

Saplings plantation has improved soil quality across Tiruppur district, says study

STAFF REPORTER

TIRUPPUR

A short-term study made on the *Vanathukkul Tiruppur* sapling plantation initiative has shown that the plantation of over 10 lakh saplings in the past six years across Tiruppur district has positively contributed to the environment such as improvement in soil quality and biodiversity.

The Ecological Impact Survey Report released by Coimbatore-based environment NGO Siddharth Foundation on February 27 in Tiruppur, studied 70 out of the total 481 plantations where the saplings were planted since 2015. As many as 79 species of birds, 65 species of butterflies and 41 species of spiders were recorded in these 70 plantations during the study, the report said.

The report estimated that 7,377 tonnes of carbon were



Siruthuli's Managing Trustee Vanitha Mohan at the inauguration of the sapling nursery in Tiruppur.

sequestered through the saplings planted in the initiative. Carbon sequestration is the removal, capture or sequestration of CO₂ from the atmosphere which could help in mitigating global warming.

"Maintenance of existing VT [*Vanathukkul Tiruppur*] plantations for four more years will result in the sequestration of 38,000 tonnes of CO₂ from the air," the report said.

Within the 70 plantations, about 88% of the saplings planted have survived and were growing well. "This survival rate is excellent compared to other afforestation programmes elsewhere," the report said, noting that the *Vanathukkul Tiruppur* initiative provides a model of participatory afforestation that can be adopted anywhere.

Managing Trustee of Siddharth Foundation P.N.

Anoop Raj said on Monday that this study was carried out between March 2020 and December 2020 and that a long-term study spanning one or two years is required to assess the impact better. "Long-term monitoring is also required," he said, as these plantations will take around 15 years to become as matured ecosystems.

T. R. Sivaram, Founder and President of NGO Vetry that has been carrying out this initiative since 2015, termed the results as encouraging. "This shows we are on the right path," he said. The target for the seventh year of *Vanathukkul Tiruppur* is two lakh saplings, Mr. Sivaram said. The nursery was inaugurated by Managing Trustee of NGO Siruthuli Vanitha Mohan in Tiruppur on Saturday and the planting of these saplings will begin in June, he added.