replicable strategy not only to achieve the goal, but also enable replication and expansion

Realisation of the Mandate

Thirteen synchronised steps



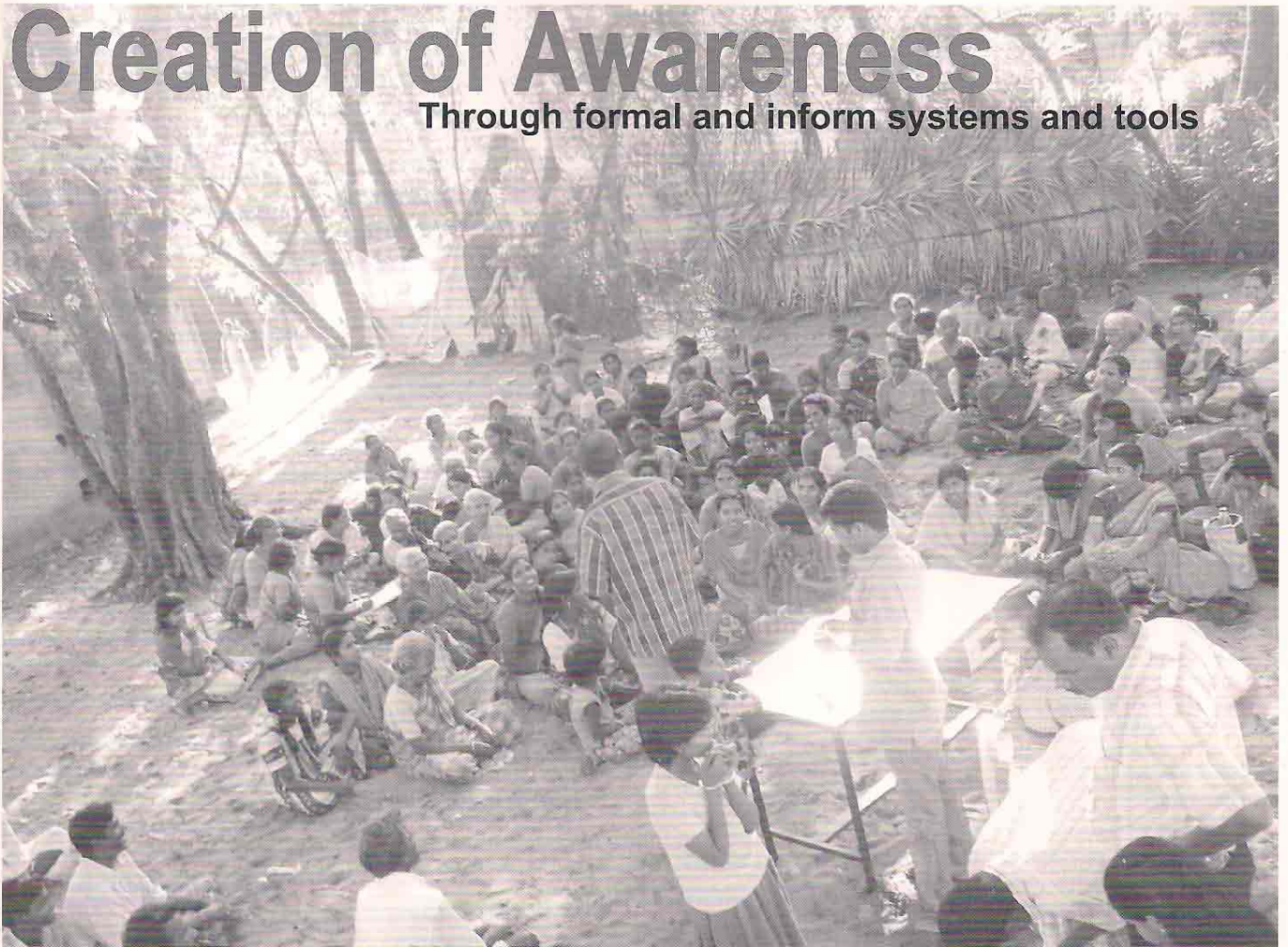


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Launched against the backdrop of massive inflow of funds into villages in the post-Tsunami phase, Project ReCAP invested sustained efforts for building awareness on protecting habitats for mitigating disasters. That we need to become custodians of our coasts was a platform that was created in the project sites as well as amongst other stakeholders

# Creation of Awareness

Through formal and inform systems and tools







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## **Forming**

**Enhancing local capabilities to ensure sustainability**

**11 Groups spread over the three project villages and comprising of 220 members were formed into Task Forces for the project - mandated with the implementation and monitoring of the restoration efforts**





# 2

## Forming

**Enhancing local capabilities to ensure sustainability**

11 Groups spread over the three project villages and comprising of 220 members were formed into Task Forces for the project - mandated with the implementation and monitoring of the restoration efforts

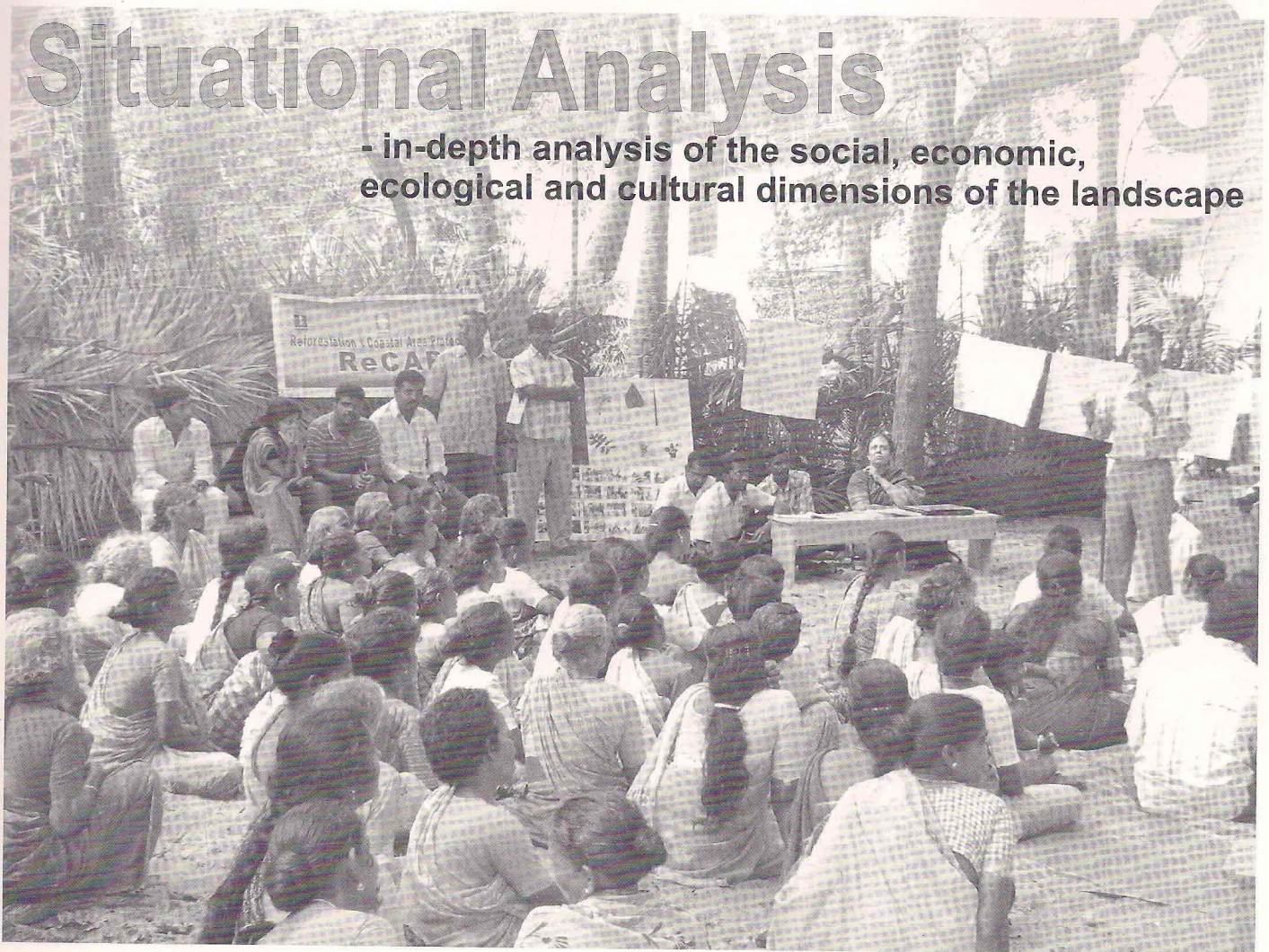


When the village is viewed as a landscape with four types of infrastructure viz. social, economic, ecological and cultural, the ambit of situational analysis is not only enlarged, but is also rendered meaningful - investing time and effort and ensuring active community participation in such an analysis is an important step for success



# Situational Analysis

- in-depth analysis of the social, economic, ecological and cultural dimensions of the landscape





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# Landscape Assessment

**- providing scientific inputs for community mobilisation**

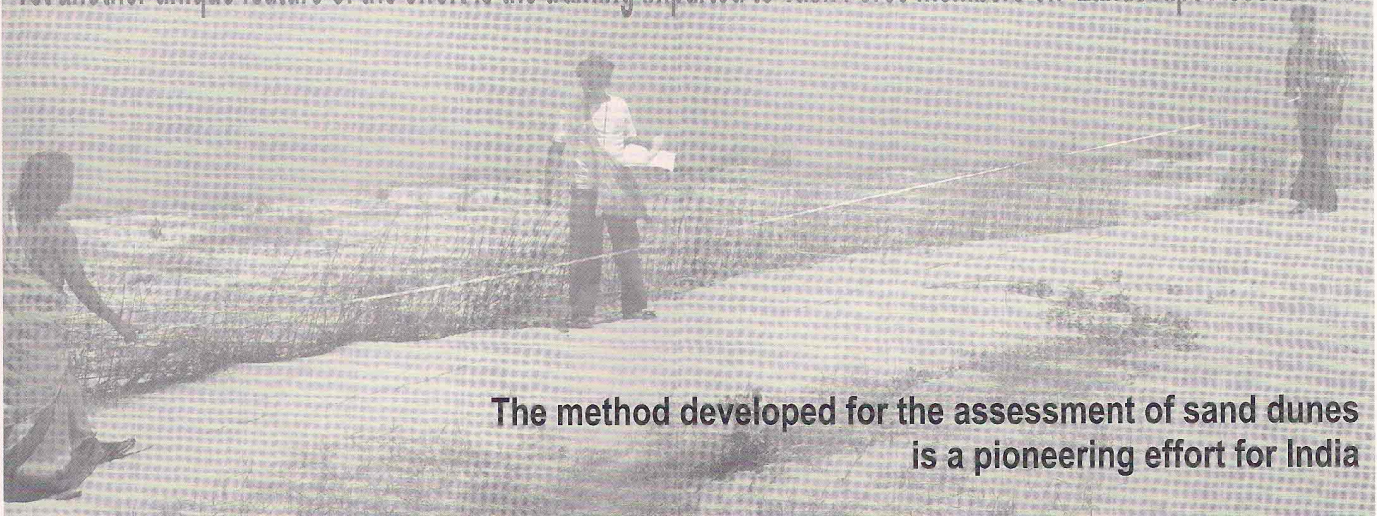
Developed under the academic domain of Restoration Ecology, this component was essential to assess the ecological status of the project villages, the reasons for degradation and the potential for restoration

The focus was on sand dunes, mangroves and littoral forests - three dynamic systems that are also intensively used by humans. The assessment also helped in identifying the plant species that were to be sourced, protected or planted for enabling coastal restoration



Assessment protocol for each of the habitats was distinct and validated for replication as well as use by the community. Data was collected as a joint exercise and fed into the database for analysis and use

Yet another unique feature of the effort is the training imparted to Task Force members on Landscape Assessment



The method developed for the assessment of sand dunes is a pioneering effort for India



A Methodology Manual on Landscape Assessment is available at the Centre of Competence for Coastal Protection - PMSSS





# Herbarium

Keeping with the guiding principle of the project, a herbarium of coastal plant species was developed with the active participation of the community - the collection is stored at the CCCP



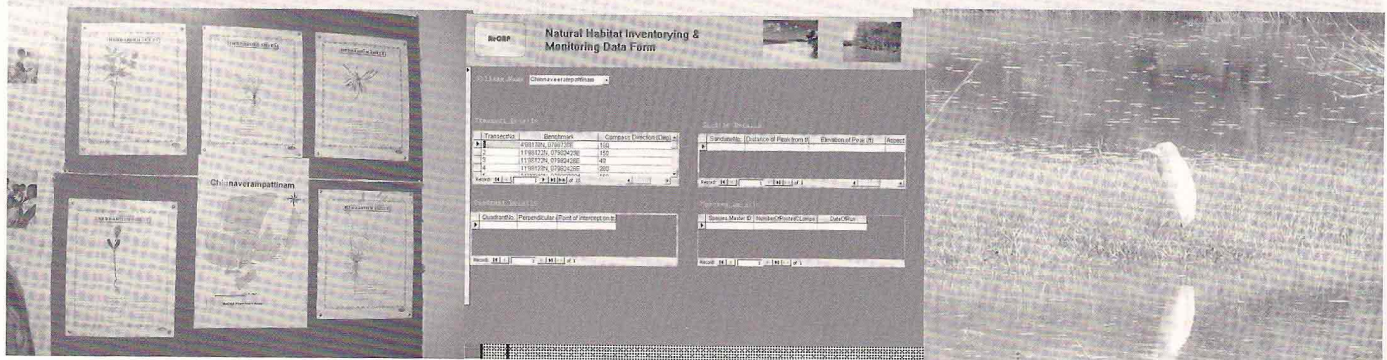


# Centre of Competence for Coastal Protection

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- to preserve information for use and posterity

The Centre of Competence for Coastal Protection (CCCP) is one of the primary outputs of ReCAP. Designed to function as a one stop resource hub for a range of stakeholders, the CCCP has over 1000 research and popular articles and abstracts, photographs, maps and a database for habitat inventoring and monitoring





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## Participatory Mapping

From hand drawn Mental Maps to Satellite Imageries



A rather distinct component of ReCAP was the process of participatory mapping. This was achieved by introducing the element of scale and layers into mental mapping exercises- and further strengthened by GPS based surveys that were eventually consolidated into GIS based images of project intervention



# Skill Training and Capacity Building

- for ensuring livelihoods and improving lives

Why should training be restricted to community mobilisation ?  
How do we make communities self reliant in coastal protection ?

Guided by these two questions, Project ReCAP invested its effort in training local capabilities in livelihood options such as bio fuel generation, raising medicinal plants etc.

Recognising the potential of local communities to learn, training in restoration ecology was also undertaken during the entire course of the project,





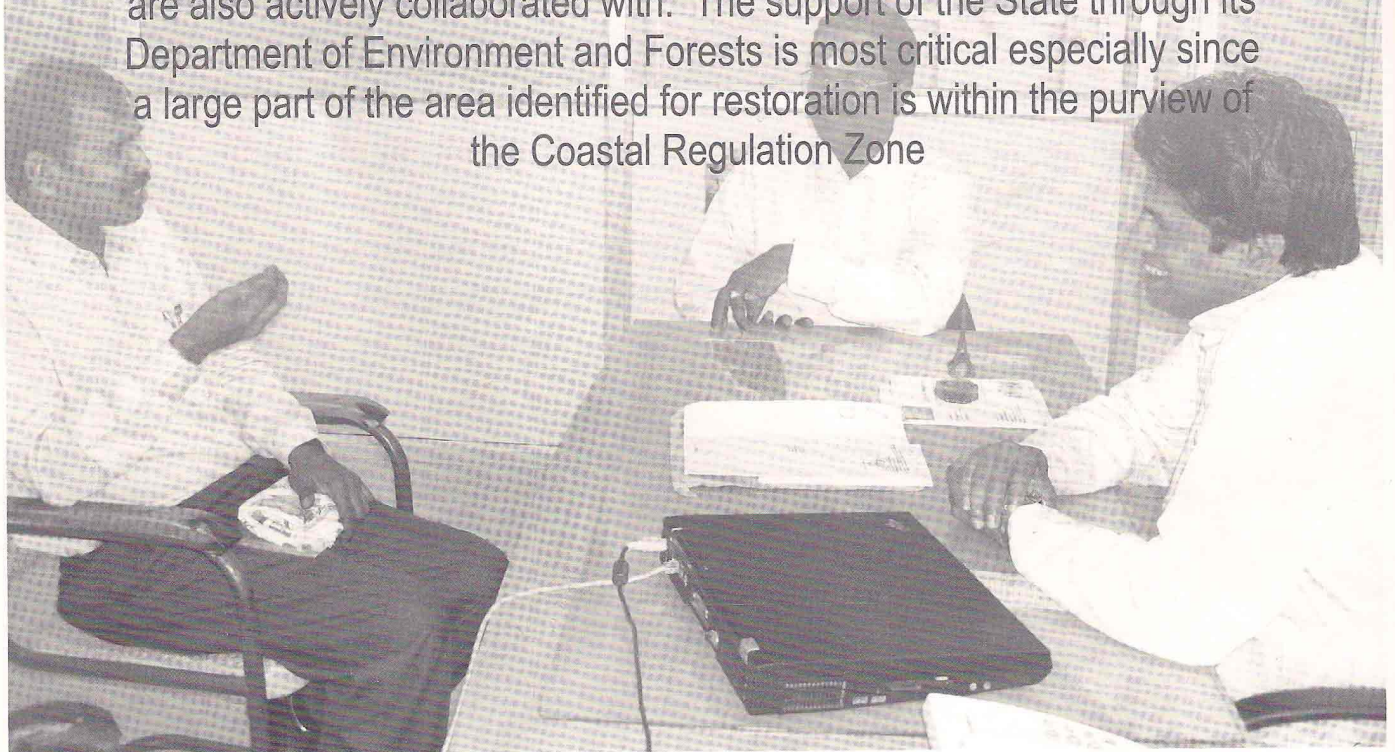


# Stakeholder Consultation

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- together we protect and conserve our coast

While consultations with local communities form the backbone of the project, it is also imperative that other organisations of the landscape are also actively collaborated with. The support of the State through its Department of Environment and Forests is most critical especially since a large part of the area identified for restoration is within the purview of the Coastal Regulation Zone





# Exposure Visits

# 10

Members of the Task Forces visited project sites of other organisations and government departments to obtain a first hand understanding of restoration, coastal livelihood options - this hastened the process of internalisation within communities



**MPIC OVERREACHING OF MEDICINAL PLANT INTERPRETATION CENTER**  
Madagadipet, Pudukkottai-605 107  
Department of Agriculture, Pudukkottai



A project to establish, maintain & improve a Medicinal Plant Interpretation Centre (MPIC) at the Government Horticulture farm at Madagadipet, Pudukkottai with a view to conserve, cultivate and commercialise medicinal plants.



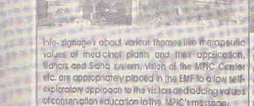
Activities such as taking guided tours, conducting workshops, seminars, awareness programmes, etc. have been planned to disseminate the value and benefits of medicinal plants to the public.



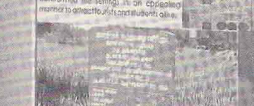
Information brochures, leaflets and other promotional materials were developed and distributed to the public to create awareness and interest in medicinal plants.



Visitors are provided with information on the medicinal properties of various plants and their uses. The staff members are trained to provide detailed information to the visitors.



Medicinal plants have been identified and their medicinal properties are being studied. The project aims to conserve and utilize these plants for the benefit of the community.



Cultivation Demonstration plots for 12 medicinal plants are being developed to study and demonstrate the medicinal properties of these plants to the public.



The project has received financial support from various sources, including the Government and private organizations. This support has helped in the development and maintenance of the MPIC.



A novel concept called 'Medicinal Forest' has been introduced. This concept involves the cultivation of medicinal plants in a natural forest setting, which helps in the conservation of these plants and their medicinal properties.



Medicinal plants are being cultivated in a natural forest setting, which helps in the conservation of these plants and their medicinal properties. This approach is more sustainable and environmentally friendly.



A different kind of poster, stickers, pamphlets have been developed by MPIC and made available to the public. These materials help in raising awareness about the medicinal plants and their uses.



Professors Deans from Madurai University, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Madurai University, Annamalai University have visited and appreciated the conservation efforts made at the MPIC.



MPIC attracted visitors of from various walks of life such as students, women groups, traditional healers, farmers, industrialists, scientists and other tourists. They regularly attend MPIC and carry the MPIC concept to other parts of the country, that visits from all over Tamil Nadu and Pudukkottai appreciate the activities designed in the MPIC. It is evidenced through the Visitor's book.

Project implementation by: **HERB Society, Pudukkottai**

A survey, questionnaire of the region was conducted and the results were analyzed to identify the medicinal plants and their uses.



Exhibition of medicinal plants was held during the World Agricultural Exhibition, Madurai, during the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Government of Tamil Nadu.

Radio and television programmes on medicinal plants and their uses were broadcasted on various channels.

Press media like Hima, Thiruvananthapuram, Malabar Mitra, etc. have reported on the activities of the MPIC.



A special health ingredients was developed and marketed to the public. This product is made from the medicinal plants and is known to have various health benefits.



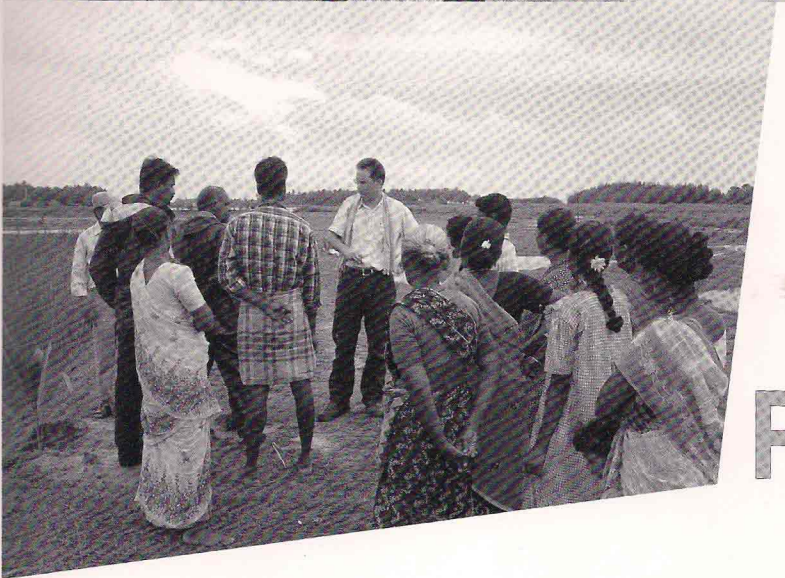
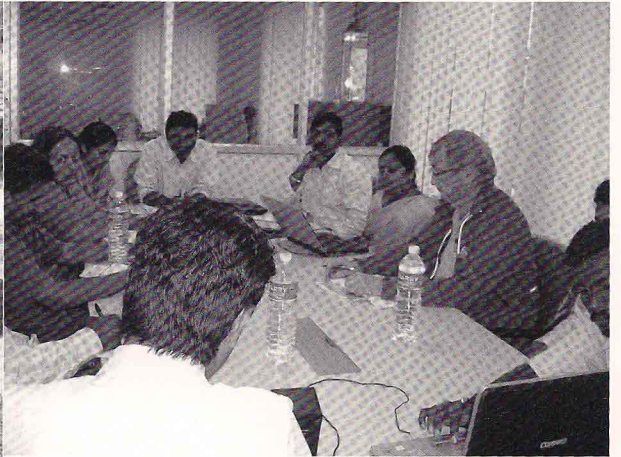
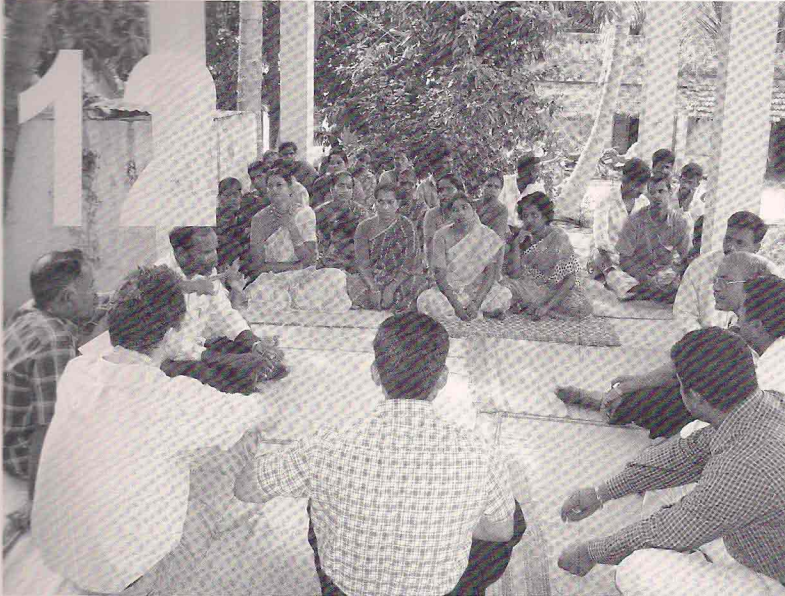
# Ensuring Regeneration and Recruitment

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- of native vegetation through collection of seeds and establishment of nurseries







# Participatory Review

A process and target oriented review during the entire duration of the project on mutually convenient dates



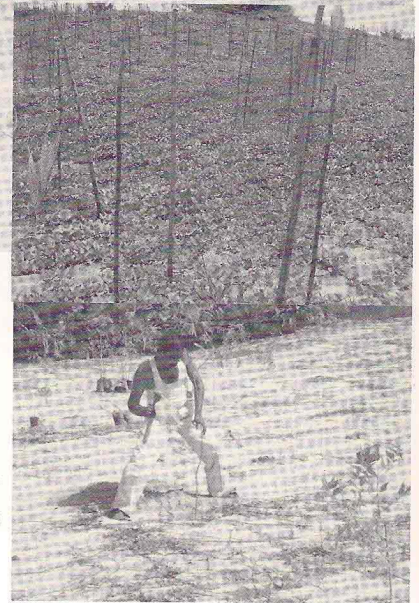


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# Restoration

A plethora of restoration activities designed to specifically address the status and potential of the habitat type under consideration - all activities were designed and implemented with the active support of the local communities

**Key activities include sourcing of seeds, plants, planting, protection using local material and maintenance**





## The success of Project ReCAP

.....tangible evidence on ground

The concept and practice of restoration of natural habitats mainstreamed into local development paradigms

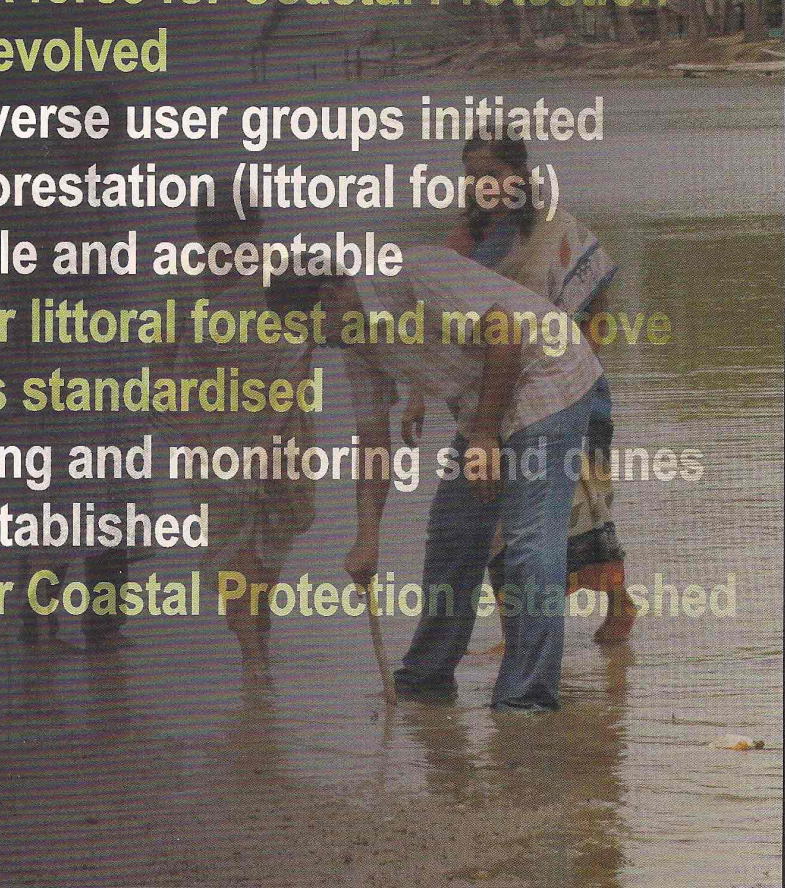
Local level skilled task force for Coastal Protection evolved

Networking with diverse user groups initiated multi-species reforestation (littoral forest) found viable and acceptable

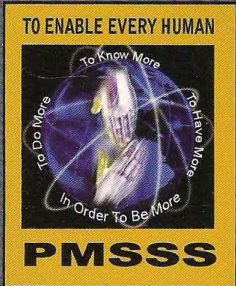
Nursery techniques for littoral forest and mangrove species standardised

Methodology for restoring and monitoring sand dunes established

Centre of Competence for Coastal Protection established







Project Reforestation and Coastal Area Protection (ReCAP) is a collaborative project of the Pondicherry Multipurpose Social Service Society (PMSSS), Care Earth and Caritas India



Care Earth

