

## ECO-FRIENDLY PRACTICES INITIATED BY FOREST DEPARTMENT

**In a nutshell:** Inculcate eco-friendly practices while doing departmental activities and promote the same in target groups which are general and villagers of the area

**Nodal agency:** Mayabunder Forest Division/ Andaman and Nicobar Islands

To counter the growing menace of plastic and non-biodegradable waste, the forest department of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands has initiated a set of eco-friendly practices while carrying out departmental activities, while promoting the same among the general public and villagers of the area.

The various initiatives include:

- 1. Eco-friendly practices adopted in forest nurseries in various ranges to minimize polybag usage.**
  - Use of areca nut leaf sheath for making seedling bags as an initiative.
  - The raw material/areca nut leaf sheaths are procured/collected from local villages.
  - The final product is used for short duration seedlings i.e., for 4-6 months old seedlings of flower cuttings, medicinal plants and vegetables.
  - Use of bamboos instead of poly bags as containers for seedlings.
- 2. To promote green manuring.**
  - Use of compost pits in forest nurseries where dried leaves, twigs, grass, vegetable waste etc. are decomposed using cow dung slurry to produce green manure.
- 3. To promote butterfly conservation.**
  - An initiative towards butterfly conservation at model nursery in Karmatang - a small structure is made which is planted with nectarous flowering plants and host plants nearby, to attract butterflies and facilitate pollination.
- 4. Water conservation efforts.**
  - Under this initiative, efforts have been made by cleaning of perennial water sources, construction of temporary loose boulder check dams, gully plugging in freshwater reservoirs to facilitate surface recharge of aquifers, to check soil erosion and also to provide adequate water for departmental livestock and other wild animals.
  - Construction of ring wells at range office complex to cater the local needs of freshwater for the forest colony and model nursery camp water requirements.
- 5. Sanitation and cleaning works at the beach area**
  - To maintain plastic free zones and to segregate and dispose off garbage waste generated by incoming tourists, regular cleaning works are carried out by engaging departmental workers on a regular basis.

## 6. Sensitization activities

- To sensitize local youths, general public and school students on importance of forestry, marine ecology etc., territorial ranges under this division has conducted various field visits, nature camps, interactive sessions to strengthen forest conservation and protection.

The initiatives have elicited positive response from the public and has reaped positive outputs as well. The challenge, however, is to ensure that people follow the cleanliness rules and guidelines at various eco-tourism spots in the region.



**Compost pit made for generating green manure from dried leaves/grasses at Model Nursery Karmatang**



**An Initiative towards Butterfly conservation at Model Nursery Karmatang**

Preparing green manure using compost pit