

**BEFORE THE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL**

**SOUTHERN ZONE, CHENNAI**

**Original Application No 13 of 2025 (SZ)**

**In the matter of:**

**Tribunal on its own motion - SUO MOTU  
based on the News item in The New Indian  
Express newspaper, Chennai e-edition  
dated 16.01.2025, titled, "Experts are  
alarmed as 350 turtles was ashore dead till  
January 2025".**

Versus

Union of India,  
Represented by its Secretary,  
MOEF & CC, New Delhi and ors.

...Respondent(s)

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Through

Dr. D. Shanmuganathan

Standing Counsel of Government of Tamil Nadu

National Green Tribunal

Southern Zone, Chennai

**DATE:08.02.2026**

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SOUTHERN ZONE, CHENNAI  
Original Application No.13 of 2025 (SZ)**

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

Tribunal on its own motion SUO MOTU  
based on the News Item in The New Indian  
Express newspaper, Chennai e-edition dt.16.01.2025,  
titled, "Experts are alarmed as 350 turtles was ashore  
dead till January 15"

And

Union of India,  
Represented by its Secretary,  
MOEF & CC, New Delhi and others.

....Respondent(s)

**STATUS REPORT FILED BY THE 6th RESPONDENT**

I, Rakesh Kumar Dogra, I.F.S., Son of Late M L Dogra, Hindu, aged about 58 years, residing at A-1204, AIS Housing Complex, TAISHA, Nerkundram, Chennai-92, and presently working as Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Chief Wild Life Warden, Chennai do hereby solemnly affirm and sincerely state as follows:

1. It is respectfully submitted that I am the 6<sup>th</sup> respondent herein, and I am acquainted with the facts of the case based on the available records. I am filing this counter on behalf of Tamil Nadu Forest Department.

2. It is respectfully submitted that the tribunal order dated 05.01.2026 has directed as follows:

***"4. In all the coastal districts of Tamil Nadu, including Villupuram, Cuddalore, Nagapattinam, Ramanathapuram, Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli, and Kanyakumari, there are nesting stretches. However, it is reported that celebrations along the coast involving heavy noise and bright lights disturb the hatcheries.***

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**5. Therefore, we direct the Department of Fisheries & Fishermen Welfare and the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests & Chief Wildlife Warden, along with the Tamil Nadu State Coastal Zone Management Authority, to take preventive measures to avoid disturbances to the hatching of Olive Ridley turtles.**

**6. Disturbances are caused not only by natural predators such as crows and dogs, but also by human activities, including excessive light and sound, which affect the nesting season. Hence, we direct both authorities to coordinate and issue appropriate guidelines or directions to avoid light and sound disturbances during the nesting season between January and April.**

**7. As a follow-up measure, let the matter be listed on 09.02.2026."**

3. It is respectfully submitted that , with respect to preventive measures to avoid disturbance to hatchlings of Olive Ridley Turtles , in **G.O.(Ms)No.35, Municipal Administration and Water Supply (MC-1) Department, dated 31.01.2011**, the Government has directed the Commissioner, Corporation of Chennai to switch off the lights erected on the mast all along the coast from Adyar estuary to Neelankarai between 11:00 PM to 05:00 AM every day during breeding season (i.e.,) January-April of every year in order to save the lives of Olive Ridley Turtles.

4. Further, it is respectfully submitted that every year, the preparation for sea turtle season begins by undertaking preparatory works starting from the month of October. In this regard, Advanced discussion on Sea Turtle Conservation in Tamil Nadu was convened under the chairmanship of Additional Chief Secretary, Environment, Climate Change and Forests Department with Wildlife Institute of India (WII), Advanced Institute for Wildlife Conservation, Tamil Nadu Coastal Restoration Mission, Indian Coast Guard, Coastal Security Group, Fisheries Department, Coastal District Forest Officers / Wild Life Wardens, Student Sea Turtle Conservation Network, Chennai.

5. It is respectfully submitted that, the Nodal Task Force Committee meeting under the Chairmanship of Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Chief Wild-Life Warden along with stakeholders, Student Sea Turtle Conservation Network representatives, Fisherman Association and other line departments was conducted on 06.01.2026 to discuss on various measures for controlling Sea Turtle Mortality during breeding season.

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A meeting on Sea Turtle Conservation in Tamil Nadu was held on 10.01.2026 under the Chairmanship of the Chief Secretary to Government, Tamil Nadu at Secretariat, Chennai to emphasize the importance of commencing conservation actions early in the season, drawing lessons from the previous year's experiences, and highlighted the need to put strong collaborative efforts for Sea Turtle conservation along the Tamil Nadu coast.

6. It is respectfully submitted that, based on the outcome of the above-mentioned meetings, with respect to Beach light switching off, the Greater Chennai Corporation has committed to enforce lighting restrictions through their Zonal AD (Electrical) team during the turtle season. The Turtle-friendly lighting options were explored by Advanced Institute for Wildlife Conservation, Vandalur and the same has been communicated Municipal Administration and Water Supply Department for further action.

7. Further, it is respectfully submitted that, the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) has also taken steps to control stray dogs by creating temporary bamboo barriers near the Broken Bridge, Besant Nagar and Indian Naval Service (Indian Navy) Adyar site. For this purpose and beach cleaning activities, the Greater Chennai Corporation has engaged a team of 36 workers in three shifts for this work. Unregulated eateries attract stray dogs, posing threats to nesting turtles. Hence, Greater Chennai Corporation was requested to stop issuing new beachside eatery licenses and also action envisaged against illegal eateries.

8. It is also respectfully submitted that, adequate preventive and enforcement measures have been taken to avoid light and sound disturbances during nesting season. Tamil Nadu Forest Department is working in close coordination with department of fisheries and fishermen welfare and other line departments in this regard.

In light of the above facts and circumstances, it is humbly prayed that this Hon'ble Tribunal may pass any direction or order as it may deem fit, in the interests of justice and ecological preservation.

Date: 05-02-2026

Digitally signed by  
Rakesh Kumar Dogra  
Date: 05-02-2026  
16:51:40

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests  
& Chief Wild Life Warden.

**VERIFICATION**

I, Rakesh Kumar Dogra, I.F.S., Son of Late M L Dogra, Hindu, aged about 58 years, residing at A-1204, AIS Housing Complex, TAISHA, Nerkundram, Chennai-92, and presently working as Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Chief Wild Life Warden, Chennai Solemnly affirm that the contents of this Report are true to the best of my knowledge based on the records and I have not suppressed any facts.

Date: 05-02-2026

Digitally signed by  
Rakesh Kumar Dogra  
Date: 05-02-2026  
16:52:59

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests  
& Chief Wild Life Warden.