

Plantation tips to save Ganga

Suman Chakraborti, May 30 2016 : The Times of India (Kolkata)



The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), under the ministry of water resources, river development and Ganga rejuvenation, has proposed a specific forestry and urban landscape model for the five states through which the Ganga flows, including West Bengal.

While for North Bengal, the Centre has proposed miscellaneous plantation, South Bengal may have Sal and other associate species of trees. It has also been proposed to have quick growing small timber, fuel and fodder plantation in the riverside areas of South Bengal.

The state has already prepared a detailed project report (DPR) for urban forestry and landscape based on the Centre's proposal.

Bengal has come up with three landscape-specific forestry interventions -natural, agricultural and urban landscape. The course of the Ganga and its tributaries in Bengal has been classed into three broad stretches -the mountaineering stretch in Darjeeling region, the plain stretch in the greater part of the state and the delta area of Sunderbans.

For natural landscapes and ecosystems like forests, grasslands and wetlands, the state has proposed soil and moisture conservation, weed control and plantations.

Miscellaneous species plantation, grass and fodder plantation, mangrove plantation and underplanting with bamboo are other proposals.

Riverfront development is the most important area included in urban landscape. Large and dwarf trees, shrubs, bamboos, herbs, grasses and miscellaneous ornamental plants, like lawn and hedge plants, have been proposed in the DPR. For agricultural land beside the river, pulse, grains, vegetable and fruit crops have been proposed. Ecopark development and industrial and institutional estate plantation are also parts of urban landscaping. Palms, aquatic plants, fruit trees and ornamental plantation have been proposed for ecoparks, and fodder, ornamental and fruit trees have been proposed for industrial zones on the Gangetic riverside areas of the state.

The DPR also mention conservation interventions like soil and water conservation, riparian wildlife management and wetland management, along with a number of supporting activities like policy-level interventions, concurrent research, capacity building, awareness, monitoring and evaluation.

Besides urban forestry plans, it has been suggested that the ghats and crematoria in the state could be maintained and looked after by corporates or NRIs for proper maintenance.