

Endangered forest type: Tropical dry evergreen forest (TDEF), Coromandel Coast, southern India

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Tropical Dry Evergreen Forest (TDEF) was first recognized by Wimbush in 1935 then the Chief Conservator of Forest of Madras Presidency. He stated it in his classical paper on The Forest of Southern India, published in Madras College Magazine as: "On approaching the Coast for instance in Kancheepuram, Kurumbaram, Point Calimere, Kuzhanthaikuppam, Thirumanikuzhi, Puthupet, Arasadikuppam, Oorani and Pitchandikulam significance areas, a type of forest is met which is semi-evergreen in characters". The term TDEF was first used by Champion in the famous classical book on the forest types of India first published in 1936. The revised edition of this book was later published by Champion and Seth in 1968.

Tropical Dry Evergreen Forest occur as a thin patch, along the coast of India extending from Vishakapatanam to Ramanathapuram to a stretch of about a length of 1,800 km and a width of about 60 km; it covers a total area of 1,08,000 km². Tropical Dry Evergreen Forest occurs in three different habitats namely i) along the sandy coast, ii) Interior coastal plains, with red laterite soil and iii) Isolated hillocks that are scattered along the coast.

Present work deals with promotion and conservation of some endangered and endemic plants species from Tropical dry evergreen forest (TDEF) of southern Coromandel Coast, India. Tropical dry evergreen forest (TDEF) is one of the important endangered forest types of the India (Narasimhan, 2009). Plants Species situated and spread in TDEF has great potentiality both from cultural activities and botanical point of view. The medicinal plants species were abundant in this area and can be exploited due to improper management and by following activities harvesting, cattle grazing, shifting, cultivation,

Agriculture activities, deforestation, real estate and uprooting of plants species for the purpose of food, fire wood, fodder and medicines by local people.

An extensive survey of Tropical Dry Evergreen Forest (TDEF) southern Coromandel Coast was carried out from conservation point of view. Taxonomic, ecological and conservation aspects of selected endangered, endemic and rare plants were studied.

The plants considered to be endangered in TDEF are as follows *Crotalaria globosa*, *Indigofera barberi* *Lindernia minima*, *Psydrax dicoccos*, *Sterculia populifolia* et., and Endemic plants include *Argyreia kleiniana*, *Cordia diffusa*, *Chloris wightiana*, *Lepidagathis pungens*, *Jatropha heynei*, *Polycarpaea corymbosa* var. *longipetala*, and *Theriophonum sivaganganum* While *Phyllanthus rotundifolia*, *Capparis rotundifolia*, *Garcinia spicata*, *Lindernia oppositifolia* are considered to be rare. Some of the regionally threatened plants recorded in our survey are *Crotalaria rigida*, *Capparis rotundifolia*, *Habenaria roxburghii* and *Polycarpaea diffusa*.

Majority of the forest patches however, are in the form of sacred groves that are highly fragmented and are community protected. It is suggested that the sacred grove patches of TDEF should be brought under heritage sites as envisaged in National biodiversity act. Tropical Dry Evergreen Forest have high conservation value and its conservation should be paid enormous attention by involving the local communities and forest representative in preservation conservation aspects.

Key words: Endangered, Tropical Dry Evergreen Forest, southern, Coromandel Coast.