

PERINGAMKULAM POND MAINTENANCE PROJECT



Annual Report 2017-18

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Apollo Tyre Foundation

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INTRODUCTION

Conservation of ponds is by now an acknowledged solution to the water scarcity and ground water depletion. In the past, ponds were a part of everyone's daily lives because uses of ponds are many. It conserves water, supports agriculture and other water needs, provides a viable condition for local wildlife such as birds, butterflies, dragonflies, damselflies, frogs, crabs *etc.*. Ponds are ideal habitat for lots of organisms. Ponds also support their breeding.

Water scarcity has emerged as one of the most prominent issues faced in the world. Though Kerala is known for its water bodies, there are many people struggling to meet their water needs and left agriculture due to water scarcity. On one hand, a large number of people are thriving for water, on the other hand a large number of water resources are ruined. Conserving the ponds can definitely help us with the rise in water demand.

Peringamkulam pond is located in KodakaraPanchayat in Thrissur district, Kerala. It was the major source of water to the local community, especially for agricultural and domestic purposes. The water body had greater ecological and cultural significances in the past, and due to its existence the entire surrounding area is known as Peringamkulam today. It was an important place not only for the community members, but also was a major halting spot for pilgrims to Sabarimala.

Considering the ecological and cultural significance of Peringamkulam pond, which is very close to Apollo, its conservation and restoration is one of the interested areas of Apollo's biodiversity conservation. Therefore, they have restored the pond and developed the pond bank as a way side leisure destination, which is a sustainable model conservation of ponds. The maintenance of the restored pond has been continued in the last year.

OBJECTIVE

To protect and maintain existing components in Peringamkulam as a sustainable model of pond conservation.

DESCRIPTION

As a continuation of the Peringamkulam Pond restoration and conservation activities held in 2016, the maintenance activities were continued in the year 2017-18 as well.

Monthly cleaning of butterfly gardens and pond surroundings as well as application of organic fertilizers was conducted throughout the year. Pond cleaning was conducted thrice in the year, July, October and February. The plants in the butterfly garden were replanted

twice in the last year in May and December. Also, the handrails of the pond were repainted in September.



Figure 1: Peringankulam

A Peringankulam committee meeting was conducted on 3rd February, 2018 at Marathampilli Anganawadi to take major decisions about the takeover of Peringankulam Pond's maintenance by Panchayath. Though a traditional snack stall was started at Peringankulam, due to lack of a proper infrastructure it was failed. Therefore, it was proposed to the Panchayath to provide a stall for Peringankulam which will be leased for starting a stall, thereby ensuring people's involvement with the pond. The vendors will be entitled with the responsibility of cleaning and general maintenance of the pond.

CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Society does not take initiatives without direct benefits. Therefore, no one comes forward to initiate it's maintenance.
- Several attempts have been made to start 1-2 evening food stalls at the site. It has brought in regular visitors to the pond and also the stalls get good revenue. However, due to the lack of infrastructure it was failed. Hence, the provision of such an infrastructure has been proposed to the Kodakara Panchayath.

CONCLUSION

Peringankulam is one of the best model for the conservation of small surface water resources, coupling tourism and water conservation. This is of high importance especially in the wake of climate change. It is our duty to demonstrate its sustainable maintenance too.

