

# Green Rameswaram Annual Report 2017-18



“Blessed is the little squirrel; he is doing his work to the best of his ability. I simply want to be like the squirrel in the building of Rama’s bridge, who was quite content to put on the bridge his little quota of sand-dust. That is my position”.



- Swami Vivekananda  
At Shakespeare Club,

Pasadena, California

31 January 1900





# Foreword

Green Rameswaram is a movement to involve all the stakeholders to nurture the rich heritage and preserve the ecosystem of the island. It has identified nine verticals as priority areas to bring the transformation by engaging likeminded organization to steer this process. Its work has drawn the attention of the nation when Prime Minister Shri.Narendra Modi acknowledged its work in a public meeting and set milestones for future action by releasing the “Synopsis of Green Resilient Rameswaram Action Plan”. This has made us more responsible for giving the best to the island.

The year 2017 -18 has concretized our development approach of moving from fragile ecosystem to balanced ecosystem with effective integration of demand, supply and enabling stream. It has reinforced our vision envisaged in SamagraVikas - Development with a human face. This approach builds on traditional wisdom where Development is conceptualized of three elements, namely: (i) as a physical, mental, emotional and spiritual growth of man, (ii) in consonance with his family, community, patriotic and global identities and relations, (iii) living in tune with nature without impoverishing or endangering future generations. This is highlighted in the lead paper.

This annual report has captured the work in the field of all the 9 verticals – (i) identifying the issues of the island calling for resilient approach, (ii) its impact and progress made so far (iii) and given leads for future action. Verticals are the interventions in the field of water, waste, energy, health, landscaping and beautification, social capital, livelihoods, heritage transport, and biodiversity. Each vertical is anchored by the partner organizations, namely (i) Hand in Hand India, (ii) C.P.R. Environmental Education Center (iii) Green Pilgrimage Network (iv) REACH Foundation (v) Basil Energetics (vi) Gandhigram Trust(vii) India NGO and (viii) Vivekananda Kendra - Nardep. In addition, Indian Institute of Technology, Madras is our Technology partner. All these partners have immensely contributed to the island development by shouldering the cause of building resilient Rameswaram.

We have the constant support of District administration – starting from Dist. Collector to line departments, BrahMos Aerospace, ONGC and many corporate and well-wishers who are contributing for this sacred cause.

Our work has resulted in influencing the policy of the government by forming an Island Development Committee where representative of Green Rameswaram has been made a permanent member. This gives space for collaboration with the stakeholders / departments at district, state and national level to actualize the plan envisaged.

*Vasude*

(G.Vasudeo)

## Associates



## Supporters



## Technology Partner

# Approach for Promoting Green Resilient Rameswaram

## About Green Resilient Rameswaram

Rameswaram is a unique island that has a special place in the hearts of Indians. It contains within its shores history, mythology, spirituality, religion, archaeology, natural beauty, bio-diversity, etc. It attracts tourists and pilgrims in equal numbers. To preserve its wonderful gifts of nature, Vivekananda Kendra under its Natural Resource Development Project (NARDEP) has promoted “Green Rameswaram Project”. The Project Green Rameswaram was inaugurated by the late President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam at a grand public function on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2014. The Project covers a range of verticals such as water management, waste management, renewable energy, new merchandise and livelihoods, landscaping and beautification, green health, heritage, eco-tourism & green transport and marine bio-diversity.

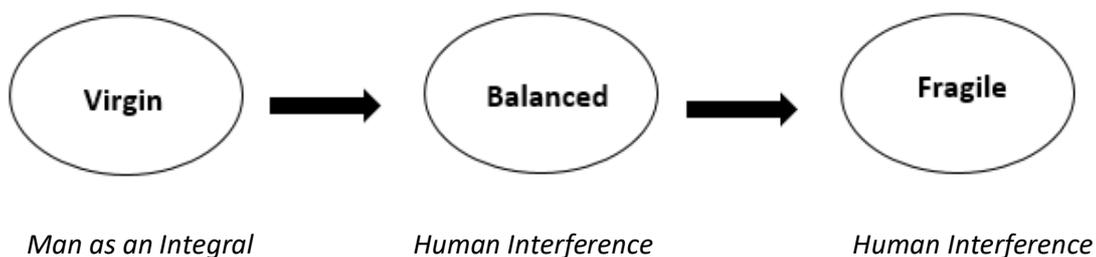
As a catalytic agent, Vivekananda Kendra has brought the stakeholders of the island-government organisations, community and civil society organisations together through networking to join hands in the transformation. Shri. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, in a mega public event held on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2017 at Rameswaram commend the district administration, Vivekananda Kendra and other partner organizations for the work done so far under the Project. During the event, the Prime Minister unveiled the ‘Blueprint of Green Rameswaram’-a goal setting document for making Rameswaram Green.

## SamagraVikas- Development with a human face

Inspired by the Eastern wisdom of Sanatana Dharma, we have learnt a deeper and broader meaning of Development. Our understanding of development goes beyond materialistic and quality of life indicators. We see Development as is the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual growth of man in consonance with his family, community, patriotic and global identities and relations helping him living in harmony with Nature.

We have understood that all the developmental issues in the world are attributed to imbalances in interrelations among the elements of the Eco-system. The Eco-system includes the following three elements

- Natural resources (PanchaBhootas) – water, land, air, energy (fire) and space
- People
- Institutions – family, community, religion, governments and civil society organisations and values, culture, norms and systems promoted by these institutions



*Part of Nature*

*with optimal use*

*with over use*

Before the ages of the civilisation, when the man was Nature's integral part, Nature had taken its own course of actions in maintaining equilibrium. The resources and flora and fauna had been unexploited during this phase and could be considered 'virgin'. The human beings, after civilisation, started using the resources for their survival and development. In the early stages of the mankind, in spite their interferences, a balance among the elements of the Eco-system was maintained due to the optimal use of resources. However, in the recent centuries, the mankind has started over-using resources and it eventually has resulted in a serious disturbance in balance of the Eco-system elements. The Eco-system has almost lost its power of self-regeneration and become fragile.

Transition in the Eco-system elements due to human interferences is as presented below

Eco-system element	Characteristic of the element when the Eco-system elements are	
	In balanced state	In fragile state
<b>People</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Self-contented</li><li>• Contributive (sharing)</li><li>• Complying to the higher order values and institutional norms</li><li>• Mutually inclusive with fellow human beings and Nature</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Greedy</li><li>• Self-centered</li><li>• Poor compliance to values. Values remain only as rituals</li><li>• Lack of interrelatedness with Nature</li></ul>
<b>Institutions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Value based</li><li>• Educative</li><li>• Regulative</li><li>• Preserving heritage and wisdom</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Production and wealth based</li><li>• Instructive</li><li>• Exploitative</li><li>• Eroding heritage and wisdom</li></ul>
<b>Flora and Fauna</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rich</li><li>• Diversified</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eroded</li><li>• Endangered</li></ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Available in surplus for the present</li><li>• Self-regenerative for the needs of the future</li><li>• Locally existing</li><li>• Functional and usable</li><li>• Pure</li><li>• Equitably distributed to all sections of the society</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deficit</li><li>• Degenerated</li><li>• Alien</li><li>• Dysfunctional</li><li>• Polluted</li><li>• Inequitably distributed</li></ul>

The modern science and economies see the parts as divorced from the whole. This approach sees trees and misses' woods. This vision also failed to see the interdependence of the parts of Nature, their underlying linkages and the overall utility. Synthesis and holism lost out the race for a place in man's scheme of things. Thereafter, the economies got divorced from the social concerns of man and became the study of the management merely of the materials and wealth. In this paradigm, social units such as family, community and cultural entities suffered the most. The new science ad economies promoted

life-style and a thought-pattern that led to the atomisation of the community. This resulted in isolation of the individual from his emotional and biological provenance and cultural background.

In earlier days, man was slow, land-loving, Nature-loving and family and community centred. He led a subsistent way of life, which kept him self-contented. The values and norms promoted by the institutions of the early days, guided the man to live in harmony with fellow human beings and Nature through sharing and caring. The industrial society-the invention of the mankind after 15<sup>th</sup> century was a sure recipe of disaster of family and community values and all that go with them. The industrial economy has been fast-paced, factory-loving and materialistic. Commercialisation of social transactions degraded community values and created orphans, who could not 'purchase their way out'.

Defining man as nothing more than his body and suggesting the mind, intellect and consciousness to be evolutes of the body, the modern approach has laid great stress on body-care, satisfying the needs of the body and the primacy of the body in human life. The needs of the senses and the significance of satisfying them were exaggerated. Unbridled greed, the need of ego-satisfaction through amassing wealth and power, trying to squeeze more pleasure out of the tired senses than they are capable of yielding have led to sick individuals and imbalanced societies. In exchange, the modern science has given the mankind, the suppression of human emotions, fragmentation of family and community, frittering away of traditions built over thousands of years.

Lack of respect for life, emotion and subjective awareness, playing the individual against the larger host groups, failure to gauge significance of bio-diversity, ignorance and neglect of the time-tested traditional knowledge systems of the world, mark the development paradigm today. The modern science and economy exploited and tried to enslave the Nature resulting in centralisation and inequalities. It has centralised the means of production, and made impossible the proper distribution of the wealth produced. It has over exploited Nature, burnt up scarce non-renewable resources, and has endangered all life-support systems - air, water, soil fertility, bio-diversity etc. The modern science has also split Nature's bounties to man into indigestible and over-concentrated "Goods" and non-recyclable, non-disposable, polluting "Wastes".

To reverse this status, a development approach which is holistic and has a human face is required. Green Rameswaram Trust, strives to promote a model of development guided by the SamagraVikas approach.

## Present status of Rameswaram Eco-system

At least five thousand pilgrims visit the Rameswaram islands every day, according to the City Development Plan prepared during 2009. Present estimates put this figure over 1.5 crore per year. The numbers are impressive, but it also indicates the level of exposure of the environment to pollution. As per Swachh Bharat Mission rating of clean cities of March 2017, Rameswaram occupies the lower cardinal order of 262 out of 468 cities in India. Per capita waste generation in Rameswaram is nearly 3,505 gm., which is significantly higher for a town of this size attributable to the higher visiting population in the Islands.

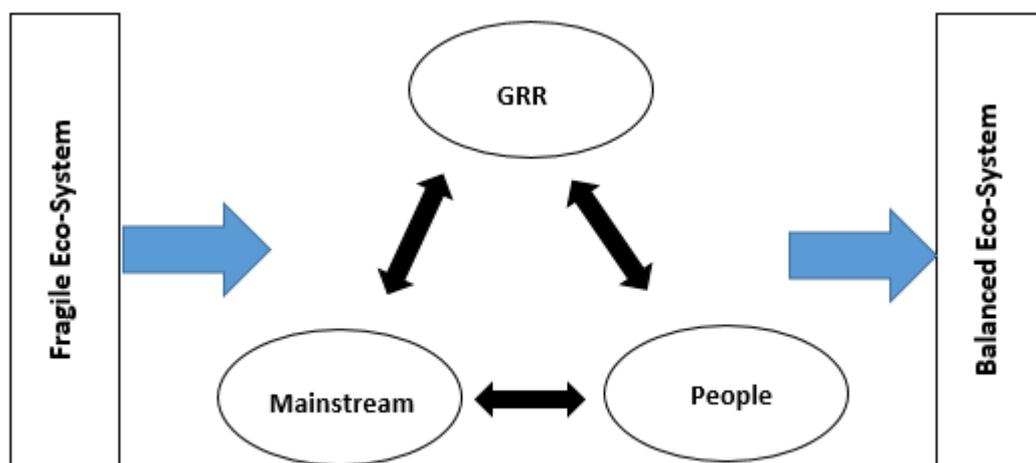
Ground water contains high content of dissolved salts. The intrusion of sea water is increasing gradually. According to the municipal records, hardness in drinking water has already crossed

permissible limit. Although 80 percent of the road network is covered by water supply network, only 13.6 percent households have service connection. The existing income sources of the municipality are not enough to meet the growing demand of water in the town. Hence the Renovation of Water Bodies, Community managed RO water plant in acute water scarce waters and introducing strategies for reusing grey and black water are of primordial importance.

The above are only a few examples of the disturbed state of natural resources and similar pattern prevail in case of all the resources namely water, land, energy, air and space requiring a holistic intervention.

## Towards Green Resilient Rameswaram

Green Rameswaram Trust built on from the concept of SamagraVikas, has developed a development approach integrating all the components of the Eco-system. The model emphasises involvement of people, mainstream institutions and civil society organisations in the process of development.



The model interventions envisage addressing the issues that cause imbalances in the present fragile Eco-system and promoting balances among the Eco-system elements. Green Rameswaram Trust, building on from the wisdom and heritage of Vivekananda Kendra would primarily play the role of value and culture builder. The Trust would work as a conduit between the people and mainstream institutions. The mainstream institutions being the powerful stakeholder in the development process would act as an infrastructure builder and a regulator. The people who are residents and pilgrims of the Rameswaram islands are expected to be responsible and value based citizens. A break up of roles defined for the three stakeholders is given below

Green Rameswaram Trust	Mainstream institutions	People
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Value and culture building</b></li> <li>• <b>Policy advocacy</b></li> <li>• <b>Collaboration (with</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy formulation and execution</li> <li>• Infrastructure development and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value and norms compliance</li> <li>• Demanding</li> <li>• Adapting to risks and</li> </ul>

<b>mainstream and fellow civil society organisations)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Promoting innovations through experimentations</b></li> </ul>	<b>maintenance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial resource generation and distribution</li> <li>• Provision of goods and services</li> <li>• Regulation</li> </ul>	<b>vulnerabilities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributing to the development</li> </ul>
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## Verticals of Change

Through a multi-stakeholder visioning exercise in active collaboration with the district administration, following nine priority areas have been identified and termed as “Verticals” to execute the model.

Sl. No	Vertical	Areas of interventions
1.	Water management	Proactive ground water augmentation Purifying black and grey water
2.	Waste management	Promoting zero waste
3.	Renewable energy	Integrating off-grid and on-grid renewable sources of energy
4.	New merchandise and livelihoods	Developing entrepreneurs through trading activities
5.	Landscaping and beautification	Beautifying the landscape structures to fit traditional aesthetic standards of the town
6.	Green health	Creating human well-being through traditional health systems
7.	Heritage	Promoting living heritage
8.	Eco-tourism and green transport	Enhancing spiritual experience of the pilgrims
9.	Marine bio-diversity	Conserving ecology and bio-diversity in the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere





# Water Management

**“Environmental Preservation would encompass --- conserving ground water and rivers and other water bodies, protection of the coastal zones and fragile eco systems”**

**(Tamil Nadu Vision 2023)**

Rameswaram municipality meets its water supply requirements through ground water sources. The water is supplied to the town through 11 bore wells (out of which 8 are non-functional) in addition to the desalination plant which too is non-functional, leaving an effective supply to be available from four open wells located at Nambunayaki Amman Kovil, Meyambuli, Semmamadam, Natarajapuram.

Ground water contains high content of dissolved salts. The intrusion of sea water is increasing gradually. According to the municipal records hardness in drinking water has already crossed permissible limit. Although 80 percent of the road network is covered by water supply network, only 13.6 percent households have service connection. The existing income sources of the municipality are not enough to meet the growing demand of water in the town. Hence the Renovation of Water Bodies, Community managed RO water plant in acute water scarce waters and introducing strategies for reusing grey and black water are of primordial importance.

Research into mythological texts enabled VK- NARDEP identified the lost and damaged traditional water bodies – Teerthams. The survey maps and interaction with the locals helped in restoring and renovating the Teerthams without damaging environmental / societal norms or antiquity. After bringing them back to their original glory, Teerthams have been handed over to “TeerthaMitras”, a community group for maintenance

- 64 Traditional Water bodies (Teerthams) in and around Rameswaram Island Identified
- 30 Traditional Water Bodies outside the temple revived and renovated
- 12.68 million liters of water storage created to recharge the ground water
- 26000 Villagers and two lakhs of Tourists are benefitted
- Kudimaramathu system for protecting traditional water bodies revived
- Mythological values linked to the revival of traditional water bodies for sustainability

## 1.1 Progress for the year 2017-18

### 1.1.1 Renovation of Traditional Water Bodies

Renovation of Water bodies has become the primordial focus in Rameswaram. Our efforts have reached out to 30 such Traditional holy water bodies and this year in specific has reached out to another four Traditional Water Bodies apart from maintaining these 30 traditional Water bodies. This year the following Teerthams were newly renovated

1. KumuthaTeertham
2. PanachaTeertham
3. NeelakantaTeertham
4. Naga Teertham

Each Teertha has a distinct value calling for being at the service of others to gain purity of mind.



**Naga Teertham before Renovation**



**Naga Teertham after Renovation**

### 1.1.2 RO Plant at Green Rameswaram Building

Water treatment plant (Reverse Osmosis plant) of 500 liters per hour capacity was commissioned on the World Environment Day i.e. 5th of June 2017. The plant gets the electricity for operation from solar panels installed at 'Green Rameswaram' building which is having power generation capacity of 6KW. The unit is fitted with a water vending machine and multiple coins such as Rs.1/, Rs.2/- or Rs.5/- can be inserted in the unit to get the water



**RO plant sponsored by BrahMos Aerospace, New Delhi.**



**Shri. NagoorMeeran, Supervisor of the supplier (Eureka Forbes) carrying out regular maintenance of the plant for proper quality**



**Shri.Pandian, Sub-inspector inserting coin to get mineral water**

### **Auto driver to Ambassador**

I am an auto driver of this island(verkodu). I take two liters of water from this plant daily which enables me to tell the others of its use and enable pilgrims for using the same which is economical than the bottled water

(Mr Muthuramalingam)



### **Exemplifier**

“I don’t like ground water in Rameswaram because of its alkalinity. I am a native of Sivakasi district. Now it is proven that the RO plant can deliver potable drinking water. I wish to have one at my home for the benefit of my family.

Moreover, in our office, we consume 50 to 60 liters (two to three cans), our colleagues are immensely happy because of its quality and accessibility”.

(Mr.Duraikannu,Constable, Rameswaram Police Station)



### **1.1.3 Reuse of Grey Water and Black Water**

In all the own buildings of Green Rameswaram Grey water has been properly treated with plants like Kalvazhai and Vettiver and the water has been reused for Gardening purposes. Same way at Town police station, Rameswaram, Sri Parvathavarthini Amman Girls Higher Secondary School and DSP Office we have established backyard garden where in the Grey water has been used for watering the plants.



**Greening in DSP – Team in Action**

## 1.2. Plan for 2018-19

Renovating the 10 Teerthams (traditional Water Bodies) of sacred Rameswaram which are located outside the main temple

1. Establishment of Community Managed RO water plant in 2 Wards of Rameswaram where acute water shortage is witnessed
2. Piloting the DEWATS system in two places of Rameswaram

## 1.3. Media Coverage



Dinakaran January 6,2018



The Hindu(Tamil) Jan 6, 2018



# Waste Management



**“...Protection of soil and other natural formations from abuse on account of human activity, efficient recycling of solid waste ensuring minimal impact on the environment, minimizing atmospheric pollution”.**

**Vision 2023**

## 2.0 Introduction

“Waste” in its adjectival form is defined as “a material, substance, or by-product, eliminated or discarded as no longer useful or required after the completion of a process”. However, defining it as noun, it indicates “an act or instance of using or expending something carelessly, extravagantly, or to no purpose”. Municipal waste represents an amalgamation of Noun and Adjectival version of waste –

“A material or substance that is no longer required for some process, used or expended carelessly, extravagantly and to no purpose”, thereby undermining the value of the material, substance or the by-product. Every rise in income of INR 1,000, leads to 2.2 pounds of more waste, which is more toxic and less biodegradable, containing as it does more plastic and electronic waste. The Energy and Resources Institute estimated that waste generation in the cities of India will increase five-fold by 2047.

Per capita waste generation in Rameswaram is near about 3503 grams which is significantly high for a town of this size, attributable to hotels, eateries and other facilities established for visitors and pilgrims. Composition of MSW in Rameswaram is unique comprising more of fabrics, packing materials, plastics and food wastes generated by tourists and households. Unless scientifically handled, management of waste will remain a mere jargon

Solid waste management in Rameswaram Island is often complicated by its isolated geography and tourism - dominated economy and poses a greater challenge than in other places. However, a beginning has been made by taking up a pilot project in 10 wards of Rameswaram for waste management in collaboration with the municipality

- Source segregation through audio and video aids / campaigns
- Infrastructure facilities are at place to process waste of 1 crore floating population and local communities.
- 7,30,000 kg waste are recycled in a year (10 wards)
- 1,32,000 man-hours of employment generated in a year (10 wards) 4
- Partnered with ONGC Ltd in generating infrastructural support
- 25,000 kg of compost generated in a year

## 2.1 Progress for the year 2017-18

### 2.1.1 Primary and Secondary Waste Collection

Door to Door collection is the strategized tool to improve the collection of waste. Same way awareness related to segregation of wastehave been created across our working wards through different IEC and

BCC methods. Through our continuous interaction we could get 85% of the households in our working wards doing the segregation of waste.

### **2.1.2 Aspiring for 21 Wards**

Our Green Rameswaram Partner Hand in Hand India is aspiring to take up all the 21 wards of Rameswaram to give a holistic impact. Hopefully next year the organization will get it.

### **2.1.3 Resource Recovery Park**

The project is managing the Rameswaram Municipalities Resource Recovery Park established in Vadakadu hamlet of Rameswaram where all the wastes are segregated and processed and recycled.



**Resource Recovery Park in Vadakadu**

## **2.2 Recognitions**

ONGC's Green Rameswaram CSR Project was crowned winner under the 'Sanitation Category' at the 2nd Innovative Practices Awards for Sustainable Development Goals at Bengaluru on 8 June 2018.



ONGC Receiving Award

### 2.3 Construction of Toilets:

Rameswaram is an Island having peculiar problems of the land surrounded by Water. Sanitation is a big issue in Rameswaram. With the locals amounting to 55 thousand only as per Census 2011 but the tourists' inflow touching the maximum to 1.5 Crores every year. Due to SwatchBharath Mission Town has got opportunity to build toilets to the locals who relied only on Open defecation. However, the model suggested by the mission was not suitable in Rameswaram. Toilets were built only to satisfy the scheme. The quality of the toilets constructed were not liked by the people and they had the fear of toilets spoiling the Ground water. Moreover, the coverage of the scheme does not cover all the households.

For improving the Sanitation situation of Rameswaram Green Rameswaram project wanted to construct toilets on a pilot basis with island suitable models.

Shri.ShivGoenka, United International Foundation India sponsored 4toilets. Beneficiaries were selected carefully based on the following criteria

- No toilet in the house and goes for open defecation
- Has Women presence in the house
- Economically downtrodden

Our partner Shri.Krishnamoorthy of India NGO visited Rameswaram and analyzed the water level in Ground and suggested the following models for the beneficiaries





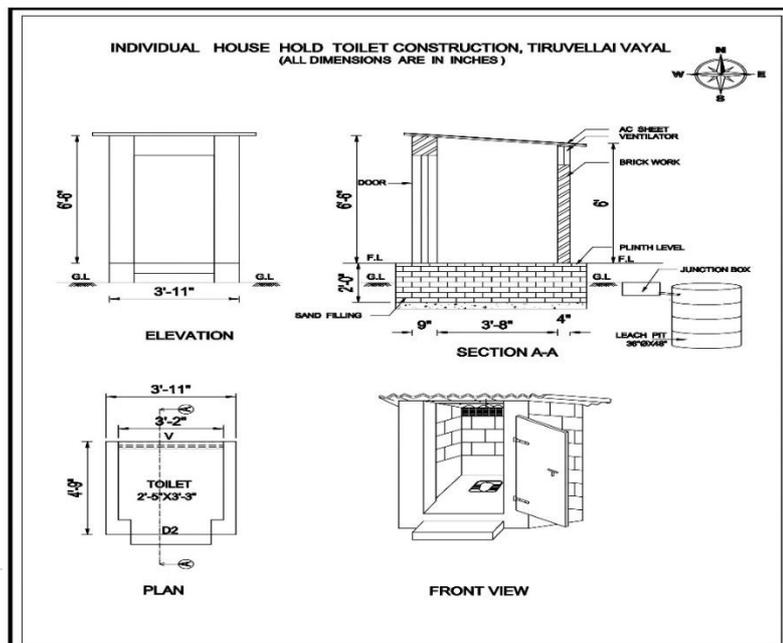
Pictures of Shri.Krishnamoorthy, Sanitation experts field Visit

He has ensured that the wells are atleast 15 feet away from the toilets. Following are the models

Sl. No	Name	Address	Type suggested by Sanitation experts
1.	Ms.Saradha	Natarajapuram, Pudhuroad, Rameswaram	Twin Leech pit
2.	Ms.Anusya	Sriramnagar, Rameswaram	Twin Leech pit
3.	Mr.Muthuramalingam	Karaiyur, Rameswaram	Sanitary Tank
4.	Mr.Mahendrapandian	Karaiyur, Rameswaram	Twin Leech Pit

suggested for the beneficiaries

Based on his findings he suggested the following design



As per the suggestions we have fully constructed the toilets



Ms.Saradha, Natarjapuram, Pudhuroad, Rameswaram –with Fully constructed Toilets



Shri.Muthuramalingam House, Karaiyur, Rameswaram – Fully Constructed Toilet

#### 2. 4. Plan for 2018-19

- Primary and Secondary Waste Collection in all the 21 Wards
- Fully established Resource Recovery Park where in all the wastes are recycled and reprocessed
- 100 cubic meter Anaerobic Digester 2 numbers for processing major food wastes from the Hotels

#### 2.5. Media



Dinamalar June 22, 2017



# Renewable Energy

.....improving the quality of the environment ..... By minimizing atmospheric pollution and in general maintaining the ecological balance across the entire state.

Vision 2023

Rameswaram Island gets its entire supply of electricity from the mainland through a High Tension (HT) feeder and is distributed through transformers to a variety of users. Hotels & Lodgings, commercial establishments, individual homes, temple and related establishments, municipal lighting, railways, schools & educational institutions are the major category of users. This apart, there are a number of micro and small industries run by individual entrepreneurs. Pumping of water for daily needs is another major load on the system. 7.5 Mega Volt Amperes (MVA) is the peak power demand as per 2017 electricity board records available for public scrutiny.

The distribution network consists of 228 distribution transformers spread over the island, the individual capacities ranging from 25 kVA to 500 kVA. The total capacity of the distribution system is 21.388 MVA which is high compared to the 7.5 MVA demand. In addition to the grid, there are many establishments using DG (Diesel Generator) sets for meeting the loads during power cuts. The power supply is also not reliable and even small shops use Gen sets and Inverters to overcome the power outages in the grid.

Energy production from renewable sources is the future for the growing energy needs. Rameshwaram island is tied with natural resources such as sunlight and biomass which can generate sustainable energy for local needs. The district administration attempts to create awareness to preserve the sanctity of the place by reducing atmospheric pollution through battery-operated vehicles in and around the temple and converting kitchen waste to biogas.

- 100 cubic meters of gas produced every day after the installation of 100 kitchen-waste-based biogas plants for households.
- Established Institutional biogas plants to show the possibilities of its use where community (hotels, hostels, commercial establishments) waste can be recycled.
- Reduced carbon footprint with the use of kitchen-waste based biogas plants.
- Installation of solar panels for generation of 25 Kilo Watt power at Vivekananda Memorial, Kundhakal and MohabeerDharmasala to explore the possibility of use of solar energy at archaeological sites.
- At Dhanushkodi, meeting energy needs of 200 households through distribution of solar lights to facilitate education, connectivity to mainland and improvement in quality of life.

### **3.0 Progress for the year 2017-18**

Dhanushkodi since 1964 storm was deprived off the mainstream benefits to the people due to its uncertain unfavorable natural conditions. However still there exists 300 families depending on the livelihoods of fishing in the Sea. In order to support them with basic needs Green Rameswaram has provided them with 200 Solar lighting system in their households. The success of the project is that the beneficiaries themselves has brought in regular maintenance, up gradation to the existing systems, etc. for the solar systems installed in the project. Though the project was implemented a couple of years ago we took an assessment of the solar panels provided and we could find 96% of the provided solar panels are in existence and is useful for them.

### Light to Live and Live to Light

Almost 3 generations of Smt. Lakshmi's family lives here she recalls the day of devastation of Dhanushkodi in 1964 and the aftermath of it. She was 5 years when this devastation has happened. She recalls the support from several hands for revival of their livelihoods. She narrates how her family re-established their huts and the continued darkness when all other parts of Tamilnadu was having electrified.



She thanks the God for providing the opportunity to use solar electrification by BrahMos. She is able to rejoice how effective it was to use the light in the night. She recalls the day when they slept along with a snake without lighting only in the morning they could realize the danger the entire family was in. This light has helped in improving the security of the Dhanushkodi families.

### Light for Rights



The solar lights were given to Ms.Mookammal who has got expired hence her son Mr.PandiGurusamy is using the Solar Lighting. Though his education is only 3<sup>rd</sup> standard however his Tamil reading ability is excellent. He is full of appreciations because the utility of the solar lighting is very good and useful especially in the context of Dhanushkodi.

Though he has received several helps outside Dhanushkodi however inside Dhanushkodi there were lots of restrictions due to archeological importance of the Site. He feels that the Solar electrification is the first such initiative inside Dhanushkodi a helping hand. Thanking Vivekananda Kendra and BrahMos for such initiative. He says it is a cost effective solution. Prior to Solar Electrification the family has used the traditional Kerosene based Lantern which consumes Kerosene heavily and it is not safe since the living place is huts and the proximity of catching fire is high. This solar Electrification flares up lower maintenance and it is cost effective too.

Type of lighting	Cost per month	Cost per year
Kerosene	Rs.300	Rs.3600
Solar Battery distill water	Rs. 10	Rs. 300

### 3.1 Plan for 2018 -19

- Solar online and offline units piloting in 2 locations
- Making Two villages Energy Efficient





# Green Health

**“To keep the body in good health is a duty. Otherwise, we shall not be able to keep our mind strong and clear”**

Over 50% of preschool children and 30 % adults were undernourished as judged by anthropometric indices and over 70% of women and children suffer from anemia. Every third child is born with low birth weight, and may have impaired mental and physical development and immunity. Intra-uterine malnutrition epigenetically predisposes to cardiovascular diseases in later life. Nutrition Security implies physical, economic and social access to balanced diet, clean drinking water, safe environment and health care (preventive, promotive and curative) for every individual. In Rameswaram (Mandapam Block) 35% of the pregnant mothers are anemic and 33% of the total adolescent girls are anemic.

Good nutrition is the foundation for good health. Centuries ago the earliest known doctors and health practitioners across the world underlined the benefits of using food as medicine to heal the body and now based on research it is evident that food plays a major role in health on a day-to-day basis. If food

has the power to prevent much of the chronic illness, then it makes sense to alter our diet to restore our health. Ancient literature has references on milletbased foods. Now with the advent of disease-creating foods, many were turning back to the traditional ways of life. Goodness of millet foods to diabetes patients is well known to the world. Several research findings stamp the above claim.

At Rameswaram, apart from Public health systems, there are a few private hospitals. Although healers and ‘Naatuvaithiyars’ are there, their quality and success are not impressive nor have been documented. Slowly they have dropped out from the health system and people increasingly visit allopathic hospitals. Our efforts



- Yoga as a therapy has been popularized for the past three years in Rameswaram and has reached out to 120 students on a daily basis.
- Around 2500 patients have got benefitted out of our free siddha medical camps in Rameswaram

## 4.1 Progress for the year 2017-18

### 4.1.1 Yoga:

Yoga Classes starts around 5.30 AM in the morning and ends at 7.30 AM in our Green Rameswaram office. Last year we have spent around 730 Hours in training students in yoga in morning hours. Yoga as a therapy has been taught. Yoga solutions to the everyday problems were discussed with the participants like managing stress, improving concentration etc. Special yoga classes are conducted for ladies in the evening. On an average 30 ladies participated.



Participants getting ready to perform yoga

### 4.1.2 Turmeric Balls

Persons who came for the Diabetes yoga were given Turmeric Balls with Hot Water every day.



**Turmeric Balls**

#### **4.1.3Neem Leaves Balls**

Same way for the Diabetes Patients Neem leaves balls were also prepared and administered with hot water after yogasanas and pranayamas



**Neem Leaves Ball**

#### **4.1.4Seed Packets Distribution to 100 Students**

100 Seed Packets distributed to School Students of Sri Parvathavarthiniamman Girls Higher Secondary School. Each Seed Packet consisted of seeds of Moringa, Bitter Guard, Tomato, Chilly and Cluster Beans. All the plants are highly nutritious in nature. It has been given under the process of Nutrition Gardens in School Students houses to keep them fit and healthy.



Students with the Seed Packets

#### 4.2 Plan for the year 2018-19

- Making 200 adolescent girls to move out of Anemia
- Reaching out to 1000 Adolescent Girls through Nutrition clubs
- Spreading Yoga as a Therapy in Rameswaram Islands
- Spreading Minor Millets as a solution to Diabetes





# Livelihoods

**“If you can create an honourable livelihood where you take your skills and earn a living from them, It gives you a sense of freedom and allows you to balance your life the way you want”**

As per mythology, KasiYatra is the final destination of any Grihastha but KasiYatra is not fulfilled until they visit Rameswaram. Rameswaram is the Banaras of South India. It is known as TeerthaYatra destination among Indians. Visits to Rameswaram strengthens one's beliefs of the existence of Lord Rama in several ways. RamanathaSamy Temple, Rama Sethu (debatable Bridge build of Limestone Shoals), Pamban Bridge, Dhanushkodi Temple, Five Face Anjaneya, NambuNayakiamman, GandhaMadhanaParvatham, Water Bird Sanctuary, Ariyaman Beach, Kothandaramar Temple, Lakshmana Teertham, JatayuTeertham, VilloondiTeertham, Vivekananda Memorial, Kurusadai Island, etc. are the main attractions of Rameswaram. Tourism as livelihood has lots of potential in Rameswaram. It is more unorganized than it is organized.

Rameswaram is an industrially backward town. In the Master Plan of Rameswaram Local Planning Area, 1997, area for industrial land use has not been demarcated so as to maintain the religious sanctity and ecological fragility of the region. However, few eco-friendly cottages are allowed in this region. There is the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) at Mandapam where research is carried out on sea-weed culture, pearl culture, sea cucumber and sea shell culture, and the research applications are transferred to fishermen. Nearly 3000 different boats are running in and around Rameswaram. Fishing is the main activity. However, the fishing holiday period of 45 days in a year will make the fishermen suffer a lot due to their non-saving habits and uncertain income in fishing activities. More over the over reliance on marine resources would affect the bio diversity of the Gulf of Mannar. Hence the need for promoting alternative livelihoods in Rameswaram

- Livelihood Training programmes done for around 1000 Women Members
- Different Topics of Moringa (Drumstick) Leaves Drying, Soap Making, Simple Ways of Extracting Coconut Oil and Fish Amino acid preparation and Herbal garden making, Establishing Terrace Garden etc. has been taught in different programmes.
- Around Five Livelihood Groups were promoted.

## 5.1 Progress for the year 2017-18

Around 5 Moringa Activity Groups were promoted. Livelihood's has expanded in promoting livelihood based SHGs in Rameswaram. Couple of SHGs were promoted on a trial basis. Livelihood assessment has happened with the support of this group member's. We could sense the prominent presence of Moringa plants in Rameswaram. Each household in Rameswaram was having 2-3 Moringa Trees and this proximity can be envisaged as a potential livelihood opportunity. Hence a study was conducted by the interns of Green Rameswaram Project and the Moringa leaves bunch sold for 5-10 Rupees can be dried and powdered and this simple value addition fetches phenomenal increase of 20-30 Rupees. Training is given to 75 SHG women in the process of drying Moringa leaves and the Team is in the process of identifying the purchaser.



SHG members being taught about the Moringa Leaves drying process

## 5.2 Plan for 2018-19

- Promotion of 2 numbers of Palm Producers Group
- Promotion of 2 numbers of Moringa Producers Group





# Eco Tourism and Green Transport

**“Leave Nothing but Footprints Take Nothing but Pictures Kill Nothing but Time”**

Rameswaram Island as a center for spiritual tourism attracts thousands of pilgrims every day. A pilgrimage is a TeerthaYatra and a pilgrim is a Teerthayatri, the place where the Teertha is located is called TeerthaKshetra or TeerthaSthana. It will help the pilgrims to open up before them a path or a direction for righteous living. A TeerthaYatra is not only a physical act but is also implies the mental or moral discipline. They all have their unique character and ambience. These places are the living symbols of tradition and culture. Water as a purifier is known to all. Everyone takes bath to keep them hygienic. All religions have given water a significant place in all their rituals to ward off the impurities or to initiate or for making resolves for new actions. Most of us intentionally or unintentionally commit actions which cause harm to the living being around us and feel sorry for it. Over the period, our ancestors have shown pathways to be free from guilt and to invoke goodness of the individual through many deeds instead of condemning oneself forever. Rameswaram known for Teertham is associated with mythological stories conveying act of sanctifying of the people who have committed wrong.

In one square kilometer of main temple area, as many as a hundred thousand tourists can be found on festive days. At least an average of five thousand pilgrims visit Rameswaram every day (As per CDP report 2009). Present estimates put this figure at over 1 crore/ year. The numbers are impressive, but it also implies that Agni Teertham, a beach used for taking holy dips is one of the most crowded tourist areas in Rameswaram Island.

Environmental Protection and Tourism are closely linked together. Outdoor recreation requires a healthy environment. A tourist place with clean environs – air, water and scenery is most sought after by leisure seekers. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), “tourism that involves travelling to relatively undisturbed natural areas with the specified object of studying, admiring and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural aspects (both of the past and present) found in these areas is Ecotourism”. Eco tourism requires a concerted clean, green package to attract more pilgrims again and again. Non-motorized transport like cycling, walking, rickshaw, battery vehicles, etc. contribute much to reduce air pollution. Thus Rameswaram needs Eco Education, new avenues for Tourism like Bird Watching spots and the Green Transport.

## **6.1 Progress during the year 2017-18**

As far as Green Transport is concerned, Green Rameswaram is running our Battery Car for all our internal travels and is setting an example for others to commute in Pollution free transportation. Apart from this our team is aiming to announce the Mukundarayarchatram to Arichalmunai as pollution free commutation path with Green Transport.



**Battery car of Green Rameswaram**

### **6.1.1 E-Vehicles for Mukuntharayachatram to Arichalmunai**

100 E-Vehicles has been proposed under MPLAD scheme to make the new NH Road laid from Mukuntharayachatram to Arichalmunai pollution free and Green Road.

### **6.2 Plan for the year 2018-19**

- Green Eco tourism Package – Conducting training programmes for all the stakeholders
- Promotion of Bird Watching Destinations
- Promoting Green Transport
- Promoting a holistic TeerthaYatra in Rameswaram





# Marine Bio - Diversity

**“The sea, the great unifier, is man’s only hope. Now, as never before, the old phrase has literal meaning: We’re all in the same boat.”**

Located on the south-eastern tip of the Asian subcontinent, the Gulf of Mannar is known to harbour over 3,600 species of flora and fauna, making it one of the richest coastal regions. Rameswaram Island is in the Gulf of Mannar. The IUCN Commission on National Parks and WWF identifies the reserve as an area of “Particular concern” given its diversity. In addition, as the first marine biosphere reserve declared in India, this area has long been a National priority.

The Forest Department (Ministry of Environment & Forest) of Tamilnadu has made a census of all the marine species in Gulf of Mannar biosphere reserve. This list has

- 181 species of seaweeds,
- 15 species of sea grasses,
- 117 species of corals,
- 158 species of arthropods,
- 856 species of mollusks,
- 1147 species of finfishes,
- 5 species of sea turtles apart from the seasonally migrating mammals like whales, and dolphins, porpoises and turtles (Source: Data base of Gulf of Mannar Bio sphere reserve, 2015, Govt. of Tamilnadu)

## 7.1 Progress during the year

Green Rameswaram explored the possibilities of tying up with Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) at Mandapam. They have suggested us the range of topics in which they are conducting Training programme. Dr.Saravanan, Asst. Director, CMFRI visited Green Rameswaram Project and invited us for a Presentation in National conference on Marine Debris - COMAD 2018 which is scheduled to be held on April 2018

## 7.2 Plan for the year 2018-19

- Awareness Generation on Marine Biodiversity
- Providing alternate livelihoods to fisherwomen





# Heritage

**“Preserving, and wherever possible, improving the quality of the environment and nurturing the cultural heritage ..... protection of soil and other natural formations.”**

In the year 2009, on directions from the Commissioner of the Municipal Administration, corporate agency has prepared a CDP for Rameswaram which highlighted the need for mapping of; a) Immovable natural heritage sites; and, b) Immovable manmade heritage sites. In addition to the above, we have included two more components to the heritage conservation plan c) Art and d) Culture. The additional components are required to include sites and buildings of archaeological, historical, architectural, cultural and ecological value. This can be done through the listing of sites and buildings under the State Town Planning Acts. Rameswaram is listed as a heritage town by the State Tourism and Cultural Department.

Rameswaram is one of the four sacred dhams (abodes) and is declared as one of the pilgrimcenter marking the confluence of Shaivism and Vaishnavism. This has enabled pilgrims to resolve the differences. There is a strong belief that bathing in the 22 ‘Theerthams’ or natural springs is a step towards enlightenment. There are many a heritage temples and buildings which are dilapidated and in bad condition. And many are encroached upon beyond the limits of recognition. By and large there are 3 types of Arts inside the Ramanathaswami temple Rameswaram –

- Visual arts – Mural paintings inside the 1000 pillar (west prakaram)
- Performing arts – Siva’s dance and SivakamaSundari
- Decorative or applied arts - Rudraksha beads structure housing Lord Siva inside the temple One can see the ancient glory of arts forms inside and outside gopuram structures.

Building the present out of past by preserving tangible and intangible elements with concrete evidence is to resurrect the cultural heritage. Rameswaram has sites of archeological significance and historical value. Attempts have been made to unearth and showcase them through listing, preparing detailed project reports and using conservation architecture.

- Listing of cultural / historical / archaeological sites to record their heritage significance.
- Detailed Project Report for Dhanushkodi prepared for showcasing its archaeological value.
- Mythological supplements for the discovered traditional water-bodies (Teerthas) are documented revealing the past and present efforts for protecting the natural formations.

- History of civilization of the coastal area in the context of the reign of different dynasty's is documented for posterity.
- With the support of the district administration, conservation architecture showcased at the historical site – MohabeerDharmasala for adoption by pilgrims and local people.

### 8.1 Progress during the year

MohabeerDharmasala -200 years old building renovated by Green Rameswaram stands as a testimonial for renovating old buildings. This renovated building is visited by a few pilgrims to have a glimpse of the room where Ma.Saradha Stayed during her visit to Rameswaram. As a part of their visit we are also exposing the pilgrims the live models of Solar Energy, RO Water Plant, Kitchen Waste Based Bio Methanation Plant, Rain Water Harvesting, Herbal Gardening, Simple exhibition about Pilgrimage etc.



Solar Plant in MohabeerDharmasala



**MohabeerDharmasala - panoramic view**

## **8.2 Release of book on Rameswaram in Literature**

Brought out the Tamil book on Rameswaram depicting the historical references about Rameswaram right from Vedas to the modern times.

## **8.3 Plan for the year 2018-19**

- Renovation of newly identified 12 Traditional Water bodies
- Fencing and Beautification of renovated 10 Traditional Water Bodies
- List of Built Heritage Structure with documentary Evidence
- Conservation of visual Art Heritage inside the temples of Rameswaram





# Landscaping and Beautification

**Preserving, and wherever possible, improving the quality of the environment and nurturing the cultural heritage of the state.....Environmental preservation would encompass the entire ecological footprint of human activity and would include increasing forest cover, conservation of zoological and botanical diversity, minimizing atmospheric pollution and in general maintaining the ecological balance**

## Vision 2023

Rameswaram, is a town in Tier-III Municipality in Ramanathapuram district of Tamil Nadu. Located on the Pamban island Rameswaram has an average elevation of 10 meters (32 feet) from the Sea level. The island is shaped like a Conch, with sandy soil in 74% of the area due to the presence of sea. It is flanked by the Palk Strait in the north west and Gulf of Mannar in the south-east. Rameswaram Town covers an area of 61.8 km<sup>2</sup> and had a population of 44,856 in 2011. Religious tourism and fisheries generate the maximum employment.

Around 1.5 crores Pilgrims visit Rameswaram every year as it is one of the holiest cities in India. This large Municipality has a scarce infrastructure which is highly inadequate for the fringe settlements. Commercial buildings encroach upon narrow roads which are dotted by dilapidated buildings, and totally devoid of sanitation. The spiritual town can boast of no unique pattern or structures within 5 km radius of Ramanathaswamy Temple to which thousands of pilgrims' throng during festival seasons. This temple is acclaimed as the second most pilgrim center in India after Kashi. Sadly, there is no spiritual ambiance

Landscaping and beautification brings out the tourism potential of the island for the visitor to relish and cherish for generations. Strengthening the sacred groves, forming Navagrahavanam, Rasivanam, NakshatraVanam, herbal garden and planning of nave species was piloted at Mangalavanam which has made the island livable for the locals and lovable to tourists. This is done in collaboration with HR & CE department and the District Administration.

- 1100 plants in 7 acres with 67 indigenous species suing the land have been planted to enhance the forest cover.
- 50 medicinal plants have signages carrying their botanical and local names and medicinal value.
- To show how our culture supports botanical diversity, birth-stars (27), zodiac signs (12) and planets (9) appropriate plants have been included in the Vanam.
- Resorts for basic amenities and recreation facilities like play parks for tourists and their children.

## 9.1.Progress in 2017-18

This year worn out plants in Mangalavanam were cleared out and about 100 new plants were replanted again.



**Mangalavanam Plants**

On February 03, 2018 Greening of DSP office at Rameswaram has happened. Around 30 Plant saplings were sponsored by our Green School Teacher Smt.GopilakshmiShanmuganathan and with the support of our Green Friends we could complete the work by planting the saplings in the DSP office premises. Shri.Mahesh, DSP, Rameswaram and his colleagues also extended a helping hand in greening their office. Hand in Hand team also stepped in to help our initiative.



**Team which did the greening work**

### 9.2 Plan for 2018-19

- Revival and Renovation of Nandavanams in Sri Ramanathasamy Temple and other two main temples in Rameswaram
- DPR for the entire Rameswaram Island





# Social Capital

.....I invite you all to participate in achieving my vision 2023 and in making it a reality..... I invite you all to walk with me on the path towards attaining it. Let us all build a strong, vibrant, prosperous and wealthy Tamil Nadu.....

Building citizens engagement is seen as a potential tool for sustainability of the verticals promoted under Green Rameswaram. Social engineering is essential for building ownership and management of Green Rameswaram. There is a lack of commitment, engagement of the citizens and stakeholders in this regard. Social Capital is the special purpose vehicle to carry out the Project goals. It is the key to the Project Management of Green Rameswaram.

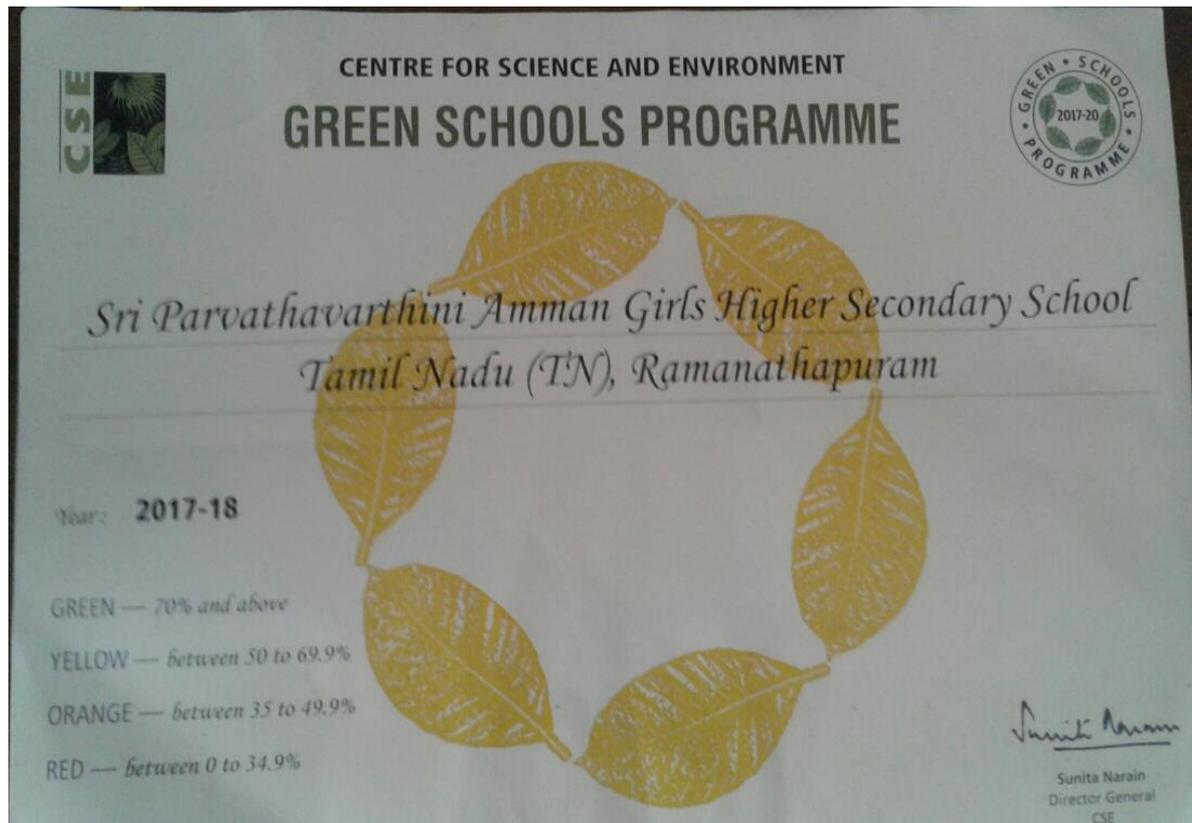
Building social capital through camps and campaigns for sustainability of the initiatives launched so far has resulted in popularising the perspective among different communities. We hope both the locals and the tourists will take the cause further for posterity.

- About 30000 students have been reached to seed the concept of Green Rameswaram through periodic camps at schools and colleges.
- Cultural festivities of all faiths and different art forms like street plays are used to involve citizens for working towards Clean and Green Rameswaram.
- Mobile vans and permanent exhibits are in place to exhibit panels on the Clean and Green Rameswaram for sensitizing and involving the pilgrims.
- Green health camps are organized to propagate ethnic medicines as an entry point-activity to involve citizens in Clean and Green Rameswaram.
- Dissemination of the themes for the benefit of pilgrims / local people through booklets, audio CD, pamphlets and posters.
- Promoting the campaign perspective by involving the line departments, community, academia and business establishments for networking and contribute for Clean and Green Rameswaram.

## 10.1 Progress for the year 2017-18

### 10.1.1 Green Schools Programme

Green Rameswaram took up the work of Green Schools Programme in Rameswaram. We could converge with Sri Parvathavarthiniamman Girls Higher Secondary School for the programme. We have conducted an orientation to the students on Land, Air, Water, Energy, Food, Water and Waste. With interested students formed Audit team for each of the subject Land, Air, Water, Energy, Food, Water and Waste and helped them conduct the audit on each subject. With only 6 months' time we could secure Yellow marks of 67% which is the top in Ramanathapuram District and got into 22 schools of the 44 schools participated in Tamilnadu."



**Green Schools Program Certificate issued to SriParvathavarthini Amman Girls Hr.Sec. School**

As a part of Green Schools programme we have distributed 100 seed packets to 100 students of Sri Parvathavarthini Amman girls higher secondary school in the month of January 2018 after 3 months we did an interim evaluation and we could draw out the following inferences from our study. They are as listed below

1. All the students have planted the seeds
2. Around 43 students have successfully grown the plant and enjoyed the yield
3. All the students who have successfully grown the seeds were done it so with the support of Parents
4. These 43 students have regularly watered the plants
5. Around 57 students have failed in their attempt to grow the plants
6. Among these 57 students 56 were not supported or encouraged by their parents. This has been the contributing factors for the growth rate
7. Among these 57 students around 55 Students has not attempted to regularly water the plants
8. Among these 57 students only 2 students have regularly watered and they have not come out successfully due to other factors
9. To the question if we give more seeds would they like to grow it all the students expressed their willingness to do the activity

Success rate of 43% is quiet astounding and the learning from the process is to give orientation to the parents also to ensure the success.

Few pics of the successful students were shown as below



Students with grown plants

### 10.1.2 Mass Cleaning Campaigns

The Prime Minister have named the nation-wide sanitation campaign from 15<sup>th</sup> September to 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2017 as “Swachhta Hi Seva”. This was coordinated by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, the convening Ministry for the Swachh Bharat Mission.

The objective of the campaign was to mobilise people and reinforce the “Jan Andolan” for sanitation to contribute to Mahatma Gandhi’s dream of a Clean India. The participation ranged from the President of India to the common citizen and would involve Union Ministers, Governors, Chief Ministers, legislators, celebrities and top officials.

The Ministry has created a special portal and web page on MyGov.in facilitating people to upload pre and post intervention photos of their Shramdan and other interventions.

Green Rameswaram has responded to the Nations call by organizing Mega events in collaboration with several stake holders as follows

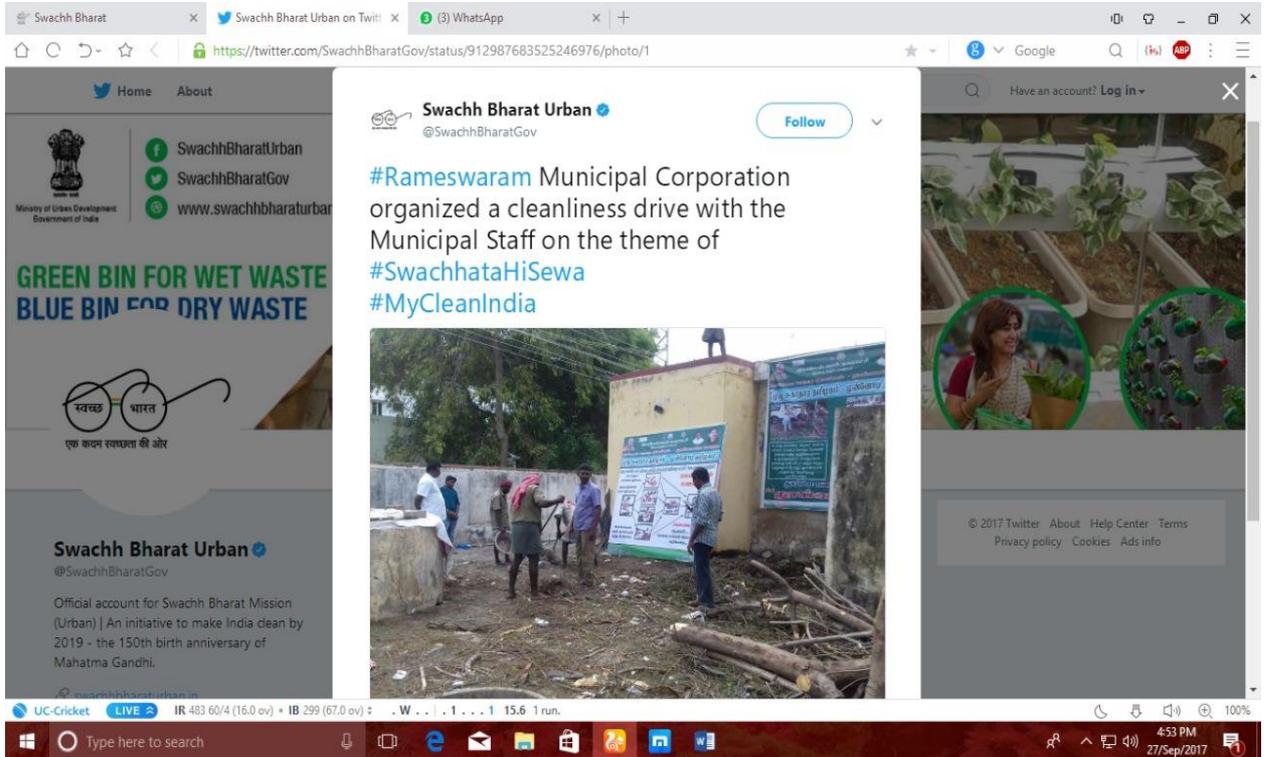
On the whole in Rameswaram for Swachhtha Hi SEVA we could achieve the following

- We could mobilize 241 Volunteers to the Swachhtha Hi Seva events
- We could motivate 2820 Volunteers to take Swachhtha Hi Seva Cleanliness Oath
- We could impact the student community to plant 43 Saplings and inspire them for maintenance of plants also.
- We could create indirect awareness for 28650 pilgrims/local residents/tourists approximately.

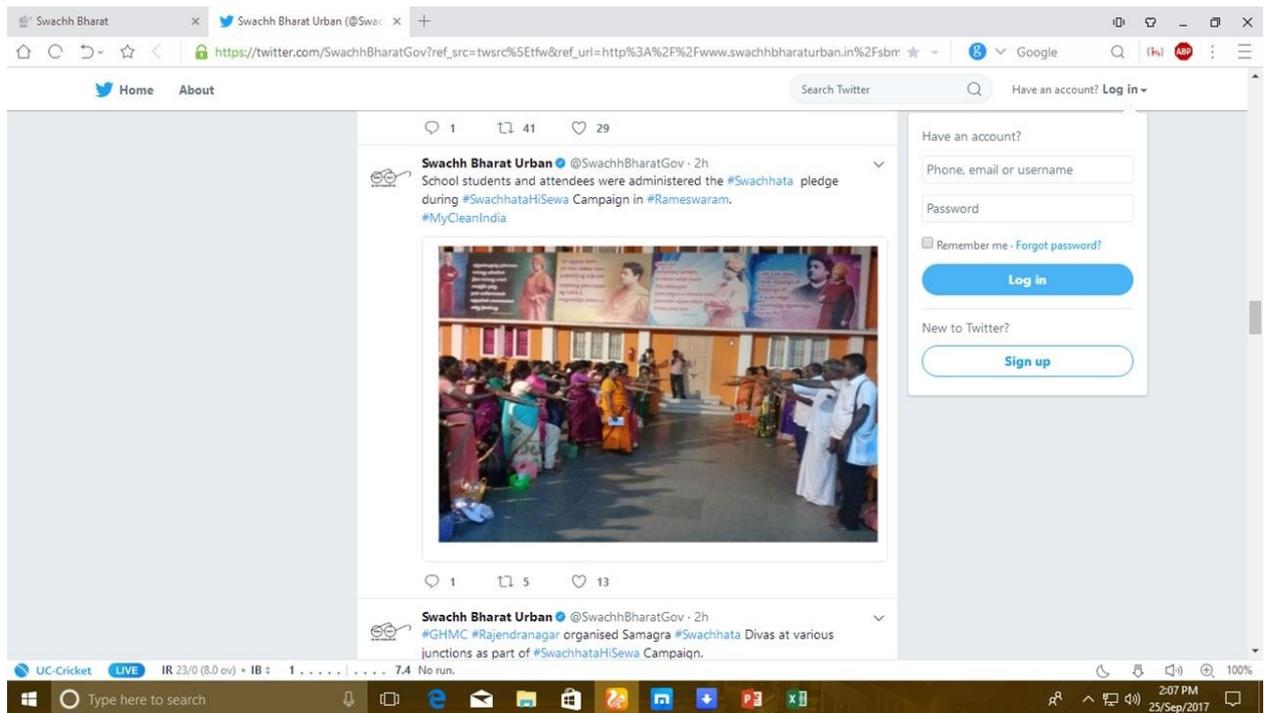
In SwachhBharath Urban Twitter account following events of us appeared



Temple cleaning by our students (Nambunayakiamman Temple)



Police Station cleaning



### Cleanliness Oath taking by 2437 Volunteers captured in Swachh Bharat Urban

Apart from every month we are mobilizing volunteers to clean Agni Teertham and Dhanushkodi to Arichalmunai beach

### 10.2 Dignitaries Visit to Green Rameswaram



Shri.Harmander Singh IAS, Principal Secretary, Municipal Administration and Water Supply visited Green Rameswaram Office on 15<sup>th</sup>January, 2018



Smt. Krishnaraj, Minister of State for Agriculture, Government of India, visiting Green Rameswaram 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2017



Vivekananda Kendra NARDEP receiving Award of Excellence in Environment for the year 2016 for Environment works in Rameswaram from Shri. Karuppanan, Minister of Environment, Tamilnadu on 05<sup>th</sup> June, 2017.



Shri.Ramarao, Commander, Mandapam Camp, Indian Navy  
involving in Agni Teertham Cleaning 16<sup>th</sup>September, 2017



High Court Judges Visit to Rameswaram 17<sup>th</sup>September, 2017  
Green Rameswaram Presentation



Scientist from Pondicherry University  
Visiting Vadakadu Green Rameswaram Project Area – 14<sup>th</sup>September, 2017



**Honourable Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speech about Vivekananda Kendra in the function**

Swami Vivekananda landed here in the year 1897 after his triumphant visit to the West and spreading the glory of India all over the world

A grand memorial was built for Swami Vivekananda at Kanyakumari by Vivekananda Kendra

Vivekananda Kendra, the District Administration and other NGOs have joined hands and made a resolve to make Rameswaram Green

This is a very good move for the bright future of Rameswaram

... And for this, I appreciate all the organizations involved in this good work

Particularly I congratulate Vivekananda Kendra

**Honourable Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Speech about Squirrel**

The squirrel can inspire us, Like a squirrel in Ramayana

If 125 crore Indians take just one step each, India will March 125 crore steps ahead

Release of Action Plan Document by Honorable Prime Minister Shri.NarendraModiji on July 27, 2017

### 10.3 Plan for the year 2018-19

Social Capital	Units	Social Capitals	Units
Building up TeerthaMitra Committee	30	Promotion of Walker club for Diabetics	3
Exposure Visit to Producer Companies	5	Establishing of Photo Clubs/Contests for Students and Youths to capture the Marine species	2
Building up Stakeholder Committee	9	Green Bus to do the Eco Development Tourism	1
Promotion of peer groups among adolescent girls at wards (street and school level)	10	Green transport to do the Eco Development Tourism	50





# Policy Advocacy

Advocacy to Change “What is” into “What Should be”

Action Plan Document

There are several steps to triumph but our focus is on first fixing the goals and frame operational guidelines for the stakeholders so that they understand the holistic issues emanating from implementation. Despite the initiatives taken at Rameswaram for impacting systems/management/process/policies at the micro and macro levels, the pace of changes/developments were not on as envisaged for various reasons. Hence, we are envisaging policy advocacy to be promoted in and around the Island Development Committee (Formal Structure proposed by Government where-in Green Rameswaram has been made as Member) on each vertical.

## 11.1 The effect of Policy Advocacy would be as follows

<b>For the Individual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism enhancement - livelihood improvement</li> <li>• Good health Ensured Value Addition to nature’s product Uniqueness of local produce getting patented</li> <li>• Clean and Green Households</li> <li>• Energy Conservation</li> <li>• Green Transport</li> <li>• Basic Services fulfilled</li> </ul>
<b>For the Community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Tourism/More Tourists Attraction</li> <li>• Good Governance in Community Based health initiatives ensured</li> <li>• Local Product Collective Production Global Reach</li> <li>• CBO (Community Based Organization) to bring local citizens and Pilgrim Engagement in waste Management</li> <li>• Improved Water Tables</li> <li>• Resource Efficiency</li> <li>• Reduced Pollution</li> </ul>
<b>For the Nature</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced Carbon Prints</li> <li>• Entire initiative itself is eco friendly</li> <li>• Value Addition to nature’s product</li> <li>• Productive use of Organic Waste will be at Place which reduces the dependence on fossil fuels</li> <li>• Greening the town, Optimum utility of resources, reuse reduces the consumption and saves the energy</li> </ul>
<b>For the Future</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism Flourishes</li> <li>• Better awareness about Marine bio diversity</li> <li>• Better Health Indices ensured</li> <li>• Model for replication</li> <li>• Cleaner and better environment to live</li> </ul>

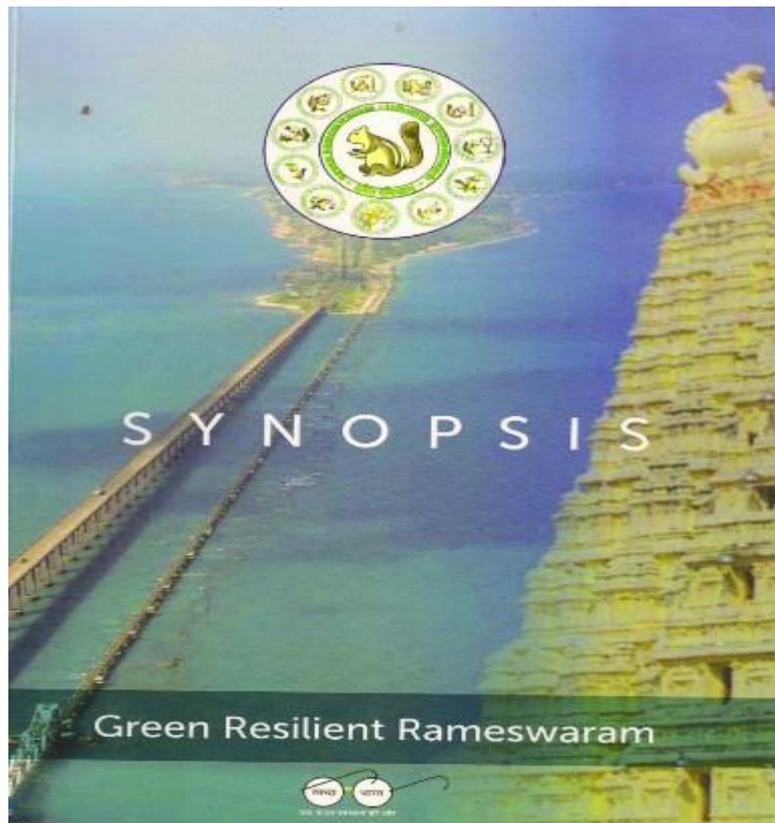
**For the Sector**

- Declaration of Rameswaram as Green Transport Island
- Community Governance model with all stakeholder's engagement
- Institutionalization of Citizen Engagement in Water and Waste Management
- Allocation of resources based on the hotspots and waste generation which keep the city clean and green
- Technology Knowledge park for the community, Pilot tested DC model for scaling up of energy devices and systems.
- Successful Producer Company to benefit Producers
- Institutionalization of social and management processes to ensure survival and continued relevance of community
- Acceptance of Yoga as a way of life and herbal remedies
- Replicable Model of Eco Tourism
- Better awareness about Marine bio diversity

**11.0 Progress for the year 2017-18****11.1.1 Release of Action Plan Document of Green Rameswaram**

This Green Rameswaram initiative was blessed by Dr.A. P.J Abdul Kalam and has strengthened the Green Rameshwaram Project, which is a part of the Island Development Committee. The projects are implemented in collaboration with the central and state governments, District Administration, Municipality, and from the contributions of community and corporate.





Green Resilient Rameswaram Action plan is prepared based on the projects implemented so far and in consultation with Stakeholders as a part of the Visioning Exercise carried out under the Chairmanship of Island Development Committee, Dr.S. Natarajan, IAS, District Collector. The action plan comprises of 11 verticals namely, Water management, Waste management, Renewable Energy, Eco Tourism with Green Transport, Landscaping and Beautification, Marine biodiversity, Green Health, New merchandise and Livelihoods, Heritage, Social Capital and Policy advocacy. It envisages 27 goals with the project outlay of Rs.24.02 crore seeking the support of Central, State, Corporates and Community. The project partners working for the cause are Hand in Hand. India, C.P.R Environmental Education Center, REACH Foundation, Basil Electronics, Green Pilgrimage Network and Indian Institute of Technology, Chennai

The Synopsis of Green Resilient Rameswaram Action plan was unveiled by Honorable Prime Minister Shri.Narendra Modi at Mandapam, Ramnad District. The recipients of the plan document are Dr.S.Natarajan, IAS, District Collector and Shri.G.Vasudeo, Secretary, Vivekananda Kendra – Natural Resources Development Project. In his address to the public, PM lauded the efforts of Vivekananda Kendra and District administration and called for every citizen and pilgrim to develop the nation like the squirrel which contributed for constructing the Ramar bridge. Earlier, Sri Edappadi K. Palaniswamy, Chief Minister, Government of Tamil Nadu in his address shared the efforts of the state in particular about the tourism at Dhanushkodi and the allocation made for Drainage. He thanked the Prime Minister for the support under AMRUT and Swadesh Darshan Scheme for making the Rameswaram Island a place worthy of visit for pilgrims. Sri M Venkaiah Naidu, MP, welcomed the gathering and Sri Pon.Radhakrishnan, Union Minister of state for Shipping, Road Transport and Highways gave vote of thanks.

### **11.1.2 Formation of Island Development Committee**

Green Rameswaram is a peoples' project. Vivekananda Kendra acts as a catalyst agent by partnering with several likeminded organization. A special purpose vehicle like Island Development Committee was envisaged since 2014 and due to our policy advocacy efforts, this year Government has formed

Island Development Committee on 16-11-2017. The purpose of the Island Development Committee was to support the Green Rameswaram Project. Government forming a Formal committee to support our unique project is a credit to the good work so far we have done and it puts us under tremendous pressure to go further with more caution and rigor. In this committee Green Rameswaram is also a member. Circular is enclosed herewith



**ABSTRACT**

Green Rameswaram – Rameswaram Municipality – Constitution of an Island Development Committee and State Level Committee under "Green Rameswaram" to implement the Green Rameswaram activities – orders – Issued.

Municipal Administration and Water Supply (MA3) Department

G.O. (Ms) No.119

Dated: 16.11.2017

தேரவிளம்பி, ஐப்பசி 30,  
திருவள்ளூர் ஆண்டு 2048

**Read:**

**From the Commissioner of Municipal Administration, Letter No.8734/ 2017/ P3, dated.27.06.2017**

\*\*\*\*

**ORDER:-**

In the letter read above, the Commissioner of Municipal Administration has stated that in accordance with the initiative taken by the District Collector, Ramanathapuram to develop the pilgrim city of Rameswaram in coordination with Green Pilgrimage Network, the Commissioner of Municipal Administration chaired a meeting on 07.04.17. During the meeting, among other aspects, it was decided to strengthen the Island Development Committee for Green Rameswaram with District Collector as Chairman.

2) The Commissioner of Municipal Administration has also requested to formalize the Rameswaram Development Committee to anchor all the development efforts of Rameswaram by issuing a Government order. He has further stated that as the concept of "Green Rameswaram" is a noble initiative, an island development Committee & State Level Committee is suggested for issue of necessary Government orders at the earliest. The formation of Committee will be the first step to hand hold this project of "Green Rameswaram" which has the potential of transforming the ambience and feel of the Island besides serving the millions of tourists who would come to the Island throughout the year. The State Level Committee will meet once in three months to review progress of Green Rameswaram activities on a quarterly basis for effective implementation.

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3) After careful examination, the Government have decided to accept the request of the Commissioner of Municipal Administration and accordingly an Island Development Committee and State Level Committee under "Green Rameswaram" to implement the Green Rameswaram activities is constituted with the following composition:-

1. Island development Committee / District Development Committee:

1	District Collector, Ramanathapuram	Chairman
2	Regional Director of Municipal Administration, Madurai	Member Secretary
3	Representative of Green Rameswaram Project	Member
4	Joint Commissioner, Hindu Religious & Charitable Endowments Department (Arulmigu Ramanathasamy Temple), Rameswaram	Member
5	Superintendent of Police, Ramanathapuram	Member
6	Municipal Commissioner, Rameswaram	Member
7	District Forest Officer, Ramanathapuram	Member
8	District Environment Engineer, Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board, Ramanathapuram	Member
9	District Project Officer, District Rural Development Agency, Ramanathapuram	Member
10	Deputy Superintendent of Police, Rameswaram	Member
11	Executive Engineer, TWAD Board CWSS Maintenance Division, Ramanathapuram	Member
12	Executive Engineer, TWAD Board Sewerage Division, Ramanathapuram	Member
13	Joint Director (Medical), Ramanathapuram	Member
14	Deputy Director of Health Services, Ramanathapuram	Member
15	Joint Director of Animal Husbandry, Ramanathapuram	Member
16	Divisional Engineer, National Highways, Ramanathapuram	Member
17	Divisional Engineer, Highways and Rural Works, Ramanathapuram	Member
18	Project Director, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), Karaikudi	Member
19	Executive Engineer, Public Works Department Building (Construction & Maintenance) Division, Ramanathapuram	Member

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20	Executive Engineer, Public Works Department, Water Resource Organization (Lower Vaigai Basin) Division, Paramakudi	Member
21	Director Gulf of Mannar Trust, Ramanathapuram	Member
22	Commandar, Naval Detachment, Rameswaram	Member
23	In charge officer, Indian Coast Guard, Mandapam	Member
24	Assistant Director of Fisheries, Rameswaram	Member
25	Station Fire Officer, Rameswaram	Member
26	Tahsildar, Rameswaram	Member
27	Superintendent/Station Master, Railway Station, Rameswaram	Member
28	Block Development Officer / Commissioner, Panchayat Union Office, Mandapam	Member
29	Tourist Officer, Department of Tourism, Rameswaram	Member
30	Divisional Engineer, TANGEDCO, Rameswaram	Member

2. State Level Committee:

1	Commissioner of Municipal Administration	Chairman
2	Chief Engineer	Member Secretary
3	Regional Director of Municipal Administration Madurai	Member
4	Regional Executive Engineer, Madurai	Member
5	The Municipal Commissioner, Rameswaram	Member
6	The Municipal Engineer, Rameswaram	Member

The State Level Committee shall meet once in three months to review progress of Green Rameswaram activities on a quarterly basis for effective implementation.

**(BY ORDER OF THE GOVERNOR)**

**HARMANDER SINGH,  
PRINCIPAL SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT.**

To  
✓ The Members of the Committee  
The Commissioner of Municipal Administration, Chennai.5.

//4//

The Regional Director of Municipal Administration (through the  
Commissioner of Municipal Administration, Chennai.5)  
The Public (Spl.A / Spl.B) Department, Chennai.9

**Copy to:**

The Senior Principal Private Secretary to Principal Secretary to Government,  
Municipal Administration & Water Supply Department, Chennai-9.  
The Senior Personal Assistant to Principal Secretary to Government, Tourism  
Culture and Religious Endowment Department, Chennai-9.  
The Senior Personal Assistant to Chief Secretary to Government,  
Secretariat, Chennai-9.  
The Senior Personal Assistant to Hon'ble Ministers (MA, RD & Spl. Imp. Prog.  
/ Tourism / HR&CE) , Chennai.9  
The Senior Personal Assistant to Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister, Chennai.9  
The Senior Personal Assistant to Hon'ble Chief Minister, Chennai.9  
The Municipal Administration & Water Supply (OP.II) Department, Chennai -9.  
Stock File / Spare Copies.

**//FORWARDED BY ORDER//**

*12/11/17*  
*12/11/17*  
**SECTION OFFICER.**

## 11.2 Plan for the year 2018-19

Verticals	Issues
<b>Water</b>	Arresting encroachment of water bodies, health risks due to black and grey water mismanagement, lack of enforcement of laws for effective use of water at all levels, Sea water intrusion due to exploitation of ground water, deficit in demand and supply of water
<b>Waste</b>	Lack of physical infrastructure, resource allocation, Poor governance, lack of data on categorization of waste, inadequate staff, lack of citizen engagement.
<b>Renewable Energy</b>	DC Micro Grid and Super-Efficient appliances have not caught the attention of policymakers. Pilot model experience, Documentation and proposition to scale up across the sector
<b>Livelihoods</b>	No exposure to formal funding, Lack of knowledge about the technical knowhow of the value additions, Collective formal structure of producer's company not known, Lack of start-up capital
<b>Landscaping and Beautification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of interest among the stakeholders in Landscaping and beautification due to self-interests in the status quo.</li> <li>• Public Resistance to change</li> <li>• Non – Enforcement of the laws</li> <li>• Inordinate delays in getting sanctions etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Heritage</b>	<p>Conserving the Natural, Built, Arts and Cultural heritage in the face of exponentially increasing tourist population (and the demands placed on blue green infrastructure), and in the face of the vagaries of nature induced by climate change.</p> <p>Building structures and processes of policy advocacy through involvement of stakeholders, working constructively with the district, state and Central Government administration.</p>
<b>Health</b>	No recognition for alternate medicine/ way of treatment, Presence of Quacks, Inadequate institution/ system for promoting alternative modes of treatment
<b>Eco tourism and Green Transport</b>	Lack of sensitization among the tourist guides related to Eco Tourism, Bird Gathering Places not promoted as Sanctuaries, Green Transport Items lack policy and administration support to promote strong base
<b>Marine Biodiversity</b>	Importance of Marine Bio Diversity not known, heavy pressure on Marine Bio Diversity, Limited exploration on Alternative Livelihoods for the fishermen community

**For further details, write to:**

**Secretary,  
Green Rameshwaram Project,  
MahabeerDharmashala, Rameshwaram - 623526  
Tamil Nadu, INDIA.  
Ph: 04573-222296**

**email : [greenrameswaram@gmail.com](mailto:greenrameswaram@gmail.com); website : [www.greenrameshwaram.org](http://www.greenrameshwaram.org)**



