

Regarding need to take comprehensive measures to make Pulicat Lake in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu a sustainable eco-tourism hubLaid

SHRI SASIKANTH SENTHIL (TIRUVALLUR): Pulicat Lake, India's second-largest brackish water lagoon after Chilika Lake, is a critical ecological and economic asset spanning Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu is home to rich biodiversity, including several endemic and migratory bird species, and supports the livelihood of over a lakh people engaged in fishing and related activities. Despite its immense potential for eco-tourism, Pulicat Lake remains underdeveloped, lacking sustainable tourism infrastructure and conservation efforts. The absence of a formal regulatory framework has led to deforestation of mangroves, and siltation, further endangering the lake's ecological balance. The government must take immediate steps to declare Pulicat Lake a sustainable eco-tourism hub, ensuring that conservation and development go hand in hand. A well-structured strategy must be implemented, including measures to encourage eco-tourism, prevent environmental degradation, and promote community-led eco-tourism models that empower local populations while preserving the ecosystem. Establishing a Pulicat Development Authority, modelled on Chilika Development Authority, will be crucial in coordinating conservation, tourism development, and sustainable resource management. Given rising threats to Pulicat Lake, urgent intervention is required to prevent ecological collapse and harness its potential for sustainable tourism. Government must act decisively to protect this invaluable natural resource while fostering eco-friendly economic opportunities for the local communities.