

BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL

SOUTHERN ZONE, CHENNAI

Original Application No. 51 of 2024 (SZ)

In the matter of:

Tribunal on its own motion SUO MOTU
based on the News Item in Dinamalar
Newspaper, Chennai Edition dt: 05.02.2024,
“Beaches becoming garbage islands pose a
threat to ecosystems and livelihoods”.

... Applicant(s)

Versus

Water Resources Department,
Rep. by its Secretary, Chennai and Ors.

...Respondent(s)

INDEX

S. No.	Date	Description	Page No.
1	05.08.2025	Report filed by the 4 th respondent- The Department of Fisheries and Fishermen Welfare .	1-4

(Note: The page numbers are at the top centre of every page)



Through

Dr. D. Shanmuganathan

Standing Counsel for Government of Tamil Nadu

National Green Tribunal

Southern Zone, Chennai

DATE:05.08.2025

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ZONE, CHENNAI**

ORIGINAL APPLICATION NO. 51 OF 2024 (SZ)

IN THE MATTER OF:

Tribunal on its own motion *Suo Motu*
based on the news item in *Dinamalar*
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05.02.2024 "Beaches becoming garbage
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livelihoods"

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Chennai and Ors.

...Respondent(s)

**STATUS REPORT Filed by the Department of Fisheries and
Fishermen Welfare**

1. The above case was registered as a *suomotu* Original Application by the Hon'ble Tribunal based on a news report published in *Dinamalar* newspaper (Chennai Edition) dated 05.02.2024, titled "Beaches becoming garbage islands pose a threat to ecosystems and livelihoods."
2. That in compliance with the directions issued by the Hon'ble Tribunal in the interim order dated 02.09.2024 in O.A. No. 51 of 2024 (SZ), a review meeting was convened on 13.09.2024 under the Chairmanship of the Additional Chief Secretary, Animal Husbandry, Dairying and

Fisheries Department. During the said meeting, the following key decisions and directions were issued:

- All fisherfolk Associations and Societies across coastal districts were to be informed and sensitized about the importance of maintaining cleanliness in Fish Markets and Fishing Harbours/Fish Landing Centres (FLCs).
 - Specific instructions were given to ensure that thermocol boxes, used in the transportation of fish, are properly disposed of so as to prevent marine and coastal pollution.
 - That pursuant to these directions, all Assistant Directors of Fisheries in coastal districts were instructed to disseminate the directives and ensure that:
 - Fish markets and harbours are maintained in a clean state.
 - Broken thermocol parts are disposed of properly.
 - Measures are taken to prevent thermocol debris from entering the sea via rainwater runoff.
3. That the Chennai Fishing Harbour is under the ownership of Chennai Port Trust and is managed by the Chennai Fishing Harbour Management Committee, functioning under the Chairmanship of the Chairman, Chennai Port Trust.
4. That periodic awareness programmes have been conducted by Assistant Director of Fisheries, Chennai Fishing Harbour among fisherfolk and stakeholders to promote sustainable handling practices and reduce reliance on single-use thermocol and other non-biodegradable materials. Additionally, mega clean-up drives are being conducted in the fishing harbour premises. Continuous monitoring is being carried out for safe disposal of thermocol and similar materials within the Chennai Fishing Harbour premises
5. It is submitted that surprise inspections are being conducted by Assistant Director of Fisheries, Chennai in coordination with the Greater

Chennai Corporation in key fish markets located at Chindathiripet, Saidapet, Jambazzar, Pattalam, Korattur, Villivakkam, Kavankarai, and Vanagaram with the objective of assessing sanitation conditions and ensuring proper waste disposal practices. Along with inspections, awareness campaigns simultaneously carried out at the above-mentioned fish markets on 16.07.2024, 17.07.2024, and 22.07.2025. These campaigns are aimed at instilling cleanliness practices among fish vendors, handlers, and other stakeholders involved in the marketing and sale of fish.

6. As part of the initiative measures for maintaining cleanliness, suggestions for alternatives to thermocol boxes have also been followed.
7. It is submitted that follow up inspections were conducted in and around Chennai Fishing Harbour at Kasimedu and other fish markets. During these visits, fish vendors were educated about the harmful effects of thermocol and encouraged to adopt renewable and eco-friendly alternatives.
8. It is submitted that a meeting has already been conducted under the Chairmanship of the Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) on 13.09.2024, during which instructions were issued to inform all Fisherfolk Associations and Societies to ensure that Fish Markets, Fishing Harbours, and Fish Landing Centres (FLCs) are maintained free from pollution, with proper disposal of thermocol boxes and other non-biodegradable materials.
9. It is submitted that a meeting with the aforesaid authorities, viz., the Chennai Fishing Harbour Management Committee and the Greater Chennai Corporation will be convened shortly under the chairmanship of the Secretary to Government, Animal Husbandry, Dairying, Fisheries and Fishermen Welfare department to discuss alternatives to the use of thermocol boxes.

10. In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that Hon'ble Tribunal may graciously grant time for convening the joint meeting and to submit a final consolidated report.

Based on the above facts, it is humbly prayed that the status report may kindly be accepted and pass suitable order.

Date at Chennai on this 5th day of August 2025


Director

Fisheries and Fishermen Welfare


4/8/25