



### **ABSTRACT**

Forests – Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Board – Notification of Kasampatty (Veera kovil) Sacred Grove as Biodiversity Heritage site in Dindigul district under section 37 (1) of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 – Orders – Issued.

### **ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND FOREST (FR.5) DEPARTMENT**

G.O.(Ms).No. 52

Dated: 12.03.2025

சுபகிருது, மாசி- 28

திருவள்ளூர் ஆண்டு- 2053

Read:

1. Resolution dated 09.02.2023 passed by the Reddiyapatty Panchayat Council.
2. From the District Forest Officer (FAC), Dindigul letter C.No.894/2023/D1, dated 16.02.2023.
3. From the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Secretary, Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Board letter No.TNBB/487/2022/B3, dated 04.08.2023.
4. From the District Collector, Dindigul Letter ந.க. No. 201/2024/அ, dated:12.09.2024

### **ORDER:-**

Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS) are well-defined areas that are unique, ecologically fragile ecosystems – terrestrial, coastal and inland waters and marine – with a high diversity of wild and domesticated species or intra-specific categories, high endemism, presence of rare and threatened species, keystone species, species of evolutionary significance, and wild ancestors of domestic and cultivated species.

2. The National Biodiversity Authority in their guidelines has outlined the relevance and purposes of Biodiversity Heritage Sites, among which are the following:-

a. Biodiversity is closely linked to ecological security and therefore, human welfare. To strengthen the biodiversity conservation in traditionally managed areas and to stem the rapid loss of biodiversity in intensively managed areas, such areas need special attention.

b. Such areas also often represent a positive interface between nature, culture, society and technologies, such that both conservation and livelihood security are or can be achieved, and positive links between wild and domesticated biodiversity are enhanced.

c. To have a Biodiversity Heritage Sites in or around a community should be a matter of pride and honour to such community and this virtuous act of community may work as an example to the entire nation apart from ensuring availability of the resources to their own future generation. The areas like existing sacred groves in general and those existing in Western Ghats in particular can straight away be declared and notified as Biodiversity Heritage Sites.

d. It is necessary to instill and nurture conservation ethics in all sections of society. The creation of Biodiversity Heritage Sites will ensure bringing home these values in the society and thereby put an end to over-exploitation of natural resources and avoid environmental degradation.

e. The creation of Biodiversity Heritage Sites may not put any restriction on the prevailing practices and usages of the local communities, other than those voluntarily decided by them. The purpose is to enhance the quality of life of the local communities through this conservation measure.

3. The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF) and Member Secretary (FAC), Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Board has sent a proposal to declare Kasampatty village in Dindigul district as a Biodiversity Heritage Site.

4. The village Kasampatty is rich in biodiversity and has been traditionally conserved by the local communities since ages and have a large number of significant floras, including 48 numbers of trees, 22 shrubs, 21 lianas and 29 herbs.

5. In his letter fourth read above, the District Collector, Dindigul has stated that people of Reddiyapatty panchayat are worshipping in the "Veera kovil" temple located in the above village. He has also stated that the Reddiyapatty Panchayat Council has passed resolution agreeing to declare the land in Kasampatty village in SF.No.52/2 (4.97.5 ha.) in Dindigul district as a Biodiversity Heritage Site. He has, therefore, recommended to declare the above land as Biodiversity Heritage Site, without hindrance for the general public to worship at "Veera kovil" located in the above land.

6. On recommendation of the Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Board and the District Collector, Dindigul, the Government have deemed it necessary to declare the said area as the Biodiversity Heritage Site in order to improve species conservation and protect the region from a rapid loss of biodiversity. The proposal has been passed through a resolution of local body and also recommended by District Collector. The local community has a proven record of conservation and 'Biodiversity Heritage Site' (BHS) status will consolidate its position.

7. After careful examination of all the above, the Government of Tamil Nadu have decided to notify the area in Survey No. 52/2 located in Kasampatty village in Dindigul district, as a Biodiversity Heritage Site, without hindrance for the general public to worship at "Veera kovil" temple located in the above site under section 37(1) of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 (Act No.18 of 2003) considering the rich biodiversity in the area and ordered accordingly. The notification appended to this order will be published in English in the Tamil Nadu Government Gazette and in Tamil in the District Gazette of Dindigul District.

8. The Works Manager, Government Central Press, Chennai is requested to send 25 copies of each of the Notification to Government, the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF), Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Chief Wildlife Warden and to the District Collector, Dindigul District as soon as the Notification is published.

9. The Tamil Development and Information Department is requested to send immediately a Tamil translation of the Notification to the Works Manager, Government Central Press, Chennai for publication in the Tamil Nadu Government Gazette and in the District Gazette of Dindigul District.

(BY THE ORDER OF THE GOVERNOR)

**SUPRIYA SAHU**  
**ADDITIONAL CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT**

To

The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests  
(Head of Forest Force), Chennai-32.

The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and  
Chief Wildlife Warden, Chennai-32.

The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (HoFF)  
and Member Secretary (FAC), TNBB, Chennai-100.

The Secretary, National Biodiversity Authority, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor,  
TICEL Bio Park, CSIR Road, Taramani, Chennai-600 113

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change,  
Indira Paryavaran Bhawan Jorbagh Road, New Delhi – 110 003.

The District Collector, Dindigul.

The District Forest Officer, Dindigul.

Copy to:-

The Tamil Development and Information Department, Chennai-9.

The Principal Secretary – III to Hon'ble Chief Minister, Chennai-9.

The Special Personal Assistant to Hon'ble Chief Minister, Chennai-9.

The Special Personal Assistant to Hon'ble Minister (Forests),  
Chennai-9.

The Special Personal Assistant to Hon'ble Minister (Environment & Finance),  
Chennai-9.

The Private Secretary to Principal Secretary to Government,  
Environment, Climate Change and Forest Department,  
Chennai-9.

The Commissioner, Department of Archaeology, Egmore, Chennai-8.  
SF/SC.

/FORWARDED BY ORDER/

*P. Selvi*  
*12.3.25*  
**SECTION OFFICER**  
*[Signature]*

## APPENDIX.

### NOTIFICATION.

**WHEREAS**, section 37 of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 (Central Act No.18 of 2003) provides for the declaration of areas as Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS);

**AND WHEREAS**, guideline 4(c) of the Guidelines for selection and management of the Biodiversity Heritage Sites issued by the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) provides that, "areas that are significant from a biodiversity point of view as also are important cultural spaces such as sacred groves/trees and sites or other large community conserved areas", could be identified as Biodiversity Heritage Sites and guideline 4(e) provides that the Creation of Biodiversity Heritage Sites may not put any restriction on the prevailing practices and usages of the local communities, other than those voluntarily decided by them.

**AND WHEREAS**, the sacred groves in Tamil Nadu are exceptional examples of important natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, containing the existence of rare and threatened species. The locations also symbolize ongoing ecological, cultural, and biological processes in evolution. The cultural and natural heritage of the State qualifies to be recognized as per the provisions of the said Biological Diversity Act, 2002 (Central Act No.18 of 2003).

**AND WHEREAS**, the Kasampatty (Veera Koil) sacred grove, described in the schedule below represents a special fusion of socio-ecological, eco-theological and revered beliefs and is rich in biodiversity. The said area encompass substantial regions safeguarded by the local community and are noteworthy for their significance, distinctiveness and biodiversity.

**AND WHEREAS**, the local people exhibit extreme discipline by not taking out even a twig or leaf and prohibiting the use of footwear even while crossing or entering this sacred grove.

**AND WHEREAS**, to strengthen biodiversity conservation and to protect the area from rapid loss of biodiversity, the State Government upon recommendation of the Tamil Nadu Biodiversity Board have felt it necessary to declare the area as Kasampatty Bio Diversity Heritage Site.

**AND WHEREAS**, the Government of Tamil Nadu considers that the sacred grove in Kasampatty in Dindigul District described in the schedule below is of adequate biodiversity importance.

**Now, THEREFORE**, in exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (1) of section 37 of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 (Central Act 18 of 2003), the Governor of Tamil Nadu, in consultation with the local bodies, hereby notifies the areas specified in the schedule below as a biodiversity heritage site, without hindrance for the general public to worship at "Veera kovil" temple located in the site:-

# THE SCHEDULE.

- (1) Name of the Biodiversity Heritage Site : Kasampatty Biodiversity Heritage Site  
(2) Name of the sacred grove : Kasampatty village Veera koil sacred grove  
(3) Name of the district : Dindigul  
(4) Name of the taluk : Natham  
(5) Name of the Village Panchayat : Reddiapatty  
(6) Name of the Forest range : Alagar Koil range  
(7) Survey Number : 52/2  
(8) Area in Hectare : 4.97.50  
(9) GPS Coordinates

STA1	N10.1551088	E078.2356519
STA2	N10.1549676	E078.2356821
STA3	N10.1549359	E078.2362477
STA4	N10.1543917	E078.2363124
STA5	N10.154311	E078.2369417
STA6	N10.1534102	E078.2369065
STA7	N10.1528452	E078.2369568
STA8	N10.1529155	E078.2377705
STA9	N10.1529158	E078.2385014
STA10	N10.1539956	E078.2386697
STA11	N10.1546332	E078.2388635
STA12	N10.1553557	E078.2389259
STA13	N10.1552517	E078.2378919
STA14	N10.1552402	E078.2367891
STA15	N10.1551065	E078.235688

SUPRIYA SAHU  
ADDITIONAL CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT

/ TRUE COPY /

P. Selvi 12.3.25  
SECTION OFFICER