

PUDUCHERRY

Collective envisages strategy to protect fragile ecosystems

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

PUDUCHERRY FEBRUARY 06, 2021 02:20 IST

UPDATED: FEBRUARY 06, 2021 02:20 IST

Green Protocol for Wetlands was recently launched as part of World Wetlands Day celebrations



A collective of environmental protection advocates has framed a 'Green Protocol for Wetlands' that envisages a four-pronged strategy to protect the fragile ecosystems.

Apart from involving baseline mapping, wetland health cards, enlisting 'Wetland Mitras' and integrated management plans developed by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the protocol has conceived a set of SOPs under various categories.





These fall broadly into strategies for wetland rehabilitation, community participation, storm water drain management, buffer zone sustainability, and evolving an action plan for protecting the waterbodies.

The protocol was recently launched as part of World Wetlands Day celebrations and to mark the 50th anniversary of the Ramsar Convention at the Pondicherry University, in partnership with the Department of Forests and Wildlife, Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Department of School Education, and the Association for Promoting Sustainability in Campuses and Communities.

Vice-Chancellor of Pondicherry University Gurmeet Singh and Deputy Conservator of Forests and Wildlife Vanjulavalli Sridhar jointly launched the 'Green Protocol for Wetlands'. Among those present were Ramakichenin Balagandhi, Director of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, S. Balakrishnan, head, Directorate of Studies, Educational Innovations and Rural Reconstruction, B. Chitra, Registrar, K.V. Devi Prasad, dean, School of Life Sciences, and M. Nandhivarman, coordinator, Office of Green Campus, Pondicherry University.

Rudra Goud, Director, Department of School Education, said the Department was organising a drawing competition across over 400 public schools, reaching over 4,500 participants, on the theme of ‘wetlands and water’ as a sensitisation effort. Besides, to catalyse the ‘Wetlands Mitras’ (or) ‘wetlands friends’, a wetland conservation network is planned.

Photography contest

Meanwhile, AuroVanam, an eco-resource centre under the Svarnim Puducherry initiative of Sri Aurobindo Society, hosted a photography competition on the occasion of the World Wetlands Day at INTACH.

The event, themed “Wetlands and Water”, encouraged students and teachers to capture photographs of fresh waterbodies of the Puducherry bioregion and the biodiversity around them.

Out of around 129 entries received from junior and senior students and also from teachers, the best five from each category were shortlisted for an exhibition as part of the ongoing Puducherry Heritage Festival and the Water Festival 2021. The exhibition was opened by Kalamegam, environmental engineer with the Department of Science, Technology & Environment, in the presence of Shalini Aravindan, Aurovanam coordinator, INTACH officials and Sunaina Mandeem, festival coordinator. The exhibition will be on till 1 p.m. on Saturday.

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Printable version | May 16, 2022 12:38:41 am |

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