

Forest Dept. to take over mangrove forests in private land, says A.K. Saseendran

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In the first phase of the programme, mangroves in 51.41 hectares in Thrissur, Kollam, Kannur and Malappuram districts will be acquired.

Move part of government efforts to conserve mangroves

The Forest Department intended to take over mangrove forests in privately-held land totalling 12 sq. km as part of efforts to conserve them, Forest Minister A.K. Saseendran informed the Kerala Assembly on Friday.

Landowners would be compensated for the takeover planned under Section 4 (1) of the Kerala Forest (Vesting and Management of Ecologically Fragile Lands) Act, 2003, Mr. Saseendran said, replying to questions in the Assembly.

The initiative has been conceived under the post-flood Rebuild Kerala development programme. In the first phase, mangroves in 51.41 hectares in Thrissur, Kollam, Kannur and Malappuram districts will be acquired. At present, the government is providing ₹4,000 per acre to landowners for the conservation of mangroves on private land.

Steps had also been taken to protect mangroves in government-owned land in five districts by declaring them as reserve forest, said Mr. Saseendran.

The government had earmarked ₹120 crore for the takeover and conservation of mangroves as per an order on May 23, 2019, he said. The State-level empowered committee has given clearance for ₹10 crore in the current fiscal.

In the case of mangroves in other districts, inspection of survey records and compilation of information regarding the flora were progressing, said the Minister.

\The State government aimed to protect mangroves with the participation of public, he said, adding that development concerns had come into conflict with calls for protection of ecology in some places.

The government had also launched the planting of 70,000 casuarina trees along the stretch from Arthungal to Alappuzha as part of the Vanamahotsavam, he said.

Source:<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/forest-dept-to-take-over-mangrove-forests-in-private-land-says-ak-saseendran/article35760297.ece>