

Coverage Report

**Mphasis launches a Campaign dedicated to the restoration of mangroves
February 07, 2023**

Online

The New Indian Express

[Pazhaverkadu to return to its “roots” with one million mangroves](#)

Pazhaverkadu, the beautiful seashore town in the outskirts of Chennai also known as Pulicat, can now look forward to growing back some of its green roots.

Mphasis, a Bengaluru based tech firm -- in collaboration with NGO United Way Bengaluru (UWB) -- has launched an initiative for the restoration of Mangrove forests in the town on World Wetlands Day, Feb 2.

The town, which lies to the north of Chennai, was once home to a vibrant Mangrove vegetation, which is supposed to be behind its unique name: Pazhaverkadu means the “jungle of roots”.

The scheme will be part of UWB’s broader initiative to restore nearly one million mangroves in the region by 2027. It also contains measures to enhance the production of shrimp and fish species that serve as a source of livelihood for the people in the region.

Pulicat hosts India’s second largest brackish waters - the Pulicat lake, spanning 720 sq. km, and once boasted of vibrant and lively mangrove vegetation.

But now, "the lake's depth has reduced from 3.8m to 2m due to the large-scale destruction of the mangrove vegetation due to human-caused and factors. Currently, the area is left with patches of mangrove vegetation; hence these efforts are aimed at its restoration," Mphasis said.

Mangroves, the beautiful green umbrellas with thick roots that run into the depths of water, are key players in maintaining the climate equilibrium. They prevent extreme weather conditions and their dense roots shield the land from natural disasters. It also helps stabilize shorelines.

Mangroves are also highly effective as carbon absorbers. A mangrove forest absorbs five times more carbon dioxide than a tropical upland forest of the same area. Moreover, they provide habitat for diverse marine and terrestrial species.

Unfortunately, humans have failed these green saviors. Most of the mangroves near towns and cities in India have been cleared under the pressures of development.

They are also facing threat globally. The State of the World's Mangrove 2022 report suggests that only 147,000 sq km of mangrove forests remain in the whole world.

Mphasis said it hopes that its contribution will help in addressing climate change to some degree: “As our commitment to environmental preservation deepens, it becomes increasingly apparent the pivotal role mangroves play in carbon sequestration, coastal protection, and habitat preservation.”

This is not the first time the tech firm is holding hands with UWBe. This collaboration has driven several initiatives aimed at protecting the environment and restoring the greenery.

As a part of the group's 'One Billion Drops' campaign, they constructed 1,300 percolation wells for rainwater harvesting with the potential to conserve 166 million liters with each filling.

Similarly, a foundation for a thriving forest has been established at the Doddasaggere Botanical Garden in Tumkur, Karnataka, comprising 100,000 tree saplings of diverse species.

ADgully

[A Campaign To Rewild Mangroves for a Sustainable Future](#)

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DD News

[Reviving India's Mangrove Cover](#)

Pulicat, a coastal town situated north of Chennai, was once known for its thick mangrove forests. However, as the city expanded, much of these mangroves were cleared for development. But now, a CSR initiative by Bengaluru's Mphasis, a tech firm, aims to revive Pulicat's dwindling mangrove cover.

Mphasis has partnered with the NGO United Way Bengaluru to plant mangrove seedlings in Pulicat. So far, they've planted 18,500 saplings across 18.5 acres, with plans to plant another 40 acres this year.

In a written reply to a question, Union Environment Minister Ashwini Kumar Choubey informed the Lok Sabha about efforts to protect, restore, and enhance mangrove forests in coastal states and Union territories of India. The Union Budget 2023-24 introduced the 'Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes (MISHTI)' to safeguard and promote mangroves as unique ecosystems. This initiative aims to restore mangroves across approximately 540 sq km over five years, starting from 2023-24.

Launched by the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change on World Environment Day (June 5, 2023), MISHTI provides operational guidelines to states for implementing plans. Notably, India's mangrove cover increased by 252 sq km between 2015 and 2021.

Mangroves, resilient salt-tolerant plant communities found in tropical and subtropical intertidal regions, are repositories of rich biodiversity. High rainfall (1,000 to 3,000 mm) and temperatures (26°C-35°C) characterize their habitats. With unique adaptations, mangrove species survive waterlogged soils, high salinity, and cyclonic storms. These ecosystems serve as vital refuges for coastal biodiversity and act as bio-shields against extreme climatic events. Large rural populations depend on mangrove ecosystems for livelihoods.

The Sunderbans, the world's largest mangrove forest, acts like a natural barrier against cyclones and storm surges.

Recognizing the critical role of mangroves, the government has taken comprehensive steps to protect and enhance these ecosystems in coastal states and Union territories. Promotional measures include the 'Conservation and Management of Mangroves and Coral Reefs' scheme under the National Coastal Mission Programme. Regulatory measures are implemented through various acts.

Conservation efforts aim to overcome challenges such as biotic pressure, natural calamities, and human activities like land reclamation and discharge of untreated sewage. The Forest Survey of India has been monitoring mangrove cover since 1987, using remote sensing.

Recognizing their significance, the Government of India established the National Mangroves Committee in 1976 to advise on conservation and development of mangroves. The multifaceted approach outlined by the Union Budget 2023-24 and the initiatives taken by the government underscore the crucial role of mangroves in ecological balance and sustainable development.

Online		
Date	Publication/ Portal	Headline
February 05, 2024	The New Indian Express	Pazhaverkadu to return to its “roots” with one million mangroves
February 05, 2024	ADgully	A Campaign To Rewild Mangroves for a Sustainable Future
February 06, 2024	DD News	Reviving India’s Mangrove Cover