

BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL

SOUTHERN ZONE, CHENNAI

Original Application No. 91 of 2023 (SZ)

IN THE MATTER OF:

SUO MOTU based on the news item published

On “The New Indian Express”, Chennai

E- edition dated 30.06.2023, “ Road being laid

inside marshland in Perumbakkam”.

...Applicant(s)

Versus

The Director,

DTCP, Tamil Nadu and Others

...Respondent(s)

REPORT FILED BY 4th RESPONDENT –

THE TAMIL NADU STATE WETLAND AUTHORITY

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Through
D. D. Shanmuganathan
Standing Counsel for Government of Tamil Nadu
National Green Tribunal
Southern Zone

DATE: 03.08.2025

BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL

SOUTHERN ZONE, CHENNAI

Original Application No. 91 of 2023 (SZ)

IN THE MATTER OF:

Tribunal on its own motion SUO MOTU based
on the news item published in 'The New Indian Express'
Chennai E-edition dated 30.06.2023,
"Road being laid inside marshland in Perumbakkam"

...Applicant

-Verses-

1) The Director

Directorate of Town and Country Planning (DTCP), 2nd,
3rd & 4th Floor, C&E Market Road, Koyambedu,
Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

2) District Collector

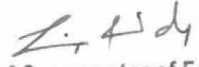
Chengalpattu Collectorate,
GST Road, Chengalpattu.

2) Additional Chief Secretary

Department of Environment & Climate Change, No.
1, Jeenis Road, Panagal Building,
Ground Floor, Saidapet, Chennai,
Tamil Nadu.

3) Member Secretary Tamil Nadu State Wetland Authority,
Panagal Maligai, Saidapet,
Chennai, Tamil Nadu


...Respondent(s)


Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and
Member Secretary
Tamil Nadu State Wetland Authority
Chennai-15

**STATUS REPORT FILED BY THE 4TH RESPONDENT/MEMBER
SECRETARY, TAMIL NADU STATE WETLAND AUTHORITY**

I, Srinivas R.Reddy, S/o Late T. Ramachandran Reddy, aged about 59 years, working as the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Head of Forest Force) and Member Secretary, Tamil Nadu State Wetland Authority (FAC) at Panagal Maligai, Saidapet, Chennai-600 015 do hereby solemnly affirm and sincerely state as follows:

1. It is humbly submitted that I am the fourth respondent herein and, as such, am well acquainted with the facts and circumstances of the case based on official records. I am therefore authorized and competent to file this report.
2. It is humbly submitted that, as per the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017 and the Guidelines for their implementation issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the 'zone of influence' of a wetland is not a fixed or uniform area but is determined based on site-specific factors such as local hydrology, topography, drainage patterns, and adjoining land use.
3. It is therefore respectfully submitted that the extent of the zone of influence varies from one wetland to another and must be delineated accordingly using scientific methods, including digital elevation models and field validation. In accordance with Rule 6 and Clauses 33–34 of the said Guidelines, this zone may include directly draining basins, peripheral agricultural lands, and adjoining settlements, depending on their impact on the ecological functioning of the wetland. (A copy of the Guidelines is enclosed as Annexure-1)
4. It is humbly submitted that the guideline of National Disaster Management Guidelines on the Management of Urban Flooding (Copy of the Guidelines


 Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and
 Member Secretary
 Tamil Nadu State Wetland Authority
 Chennai-15

enclosed as Annexure-2) are as follows:"

Building Permissions • Restrictions of Building Activity in Vicinity of Certain Areas

- i) No building/ development activity shall be allowed in the bed of water bodies like river or nallah/ storm water drain and in the Full Tank Level (FTL) of any lake, pond, tank or pond/ tank bed lands,*
- ii) The above water bodies and courses shall be maintained as recreational/ green buffer zone, and no building activity other than recreational use shall be carried out within:*

a) The Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) restricted area in case of areas along the sea coast,

b) 100 m from the river edge outside Municipal Corporation/ Municipal limits and 50 m within Municipal Corporation/ Municipal limits. No permanent constructions/ structures will be permitted within the above-mentioned buffer zone.

c) 50 m from the boundary of lakes of area 10 Ha and above, (Pallikaranai 1,247 hectares)

d) 30 m from the boundary of lakes of area less than 10 Ha / ponds/ tank bed lands,

e) 12 m from the boundaries of major canal, stream, etc., and

f) 2 m from the defined boundary of nallahs/ storm water drains, etc.

The above shall be in addition to the mandatory setbacks. Unless and otherwise stated, the area and the FTL of a lake/ pond shall be reckoned, as measured or given in the Survey of India topographical maps/Irrigation Department records/ Revenue records.


The above buffer zone may be reckoned as part of the building setback.


Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and
Member Secretary
Tamil Nadu State Wetland Authority
Chennai-15

5. It is humbly submitted that, following the declaration of the Pallikaranai Marshland as a Ramsar Site in 2022, the National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM), Chennai, has undertaken the preparation and upgradation of the Integrated Management Plan (IMP) in accordance with the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017. The revision of the existing IMP is currently under progress. As part of this process, the delineation of the zone of influence will be carried out, and the corresponding prescriptions/regulations for this zone will be included in the revised IMP. The zone of influence will become effective upon approval of the updated IMP.


6. It is respectfully submitted that the drainage canal from Perumbakkam Lake carries water from the upper catchment area into the Pallikaranai Marshland. It is pertinent to note that this canal passes through Survey Nos. 286 and 472. Any alteration in these areas is likely to significantly affect the inflow of water into the Pallikaranai Marshland, particularly during the monsoon season, thereby disrupting the hydraulic connectivity of the wetland and potentially causing inundation in the surrounding settlements. Further, it is submitted that 50 storm water inlets discharge directly into the Pallikaranai Marsh Reserve Forest. (A copy of the drainage canal and inlet map is enclosed as Annexure-3).

7. It is respectfully submitted that, based on the report received from the Directorate of Survey and Settlement Department (DoSS), it is pertinent to note that Survey No. 286 falls within the vicinity of the Ramsar boundary, with a measured distance of approximately 246.99 meters from the said boundary. As per the National Disaster Management Guidelines on the Management of Urban Flooding, any unauthorized development in this area is illegal and may adversely affect the local population due to potential overflow of water. (Copy of the measurement map enclosed as Annexure-4).


 Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and
 Member Secretary
 Tamil Nadu State Wetland Authority
 Chennai-15

It is therefore humbly submitted that the above-mentioned fact may be taken into consideration by this Hon'ble National Green Tribunal (SZ), Chennai, and pass necessary orders as it deems fit and thus render justice.

DEPONENT


Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and
Member Secretary
Tamil Nadu State Wetland Authority
Chennai-15

VERIFICATION

I Srinivas R.Reddy, S/o Late T. Ramachandran Reddy the above named deponent do hereby verify that the contents of the above affidavit are true and correct on the basis of official record maintained by the Respondent No. 4, no part of it is false and nothing material has been concealed there from.

Verified at Chennai on this the ^{5th} day of Aug, 2025.

DEPONENT


Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and
Member Secretary
Tamil Nadu State Wetland Authority
Chennai-15

COMPENDIUM OF
Wetlands (Conservation and Management)
Rules, 2017, Guidelines for implementing
Wetlands (Conservation and Management)
Rules, 2017 and Guidelines for National Plan
for Conservation of Aquatic Ecosystems

30. For each wetland and wetlands complex, a map should be prepared using a Geographical Information System (WGS84 datum and UTM (Universal Transverse Mercator) projection) and adopting professional cartographic standards. Essential features to be included in the map are as follows:

- a) Wetland boundary
- b) The boundary of settlements located within and around the wetland
- c) Connecting drainages, inflows and outflows
- d) Main roads and railway (if any)
- e) Major landmarks

31. Recommended scale for producing the wetlands maps is as follows:

Wetland / Wetlands complex area	Recommended scale
Below 100 ha	1: 4000
Between 100 – 500 ha	1: 10,000
Between 500- 4000 ha	1: 25,000
4000 ha and above	1: 50,000

These scales have been recommended on the basis of spatial data available for preparing wetlands maps and details that may be extracted for management planning and monitoring decisions. Resources at 2 LISS IV data that may be used for preparing map of wetlands below 100 ha renders an approximate scale of 1:4000. Even larger wetlands can be mapped using finer resolution data. However, for expedience and cost effectiveness, a lower scale may be sufficient for meeting management needs.

VI. Delineating zone of influence

32. For each wetland to be notified, a zone of influence is to be defined. The zone of influence of a wetland is an area, developmental activities wherein are likely to induce adverse changes in wetland ecosystem structure and (ecological) functioning.

33. The boundary of the zone of influence may be defined with due consideration to local hydrology and nature of land use. For wetlands with a well-defined surface drainage system, its directly and freely draining basin should be delineated as the zone of influence. This can be done using a suitable digital elevation model data and validated using toposheets. The basin should encompass all direct inflow as well as outflow areas. The river basin atlas of India (available at http://www.india-wris.nrsc.gov.in/wrpinfo/index.php?title=WRIS_Publications) may be used to support the delineation.

34. For wetlands with diffused drainage and where the slope is too gentle leading to large basin area, the zone of influence can be delineated on the basis of features that are likely to influence wetland functioning adversely. These could be based on the outer periphery of adjoining settlements, or peripheral agricultural fields that drain directly into the wetland.

35. A map should be prepared to indicate the following elements in a Geographical Information System (WGS84 datum and UTM projection) and adopting professional cartographic standards:

- a) Zone of influence
- b) Wetland boundary



NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

MANAGEMENT OF URBAN FLOODING



September 2010



NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

- water collected to discharge out to the ground, if it is dirty, and
- b) A filtering tank, measuring 1m X 1m X 1m, can be constructed near the sump. The tank can be divided by a partition slab and one part shall be filled by fine sand and other by coarse sand. The bottom portion of the tank should have a slope to avoid stagnation of water.

iv. Open Ground

Wherever there is an open ground, the top soil shall be removed over a portion of the ground and back filled with coarse sand to allow percolation of rainwater. Any other methods, proved to be effective in conservation and harvesting of rainwater, may be adopted in each and every construction taken up.

- v. The proposal shall comply with the provisions of relevant regulations in force.
- vi. In case the layout area exceeds 50 Ha, the NOC from Central Pollution Control Board/ MoEF is mandatory.

6.6.2 Building Permissions

• Restrictions of Building Activity in Vicinity of Certain Areas

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- c) 50 m from the boundary of lakes of area 10 Ha and above,
- d) 30 m from the boundary of lakes of area less than 10 Ha / ponds/ tank bed lands,
- e) 12 m from the boundaries of major canal, stream, etc.,and
- f) 2 m from the defined boundary of nallahs/ stormwater drains, etc. The above shall be in addition to the mandatory setbacks. Unless and otherwise stated, the area and the FTL of a lake/ pond shall be reckoned, as measured or given in the Survey of India topographical maps/Irrigation Department records/ Revenue records. The above buffer zone may be reckoned as part of the building setback.
- iii) Unless and otherwise specified in the Master Plan/Zonal Development Plan:



Perumbakkam Lake outlet channel Draining into Pallikaranai Marsh Land

Legend

- Distance from Survey Number 286 to Ramsar Boundary - 246.99m
- Distance from Survey Number 472 to Ramsar Boundary - 48.63m



Perumbakkam Lake



Channel



Survey Number- 286

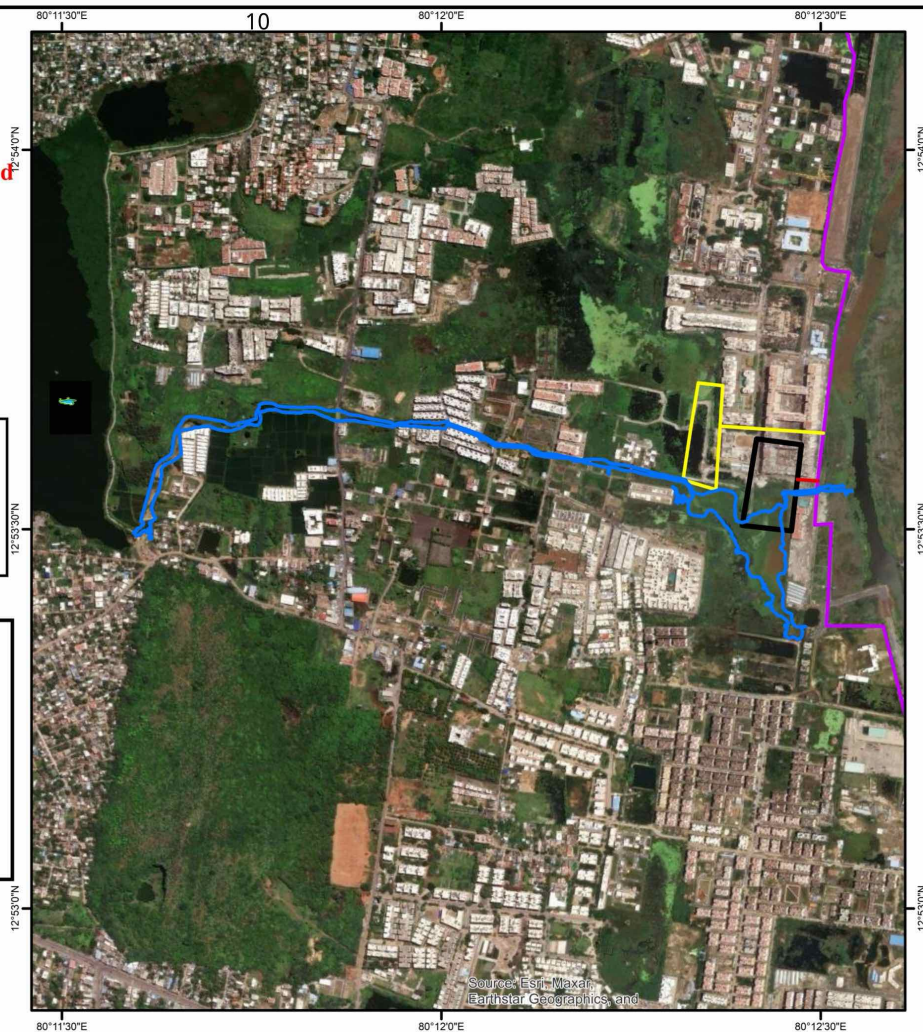


Survey Number - 472



Pallikaranai Ramsar Boundary

0 0.075 0.15 0.3 0.45 0.6 Kilometers



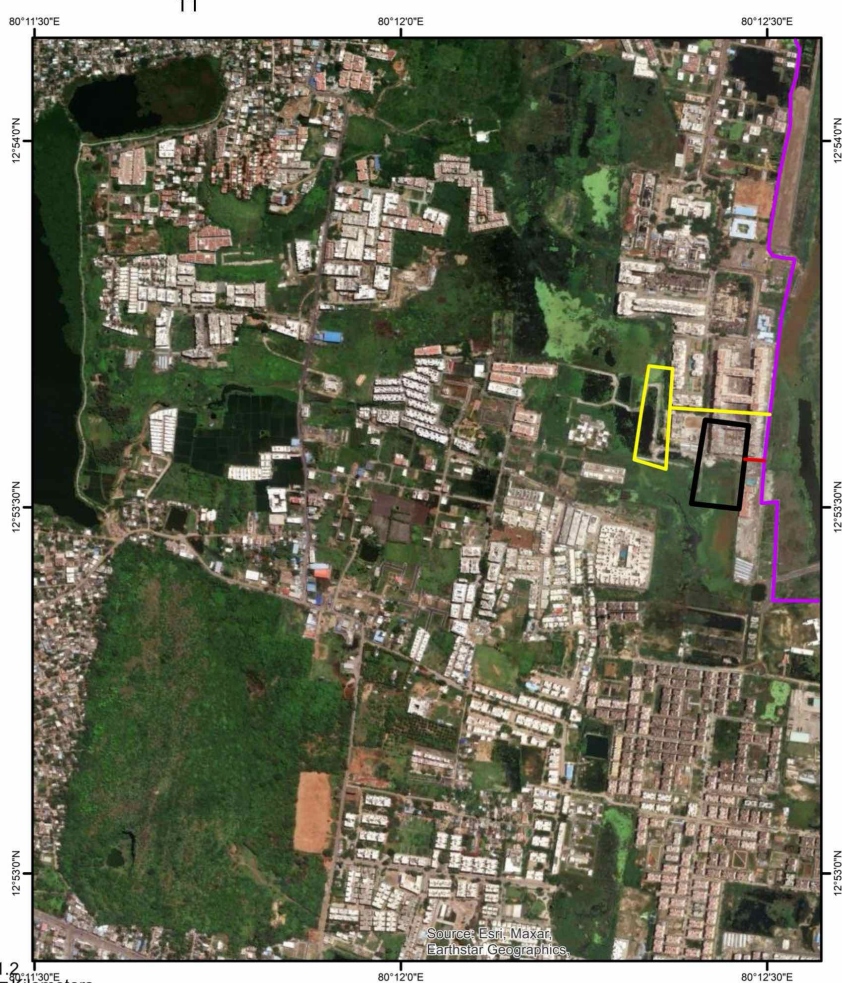


Distance Measurement Map

Legend

- Survey Number- 286
- Survey Number - 472
- Pallikaranai Ramsar Boundary
- Distance from Survey Number 286 to Ramsar Boundary - 246.99m
- Distance from Survey Number 472 to Ramsar Boundary - 48.63m

0 0.15 0.3 0.6 0.9 1.2 Kilometers



PALLIKARANAI MARSH RESERVE FOREST INLETS

