

STATE ACTION PLAN

for Conservation of Avian Diversity, their Ecosystems, Habitats & Landscapes in

TAMIL NADU



Submitted by
Sálim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON),
Coimbatore

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FOREWORD

Tamil Nadu, a southeastern state of the country, has a long history of culture, literature, and arts that intricately document the diverse biodiversity and its interconnectedness with human societies. The state harbors a wide variety of avian species, totaling 554, thriving across various landscapes, from the coastal plains to the lofty elevations of the Western Ghats; among these, 25 are endemic, 165 are migratory, and 33 are globally threatened. To safeguard the avian diversity, the state has 17 bird sanctuaries, 14 Ramsar sites and 38 Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs). Beyond these designated sites, the state's extensive network of protected areas further strengthens bird conservation: five national parks, 16 wildlife sanctuaries, two community conservation reserves, five tiger reserves, four elephant reserves, and three biosphere reserves.

In an endeavor to identify priority issues for bird conservation in the state, Sálim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON), South India Centre of the Wildlife Institute of India, has developed a comprehensive State Action Plan for Conservation of Avian Diversity, their ecosystems, habitats and landscapes in Tamil Nadu. This plan followed the framework as envisaged in the national 'Visionary Perspective Plan for Conservation of Birds and their Habitats in the country developed by SACON in 2021.

Under this action plan, conservation priority projects and actions required for bird conservation in the state have been meticulously outlined across 15 broad thematic areas. This systematic approach identifies priority projects for immediate implementation, assigns responsibilities to relevant agencies based on their expertise, and provides a robust foundation for future conservation initiatives targeting Tamil Nadu's avifauna.

I am glad to recommend this document as a valuable resource for researchers, conservationists, and policymakers, as a guideline for development and implementation of effective avian conservation strategies in the state of Tamil Nadu.

(Virendra R. Tiwari)

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This state action plan is now enriched with vibrant photographs shared by the nature photographers, Mr. Nayan, Mr. Subramanian, Dr. Bupesh Gupta, and images from Creative Commons. We would like to appreciate them for sharing their stunning pictures. Finally, we thank Sree Kumaran Printers and Mr. Nandakumar for designing this document readable.

Dr. S. Babu
Mr. Prasad S

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BACKGROUND

India, with its diverse biogeographic regions, supports 1,359 bird species, including numerous globally threatened, migratory, and endemic birds, occupying a wide array of ecosystems, habitats and landscapes. However, rising human populations and increasing resource demands exert pressure on natural systems, exacerbating the vulnerability of threatened and endemic birds to extinction. Recognizing the urgency of sustainable avian conservation, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India, commissioned the development of a ten-year roadmap known as the Visionary Perspective Plan (VPP) for conservation of avian diversity, their ecosystems, habitats, and landscapes in the country (2020-2030). The MoEFCC entrusted this project to the Sálim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON) in Coimbatore (South India Centre of Wildlife Institute of India), Government of India. SACON identified key conservation and management priorities under 15 thematic areas for the nation's avian diversity through extensive deliberations with subject experts across the country.

Given India's multifaceted landscape and unique avifaunal assemblage, the VPP's implementation can be significantly enhanced by developing regional plans, also known as State Action Plans, tailored to each state. Such plans provide deeper insights into regional challenges and conservation issues and facilitate more effective conservation strategies. This State Action Plan for the conservation of birds and their habitats, and landscape in the state of Tamil Nadu is a proof to this approach.

Tamil Nadu, situated in the southeastern region of country, has a remarkable diversity of birdlife, with 554 species recorded to date. These include 40 endemic species, 33 globally threatened species, and 165 migratory species (including passage migrants), all inhabiting a diverse range of habitats, from coastal plains to the high-altitude montane forests of the Western Ghats. To ensure the safeguarding of these invaluable avian populations, five tiger reserves, five national parks, 17 bird sanctuaries, 16 wildlife sanctuaries, 14 Ramsar sites, four elephant reserves, and three biosphere reserves have been established across the state.

Building upon the VPP framework, 15 thematic areas encompassing key aspects of bird conservation have been identified. These same thematic areas serve as the foundation for this State Action Plan for Tamil Nadu, outlining prioritized management actions specific to the state's unique context under each of the 15 themes.



Broad 15 thematic areas identified for the birds in Tamil Nadu are as follows

- 1) Conservation of Rare, Endangered & Threatened (RET) Bird Species
- 2) Conservation of Important Bird & Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) Outside Protected Area (PA) Network
- 3) Conservation of Protected Areas (PAs) with High Avian Diversity
- 4) Conservation of Avian Diversity at the Landscape Level
- 5) Conservation of Inland Aquatic Ecosystems with High Avian Diversity
- 6) Conservation of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems with High Avian Diversity
- 7) Conservation of Migratory Birds
- 8) Impacts of Developmental Projects and other Anthropogenic Activities on Avian Diversity and Habitats
- 9) Curbing Illegal Trafficking of Birds
- 10) Conservation of Avian Diversity in Urban Areas
- 11) Surveillance and Monitoring of Avian Diseases
- 12) National Plan for Nature Education and Awareness for Conservation of Avian Diversity, their Ecosystems, Habitats & Landscapes
- 13) National Capacity Building Programme for Protection and Monitoring of Avian Diversity, their Ecosystems, Habitats & Landscapes
- 14) Mainstreaming Conservation of Avian Diversity with other Government of India Schemes and Programmes
- 15) Implementation of International Protocols and Conventions in Conservation of Avian Diversity

The principal goals of this action plan are to establish prioritized conservation and management initiatives for birds in the State of Tamil Nadu, with particular emphasis on identifying species and habitats requiring immediate conservation actions.



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