

Conservation linked Enterprises - Alternative to climate change, Address migration and provide livelihood in Tamil Nadu

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Abstract—Forest Rights Act (FRA)

legitimized the rights to reside, steward and benefit from their ancestral habitat to the forest dwelling tribes across India. The Indian State recognized the first rights to the forest resources to the Tribal community and their community traditions, collective action, knowledge and heritage through the common forest rights. Tamil Nadu has a tribal population of 1.1% as per the 2011 census belonging to over 37 different tribal communities spread over several districts in the state. FRA implementation in the state of Tamil Nadu commenced much later than the rest of the country due to legal challenges. As per the Government of India dashboard on FRA, currently (the cut of date in the dashboard is later part of 2023), 30% of the individual forest claims and 20% of the community forest claims that have been submitted have been distributed to date in the state.

Recent studies highlighted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) emphasize that preserving and restoring forests are among the most effective strategies for mitigating climate change. This underscores the economic benefits of maintaining stable climate conditions, which are essential for agricultural productivity, water resource management, and disaster risk reduction. This is apart from the potential monetising of the carbon stock in the forest.

The conservation of forests is not merely an environmental issue but a fundamental pillar of sustainable development that intersects with biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, economic prosperity, public health, and societal well-being.

This paper provides a livelihood framework on conservation along with a practical break-down of the framework into policy, and programme components that can be taken forward by the government in ensuring building of a sustainable livelihoods for the tribal communities in the state.

Index Terms—Forest Rights Act, Conservation Linked Enterprises, Climate Mitigation, Bio diversity, Sustainable Livelihood.

I. INTRODUCTION

In a globalized world of commerce, all livelihoods planning needs to be in the context of global changes, opportunities and challenges. In this section we will examine the various global and planetary issues that impact the livelihoods of the forest dwelling communities in Tamil Nadu. We examine them independently and tie-up all of these with the livelihoods.

Forest Rights Act (FRA) legitimized the rights to reside, steward and benefit from their ancestral habitat to the forest dwelling tribes across India. The Indian State recognized the first rights to the forest resources to the Tribal community and their community traditions, collective action, knowledge and heritage through the common forest rights. Both individual and community rights are provided through a structured process from application, validation to eventual provision of the land rights document. This entitlement is a right that the tribal communities always had. This right was often infringed by the State through the forest and revenue department officials who randomly could intimidate the tribal community based on their ignorance of their own privileges. The FRA provided a protection from such intimidation to the community. The Individual and Collective Forest Rights are titles that are issued by the Government of India as per the FRA. As per the latest data, across India over 2.2 million titles have been issued to the forest dwelling tribes of the country and over 100,000 titles have been provided to communities to be in their custody as a jointly managed resource in recognition of the traditional claim of the community over the land. Out of the number of claims that have been received from the forest dwelling tribes of the country, about 50% of the individual and 60% of the community

claims have been awarded by the community. If one were to look at the overall titles distributed, the community titles form about 5% of the titles that have been distributed across the country whereas the individual claims constitute 95% of the land titles distributed. This is almost proportional to the number of claims received from the communities as well.

Tamil Nadu has a tribal population of 1.1% as per the 2011 census belonging to over 35 different tribal communities spread over several districts in the state. FRA implementation in the state of Tamil Nadu commenced much later than the rest of the country due to legal challenges. As per the Government of India dashboard on FRA, currently (the cut of date in the dashboard is later part of 2023), 30% of the individual forest claims and 20% of the community forest claims that have been submitted have been distributed to date in the state. This is far lesser than the rest of the country in terms of the distribution of the FRA titles in the state. However, a look at the overall trend since the last few years on the FRA land titles distribution, one can notice that there has been a significant improvement in the processing of the FRA titles at all levels in the state.

Forest dwelling tribals are the first custodians and traditional stewards of the forests across the world. FRA recognized and legitimized their rights over their land and gave them access to benefit from the resources that were available in that land. The rightful access to land also brought along with it several livelihood challenges to the tribal communities. The challenges are primarily driven by two broad phenomena, viz., economic pressure and climate change.

II. STATE OF THE FORESTS

Forests are vital ecosystems that support life on Earth in several ways and the main sinks of atmospheric carbon-di-oxide. Forests are fundamental for

regulating the Earth's climate, water and energy with the atmosphere than any other terrestrial ecosystem. Forests also affect rainfall patterns and the severity of heatwaves, impacting the resilience of agricultural systems and local communities. Moreover, forests contribute to water regulation and soil fertility, essential for agricultural production. Healthy forests protect watersheds, reduce soil erosion, and maintain water quality, thereby supporting sustainable agriculture and ensuring food security. The UN FAO has a very specific definition of a forest. It's "land spanning more than 0.5 hectares with trees higher than 0.5 meters and a canopy cover of more than 10%, or trees able to reach these thresholds in situ".

FAO estimates that the world lost a third of all forest resources in the past 10,000 years and half of it happened in the last century. It estimates that over 10 million hectares of forest was cut each year between 2010 and 2020¹ (Ref. 1)

The Indian State of Forest report⁷ ((ISFR) 2021 defines forest cover as, "Includes all lands having trees of more than one hectare in an area with a tree canopy density of more than 10%, irrespective of ownership, the legal status of the land, and species composition of trees"². With this definition the report further states the following regarding the composition of the forest land in the Indian conditions.

Very Dense Forest: All lands with tree canopy density of 70% and above

Moderately Dense Forest: All lands with tree canopy density of 40% and more but less than 70%.

Open Forest: All lands with tree canopy density of 10% and more but less than 40 %. Scrub Forest: Lands with canopy density less than 10%. Non-forest: Lands not included in any of the above classes (includes water).

The total forest cover of India³ is 7,13,789 sq. km. which is 21.71% of the geographical area of the country. Between 2019 and 2021, the overall forest cover went up by 0.22%. While the vision to increase the forest cover in India to 30% by 2030 has been a

1. ¹ Cited from UN FAO data at the One World repository
www.ourworldindata.org/deforestation

² 8 Several experts have criticized this approach as not being factual as it gets to include plantation crops

such as tea estates also as dense forest cover, Down to Earth, State of India's Environment, 2023

³ Cited in the website as a summary of the State of Forest Report 2021

large ambition for the country, it is even more so for Tamil Nadu as a state.

Tamil Nadu's total forest cover is 26,419 sq. km. which is approx. 20.13% (Ref. 4) , while the forest cover has gone up by 0.21% only between 2019 and 2021. While there is a challenge if the very dense category includes the tea estates as mentioned by some of the researchers, there is a marginal increase in the overall forest cover is acknowledged. The Forest Department provides a few livelihood support to the tribal communities apart from engaging them in the natural stewardship role of the forest. These steps include 1 – 1. providing basic infrastructure support to tribal settlements including approach roads, drinking water, housing and electricity through non-conventional methods. 2. During the year 2022-23, 10 cashew units over an area of 379.88 ha were allotted to Irular Tribal Society at sale amount of Rs. 80.55 lakhs.

III. CLIMATE CHANGE

In the fight against climate change, forests play a dual role. They act as carbon sinks, absorbing CO₂ from the atmosphere through photosynthesis and storing it in biomass and soil. Deforestation and forest degradation contribute significantly to greenhouse gas emissions, exacerbating climate change. Conversely, intact forests help regulate regional and global climates by influencing rainfall patterns, temperature moderation, and atmospheric moisture levels.

Forests store more carbon than all the Earth's exploitable oil, gas and coal and between 2001 and 2019 forests absorbed 7.6 gigatonnes of CO₂ from the atmosphere every year, or about 18% of all human-caused carbon emissions. Some estimates place the combined net effects of forests cools the planet by about 0.5°C. In some tropical parts of South America and Africa, it is estimated that the destruction of forest cover could increase the daytime temperature by 7-8°C resulting in decreased rainfall of 15%⁴

⁴ Wikipedia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forest_cover_by_state_in_India

Recent studies highlighted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) emphasize that preserving and restoring forests are among the most effective strategies for mitigating climate change. This underscores the economic benefits of maintaining stable climate conditions, which are essential for agricultural productivity, water resource management, and disaster risk reduction. This is apart from the potential monetising of the carbon stock in the forest.

The total Carbon stock of forests in the State including the Trees outside of Forests (patches which are more than 1 ha. in size) is 214.61 million ton (786.90 million ton of CO₂ equivalent) which is 2.98 % of total forest carbon of the country⁵ . However, the conversion of the forest land into non-forest land over a period of time has contributed to lesser carbon sinks through the forest land in Tamil Nadu. This is acknowledged by the Green Carbon Company report on the Inventory of Carbon in the State⁶. The report states, "Land-use changes, such as converting forests, agricultural land, and wetlands to other land categories, may result in emissions. Between 2005 and 2015, there was a 15 per cent increase in forest area in TN, leading to a rise in carbon sequestration. Therefore, a steady value of sequestration of 9.9 MtCO₂ per year was observed from 2005 to 2015. However, this pace declined to a mere 0.5 per cent between 2015 and 2019, leading to reduced carbon sequestration in the years following 2015.

A significant proportion of forest and agricultural lands have been converted to other land categories, increasing emissions in the land-use sector. This shift has transformed the sector from a carbon sink to a source of emissions since 2015. This has a direct bearing on the forest resources that are available to the tribal communities for their livelihood, however, it is a larger concern for the state if the land use is continuously being re-directed.

⁵ Policy Note 2023-24, Department of Environment, Forestry & Climate Change, Government of Tamil Nadu

⁶ Tamil Nadu's Greenhouse Gas Inventory and Pathways for Net-Zero Transition Report, February 2024

IV. SOCIAL JUSTICE & SOCIETAL BALANCE

Indigenous and local communities have long relied on forests for their cultural identity, spiritual practices, and traditional knowledge systems. Protecting forests thus becomes a matter of social justice and human rights, contributing to societal resilience and intergenerational equity. The conservation of forests is not merely an environmental issue but a fundamental pillar of sustainable development that intersects with biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, economic prosperity, public health, and societal well-being. Forest dwelling tribes in India have long been recognized as some of the best stewards of the country's forests.

Forests hold deep cultural and spiritual significance for forest dwelling tribes and the conflicts with the resources on the land often are at the cost of tribals. The tribal worldview often includes beliefs and practices that promote reverence and respect for nature. This spiritual connection fosters a sense of responsibility towards forest conservation, as preservation of forests is intricately linked to their identity and well-being. This has been observed in several tribal communities across the country and particularly so amongst tribal communities in Tamil Nadu as well. This was noticed during the field study as well.

One of the critical justice issues will be the dispensation of the environmental cases, many related to the forest dwelling communities. The State of India's Environment estimates that courts need to dispense cases at the rate of 245 cases per day to rid of the Conservation Linked Enterprises, June 2024 25 backlog of the environmental cases in India⁷. Tamil Nadu accounts for about 72% of the recorded environmental cases in the country and that is a matter of concern. There is a need to examine the cases, though bulk of the cases are to do with the Cigarette and Other Tobacco Products Act (72%), there is a need to analyse, and ensure that justice is done to the community.

⁷ State of India's Environment 2023, Down to Earth

⁸ Ibid., pg. 121

Tamil Nadu state enacted the State Commission for the Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribe Act, 2021, which also mandates the monitoring of justice dispensed to the tribal population. The state government Policy Note indicates that out of the 1826 petitions received by the commission, 987(54%) cases have been "finalized"⁸. As people who are impacted by the Climate Change for which they have contributed far lesser and feel the impact far ahead of many others, today, it is important that the lens of Climate Justice also be added to that of the social justice lens.

While several issues regarding the dignity of life and quality of life for the tribal community is essential to meet the current goals and commitments of development. In the emerging scenario, not merely the welfare schemes, but, even the products that are sold as emanating from the community based institutions will be evaluated in the market through the prism of the climate justice. It is essential that the above principles be borne in mind in designing any livelihoods programme for the tribal community.

V. ECONOMIC AND LIVELIHOOD SECURITY

With livelihoods, knowledge systems, and ways of being intrinsically tied to land and place, Tribals are disproportionately affected by the climate crisis⁹. Studies have shown that forest dwelling tribes have historically practiced sustainable resource use and management techniques, today with the infiltration of the traders and organized market players, this is no longer the case. Their hunting, gathering, fishing, and agricultural practices are often integrated with natural cycles, minimizing environmental impact and ensuring resource regeneration since generations. This sustainable approach contrasts with more extractive practices often seen in commercial forestry and it is alarmingly spread fast into the reserve forest area as well. The recorded forest area within the tribal districts of India, between 2019 and 2021 showed a decrease in 655 sq. km. indicating a brewing crisis of the

⁹ Climate change, biodiversity loss, and Indigenous Peoples' health and wellbeing: a systematic umbrella review protocol, Jan 2024

traditional stewards being infiltrated by unsustainable practices under the pressures of market forces.

Timber is a large source of forest-based revenue. Access, Felling, Transport and Trading of Timber in Tamil Nadu is impacted by over 9 different Acts and Regulations by the Forest Department¹⁰.

The economic value of forests extends far beyond the timber industry. Forest ecosystems provide direct livelihoods to over a billion people globally, particularly in rural and indigenous communities. Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP)¹¹ constitute a vital source of livelihoods for the forest dwelling communities. In India, approximately 40% of total official forest revenues and 55% of forest-based employment is provided by NTFP's¹². Sustainable forestry practices not only ensure the long-term availability of timber and non-timber forest products but also promote ecotourism, pharmaceutical discoveries, and biotechnology innovations.

In India, an estimated 67% of people are involved in the agriculture sector. Approximately 350–400 million people living in 0.152 million rural villages adjacent to forest depend on the forest for their various needs. According to a Forest Research Institute report (2017), India has 1,47,127 forest fringe villages in 275 districts of India. Often forests are a secondary source of revenue accessed during the periods of financial shock or economic stress.

A secondary large data set based global study¹³ (Ref.13) that looked at the causal effects of higher erosion of forest resources through exploitative

harvesting / collecting in 2014, concluded that - “careful case-by-case analysis will probably be needed to understand what kinds of shocks trigger specific local reactions, and how prominently forests figure comparatively in the equation. For instance, it may be the case that cash needs are more important than access to a wide range of subsistence products. Finally, maybe extractive safety-net functions are most important to the most asset-poor strata of the population, in sites where other safety-net functions remain unavailable or underdeveloped, so that forests genuinely become emergency responses of the last resort”. Lack of such data availability provides adequate for the Tribal Research Centre¹⁴ that has been set-up exclusively to research on the tribal affairs and supported by the department in Tamil Nadu. Currently the research centre activities seem to be limited to events organizing.

In June 2022, Government of India released the first ever Forest Stewardship Standards for India¹⁵, paving way for sustainable forestry stewarding by the departments and communities of India. Subsequently a Forest Stewardship Standards was also released for the small land holders that has a bearing on the standards adopted for the usage of land by the small landholders if their products are reaching the global markets¹⁶ (Ref. 16) . While broadly the Principles for the Forest Stewardship Standards are same as that of the generic ones, there are a few changes and exceptions provided in regulations for the small landholders and their adherence to the standards. It is critical these futuristic standards are integrated into the

¹⁰ More details on the Timber felling and its regulations available here

¹¹ Conference Paper, 2022 - Non-timber Forest Products: Current Status and Development, Faheem Ahamad, Rakesh Bhutiani, Mukesh Ruhela, and Nishant Rai

¹² According to a Conference Paper 2022 - Non-timber Forest Products: Current Status and Development, Environmental Pollution and Natural

Resource Management pp 103-119, Faheem Ahmed, Rakesh Bhutiani, Mukesh Ruhela and Nishant Rai

¹³ Safety Nets, Gap Filling and Forests: A Global-Comparative Perspective, Sven Wunder, Jan Börner, Gerald Shively, Miriam Wyman.

¹⁴ Policy Note, Tribal Welfare Department, 2023-24

¹⁵ GoI launch news available here

¹⁶ The FSC Forest Stewardship Standard for Smallholders in India, 2022 Version for Pilot Testing

capacity building programmes of the livelihoods initiatives so as to ensure that the community produce can be sustainable if not open up more markets for them.

Learning from the Field

Tribal communities in Tamil Nadu are not isolated from the mainstream community or markets and today are as much part of the mainstream as farmers and fishing communities. This is largely to do with the investment the state has done in providing the infrastructure and facilities in the tribal regions. Indeed all the tribal areas visited had good community infrastructure and common facilities. The community meeting was held in the Village Poverty Reduction Committee (VPRC) building at Pechipparai, while it was held in the Block development office, farmer producer company processing and retail unit as well as a community centre in Sathyamangalam; in Jawadhu hills the meeting with the community members and board of directors of the FPO was held in the very corporate FPO office, that was provided thanks to a proactive previous District Collector. While decreasing resources as forest land available and climate change impact is being acknowledged by the community through indicators such as disappearing honeybees, or observable weather changes such as increasing heat or decrease in rainfall in their region, these are not as yet recognized as livelihoods threat by the community. The education assistance provided to the tribal children also through the state government schemes ensures that those who are pursuing higher education are encouraged and supported. This has created an ecosystem where tribal students who excel in their studies are pursuing professional careers across the state today. The GER of the tribal areas are often better than in other parts of the state indicating an interest in pursuing mainstream education. Tribal communities seem to be fine with learning and adopting new skills for their livelihoods and not averse to changing some of their traditional practices as well. The traditional community governance structure and the modern market / State driven community institutional structures seem to co-exist with clear demarcation of the roles of each within the livelihood space of the community. While local conflicts are resolved through the traditional community institutions, the larger conflicts with society and government agencies are resolved through legal

processes. However, as shown already in the report, the increased crimes committed against the tribal population as well as the large number of languishing cases related to environment and forests, could be a deterrent in ensuring that justice is served to the deserving. There remains a vast amount of tribal community knowledge in traditional healthcare, and processing that is not fully documented or tapped for commercial purpose. There is no clarity within the facilitating government institutions as to how to tap into the traditional knowledge for markets. While geo-tagging, tracing, etc. are ideas that some of them are aware of, the challenge of not recording or keeping tab of the inventory of forest produce or their available sources, could render the community vulnerable, Civil Society land rights movements that have created several community institutions on the rights approach recognize that the land provided under FRA to the community being put to sustainable use is a challenge, however, they do not have the wherewithal to pursue this by themselves. In some form or another all the tribal areas have human – animal conflicts through the intrusion of the wild animals within the habitat. But in most cases this is due to the disappearing of the food in the forest for the animals or the forest itself disappearing. There is a willingness from the government department, viz., the rural livelihood mission to promote primary producer community organizations in the tribal parts and facilitate the community to link with credits and markets. There are several common factors that indicate a challenge and an opportunity within the tribal community in all the three areas studied.

The challenges that the community mentioned maybe broadly categorized as follows:

- a. Awareness regarding the various schemes, regulatory mechanisms, global opportunities
- b. Skills & Knowledge for higher order value addition, better processing, etc.,
- c. Sustainable Strategies for gathering and production and long term ones to co-exist with other forest dwelling animals
- d. Operational Efficiencies for the existing enterprises that includes better facilities, packaging, order processing, logistics planning, storage and marketing
- e. Alternative / Supplementary livelihood opportunities that are not necessarily dependent on the forest resources

f. Local conflict resolution mechanism with Forest Department

These are the visible challenges as identified by the communities themselves. Over and above these, as we already identified, the following challenges may also be added – Forest – decreasing forest land and need to increase the forest cover in line with the vision and goal of the state

Climate Change – the reduction in terms of yields, reduction in the availability of the flora and fauna in every region, the unpredictability of the weather condition

Health & Wellbeing – the several healthcare and wellbeing challenges of the community due to the changing climate, lack of access

Biodiversity – inability to closely monitor the reduction of the diversity of the biota and fauna

Traditional Knowledge – whereas there is an enormous revival of traditional knowledge in health care since the pandemic,

there is very little of the data that is functionally in use at the livelihood initiative level Social & Ecological Climate Justice - this has already been highlighted as an area of challenge for the community.

The limited study indicates many challenges that the macro data on disappearing forest cover in the tribal habitats are corroborated through local indicators for all the regions. While the exact data from the forest department needs to be locally secured to validate the exact increase / decrease of the forest land and resources, the community institutions need to develop their own indicators for the inventorization of the resources in the forest to ensure their business continuity. Building conservation practices such as sustainable harvesting practices, establishing traceability of the raw materials, ensuring the processing and value addition facilities and knowledge be provided to the community, and uniquely branding the community produced /gathered products to the outside market will go a long way to ensure that the community livelihood initiatives are sustained beyond the project supported period. The policy ecosystem and livelihood programme currently proceed with the same approach amongst the tribal as in other places, promoting tailoring and other skills which have a small local market. The field staff of the livelihood department needs to be oriented towards the unique opportunities that working with the tribal community

provides for conceptualizing and establishing of livelihoods that are from traditional knowledge and skills, but, yet with a focus on the modern market as well.

Framework for Change:

There are no differences between the current approach to a livelihood programme in a tribal area and that of a non-tribal area in Tamil Nadu. While Forest Conservation has a goal and a framework and Tribal infrastructure, habitat and facilities provision has a policy guideline for the concerned departments, on livelihoods and enterprise creation the rural development department's approach has been adopted verbatim without any unique factors that govern the tribal livelihoods except when there is a conflict between the functional aspects of these departments. Hence, the current livelihoods intervention approach follows the linear model of community mobilizing, capacity building, financing, and market integration. Institutional mechanisms, systems and community functionaries too follow the same pattern as livelihood programmes elsewhere. So, the unique advantages of the biodiversity driven opportunities, traditional knowledge-based skills, ecological services monetization, and experiential learning and earning potential remains untapped. One of the most interesting observation during the field visit, was that the tribal community did not mention marketing as their major challenge, while most rural livelihoods ventures across Tamil Nadu today have this as the first challenge in their list. This indicates the market availability if even a minimal market oriented supply chain is created through networking and commercial relationship building by the community-based enterprises. It is not merely the local markets, but, even the global markets are ready to absorb the tribal produce from the forests, provided they can be provided with certification, and traceability to the forest and informing the customer a verifiable way of understanding the sustainable practices and processes being adopted in the community institution /However, this requires a fresh approach that incorporates the unique nature of the forests and the forest dwelling communities and utilizes the advantages of these entities while addressing the possible conflicts. The interventions need to be in the areas of awareness creation, skill development, knowledge creation, building one-time and repeated process clarity,

systems that need to be built to strengthen a sustainable livelihood ecosystem, financial resources as well as the policy change. The global investment markets are willing to invest in environmentally responsible, and socially just enterprises and products, such a global potential can be tapped as well.

Strategies:

At the policy level the following could be the strategies that can facilitate a new framework for the approach to tribal areas and conservation linked enterprises –

1. Policy Framework Articulation: LONG TERM: A clear direction towards establishing conservation linked enterprise as a focus area from the Government will help in ensuring that the framework is popularized.
2. Governance: MEDIUM TERM: Establishment of transparent conflict resolution mechanism at the village level, this should especially have as a mandate the issues related to forest and forest officials as well as the animal – human conflict regions. Currently the forest department has taken several steps in that direction in specific regions of the state. However, a joint ‘tribal livelihood facilitation committee’ that is mandated to meet every month to resolve conflicts with the participation of the Rural Development, Tribal Welfare and the Forest Department will be a major systemic intervention.
3. Bio-Diversity Register: SHORT TERM: The bio-diversity register has not been properly conducted though Tamil Nadu has several lead trainers and a history of paying attention to the same. To ensure that the bio-diversity knowledge is well spread, the local government schools can have bio-diversity register based exhibitions, paintings in the wall, etc., to encourage the children to appreciate and conserve the local flora and fauna.
4. Carbon Sequestering: MEDIUM TERM: Panchayats should be in a position to trade on the carbon sequestering potential in their land in the larger market, when the markets are accessible to them. Currently they do not have the wherewithal to do so. An online easy to use carbon sequestering calculator that can provide the required support to the staff could be a futuristic enabling activity that can provide not merely a tool for each Panchayat, but, as a state be able to trade on carbon Ecosystem Services: MEDIUM TERM: A corollary to the above, a toolkit through which the ecosystem services that are provided by the community

institution which can be calculated at the village level by the community will be really helpful for both the village to understand the ecosystem services that it is providing to the larger world as well as better appreciate the services locally. Understanding the monetary value of the ecosystem services (for instance, the cost of recovery of top soil, afforestation, agro-forestry, waterbody restoration, farm pond, etc.) will equip the rural community to be able to negotiate better for their produce and communicate their product information even better.

6. Inventory of the Forest Produce / Processing / Production: IMMEDIATE: This step can be taken up without much cost immediately utilizing the existing community institutions that are available and facilitated by the TNSRLM already in the field.

7. Comprehensive Skill Development for Tribal Entrepreneurs: IMMEDIATE: A comprehensive policy that gives a stage-by-stage input to the tribal youth who aspire to be entrepreneurs utilizing the local resources. A centralized institution where they can regularly come together for a course that can be termed as a Tribal MBA to provide them with conservation linked enterprises, production, processing and marketing skills. The skills will include, sustainable harvest, managing the forest inventory, having traceability and ensuring the geo-tagging of produce for better market returns, to provide them with the new protocols for the biodiversity conservation and sustainable production and labelling standards and how to benefit from the same, marketing and market communication, branding, packaging, leveraging the existing community knowledge for market scouting and utilizing the same, etc

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