

Sriperumbudur – Rejuvenation of Water Bodies

A Tool for Social Initiatives and a promising ESG case

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Though late for a nation like India – that is endowed with a rich culture and heritage- the first national water body census conducted in 2018 (Seven decades after our Independence) by the Union Ministry of Jal Sakthi was revealing and enlightening in many ways.

According to the Census report, Tamil Nadu has the maximum number of lakes in India, boasting 13,629 lakes out of the 22,361 total lakes enumerated across the country, which is a dominant part of the nation's total lake count. That is a huge share and a matter of pride.

However, many traditional water bodies have gradually deteriorated due to encroachment, silt accumulation, weed growth, and inadequate maintenance.

Through the Government Schemes and Corporate CSR programmes of India Inc, Tamil Nadu is actively undertaking water body rejuvenation initiatives to combat urban flooding, prevent seawater intrusion, and secure long-term drinking water supplies.



The CSR Project undertaken by the NGO, Puthiya Thalaimurai Foundation for Hyundai Mobis, a global auto-parts major, through an MoU exchanged in April 2026, is an important initiative.

The project focuses on the restoration and rejuvenation of Kannan Thangal Eri in Thathanur Village, Puthu Eri in Palnallur Village, and Nayakan Thangal Eri in Echoor Village, all located in Sriperumbudur region, Kanchipuram District.



HYUNDAI
MOBIS

While the primary objective is water conservation and ecological restoration, the initiative goes beyond lake rejuvenation and aims to create a comprehensive model for rural social development.

Water Body Rejuvenation – A Catalyst for Change

The rejuvenated lakes are expected to improve groundwater levels, increase water availability for irrigation, and support sustainable agricultural practices. More importantly, they will contribute to long-term water security for the surrounding communities, benefiting nearly 1,000 rural families.

Education Through Rural Tuition Centres

As part of the integrated development approach, Puthiya Thalaimurai Foundation have set up two **Rural Tuition Centres (RTCs)** in the villages of Thathanur & Echoor. These centres will provide free educational support for school-going children, in the evenings, after the school hours.

Ms. Jercial, the Rural Tuition Centre teacher at Thathanur remarks, “the initiative provides a dedicated space for learning and academic improvement, and will give greater confidence for the students in classroom activities.”

Ms. Jeyanthi, the Rural Tuition Centre teacher at Echoor village says, “this centre is well-received by parents, who value the additional academic support provided to their children.”

The objective is to improve academic performance, reduce learning gaps, and encourage regular school attendance among rural students. Beyond academics, the centres will focus on hygiene awareness, discipline, value education, and leadership development.

The initiative also encourages the formation of volunteer groups under the “*Nammal Mudiyum*” (we can) movement, motivating the local people to participate in waterbody conservation and community development activities. By investing in education, the project aims to create confident, responsible, and socially conscious future citizens.



*Thathanur – PTF Rural Tuition Centre
Inauguration*

Puthiya Thalaimurai Foundation is currently operating 28 Rural Tuition Centres across Tamilnadu, in which over 700 students -who are children of farmers, local artisans, construction workers & others - come for the evening classes.

Micro Entrepreneurship & Healthcare

Economic empowerment is another key pillar of the project. To address this need, Puthiya Thalaimurai Foundation plans to support women-focused micro entrepreneurship initiatives. Training programs in advanced embroidery and tailoring are being planned.

In collaboration with SRM Hospital, the project includes the organization of regular medical camps in the project villages. These camps will provide free health check-ups and early detection of health issues.

Kurungadu Valarppu Thittam – Creating Micro Forests

Environmental sustainability remains central to the project's vision. Under the *Kurungadu Valarppu Thittam*, micro forests will be established around the rejuvenated water bodies and in community spaces.

Native saplings such as *Maanaram*, *Pungai*, *Iluppai*, *Neermaruthu*, and *Poovarasu* were planted on World Environment Day, June 5th, 2026 to enhance biodiversity and strengthen climate resilience. Officials from Hyundai Mobis & PTF participated in the same.

The initiative demonstrates how water conservation and afforestation can work together to combat climate change and environmental degradation.



Sapling Plantation by PTF & Hyundai Mobis officials

Strengthening Partnerships for Sustainable Development

An important aspect of the project is collaboration with local industries and institutions. Through engagement with the Sipcot Irungattukottai Manufacturers Association (SIMA), opportunities are being explored to strengthen Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) participation in nearby villages. With more than 100 industries operating in the SIPCOT industrial cluster, there is a significant potential for partnerships in education, healthcare, skill development, environmental sustainability, and livelihood enhancement.

Senior official of SIMA Mr. Ganesh Kumar said, "Member companies of SIMA are actively participating in community-driven initiatives. We are keenly waiting to see the successful completion of this project."

Voices from the Villages: Local Leaders Welcome the Lake Rejuvenation Initiative

Both the Presidents of Villages Mrs. Chandra Masilamani ,Mrs. Kumudha Dominic, Thathanur & Echoor respectively said, “ the restoration of the waterbodies is a significant milestone for our villages...The rejuvenation effort undertaken by Puthiya Thalaimurai Foundation and Hyundai Mobis will greatly benefit farmers, improve irrigation prospects, and support the long-term development of our Villages.”



Farmers Welcome the Rejuvenation of Traditional Water Bodies

Agriculture in the villages of **Thathanur (Kannanthangal), Palnallur, and Echoor** has become increasingly challenging due to the deteriorating condition of the local water bodies. Farmers reported that silt accumulation, pollution, poor maintenance of the waterbodies, reduced water storage capacity, and inadequate irrigation facilities have significantly affected crop cultivation. In Palnallur, farmers stated that they are currently able to cultivate only one crop per year, whereas they previously grew paddy, millets, vegetables, greens, and pulses regularly. According to them, some farmers have even been forced to sell their agricultural lands due to the lack of a reliable water source. The farmers expressed hope that this Rejuvenation project will help agriculture in their locality.



PTF Team interacting with farmers

Pudhu Eri & Nayakan Thangal Eri Rejuvenation work under progress (June 27,2026)

Pudhu Eri, Palnellur



Nayakan Thangal, Echoor



Water Body Rejuvenation: Driving Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Impact

Kannan Thangal Eri, Thathanur

Before



After



Water body rejuvenation is a powerful initiative that directly contributes to Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) objectives. From an environmental perspective, rejuvenated lakes, ponds, rivers, and wetlands enhance groundwater recharge, improve water quality, increase biodiversity, reduce flood risks, and strengthen climate resilience. Water bodies provide communities with access to clean water, support agriculture and livelihoods, improve public health, and create recreational and educational opportunities. Organizations investing in these initiatives demonstrate responsible resource management and commitment to sustainable development goals (SDGs), particularly those related to clean water, climate action, and ecosystem conservation.

As ESG performance becomes increasingly important for investors, regulators, and stakeholders, water body rejuvenation serves as a measurable and impactful intervention that generates long-term environmental value, social benefits, and governance excellence while contributing to the creation of resilient and sustainable communities.

The vision of Puthiya Thalaimurai Foundation and Hyundai Mobis extends beyond lake restoration. The initiative seeks to contribute for integrated models of rural development by combining water conservation, education, livelihood promotion, healthcare, and tackling climate Change and reflecting on the core objective, healthy waterbodies act as massive carbon sinks and natural buffers, mitigating extreme weather to manage floods and droughts, effectively. It will be good to remind ourselves the powerful quote,

“ if Climate Change is Shark, Water is its Teeth”. ”