

THANAL

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Collaborating for a Waste-Free, Climate-Resilient Himalayan Future

Global Collaboration for strengthening agroecology

Mannorukkam Begins: A New Chapter for Soil Health and Agroecology in Meenangadi

2025



Collaborating for a Waste-Free, Climate-Resilient Himalayan Future

Thanal was honored to participate in the Zero Waste Himalaya Meeting 2025, held in the serene and symbolic town of Bir, Himachal Pradesh—a place where the zero waste movement first took root back in 2010. This year's gathering marked a powerful moment of reflection and reimagining for the Himalayan region, bringing together changemakers from India, Bhutan, and Nepal.

Thanal has been an active and committed member of the Zero Waste Himalaya collective since its inception, working in collaboration with grassroots organizations to confront the growing twin crises of waste and climate change in one of the most ecologically fragile regions on the planet. The 2025 meeting focused on three key priorities: crafting a shared vision and mission for the future, establishing a robust governance framework to strengthen collaboration across borders, and designing a comprehensive five-year action plan to guide collective efforts across the Himalayan belt. Representing Team Thanal, Anju M. Nair and Hanna Thomas shared key insights from our work, highlighting local milestones, community-based waste reduction efforts, and our continued commitment to systemic, just, and regenerative solutions. Their contributions reflected Thanal's broader mission of building resilient ecosystems through participatory and people-centered approaches.

The gathering reaffirmed the need for community-driven solutions that address both waste and climate challenges while upholding the dignity and rights of local people. As the movement looks ahead, the energy and solidarity witnessed at Bir provide hope and momentum for the path forward.

Thanal extends its gratitude to the Zero Waste Himalaya network and all participating organizations for their unwavering dedication. Together, we continue to reimagine a future where the Himalayas can thrive — clean, resilient, and waste-free.



GLOBAL COLLABORATION FOR STRENGTHENING AGROECOLOGY

Thanal recently joined a vibrant international platform for agroecology dialogue and action — the Asia Learning Exchange on Agroecology Economies, organized by the Agroecology Fund (@agroecology_fund). This six-day event brought together practitioners, community leaders, and organizations from across Asia, creating space to share experiences, innovations, and strategies to advance agroecological transitions.

Representing Thanal were team members Anju Babu and Athira S. Krishnan, who engaged with participants from more than 60 countries. The exchange was a unique opportunity to both contribute to and learn from a diverse set of initiatives working toward food systems that are just, resilient, and rooted in ecological values.

During the sessions, Thanal shared insights from its ongoing work in community-driven agroecology training, the revitalization of traditional knowledge systems, and the implementation of Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS). These approaches have been instrumental in strengthening local food systems, fostering trust, and empowering communities through democratic participation in food production and certification.

“We came away with renewed energy and ideas, but most of all, with the affirmation that collaboration and grassroots innovation are key to agroecological transformation,” said the Thanal team. The Learning Exchange highlighted the importance of context-specific approaches, local wisdom, and solidarity-based networks in shaping a sustainable future for agriculture across the region.

Thanal extends its gratitude to the Agroecology Fund for curating this important space for exchange, reflection, and collective growth. Together, we continue to nurture agroecology — not just as a practice, but as a movement for ecological integrity, social justice, and community well-being.



NEW BOOK SHEDS LIGHT ON CLIMATE LOSSES FACED BY FARMERS IN WAYANAD

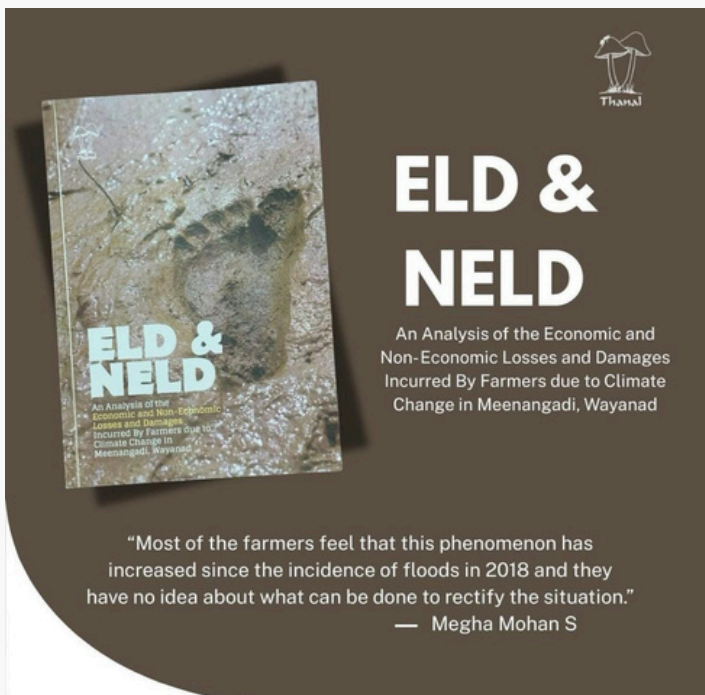
“ELD and NELD” by Megha Mohan S. explores economic and non-economic damages in Meenangadi

Wayanad, Kerala — A new book by climate researcher Megha Mohan S. is drawing attention to the deep and multifaceted impacts of climate change on farming communities in Kerala. Titled “ELD and NELD: Economic and Non-Economic Losses and Damages”, the study focuses on Meenangadi, one of the most climate-affected panchayats in Wayanad district.

Over recent years, Meenangadi has witnessed rising temperatures, unpredictable rainfall, and crop failures — all contributing to a growing crisis for local farmers. This publication provides a comprehensive look into how climate shifts are not only damaging crops but also altering the very fabric of rural life.

The book offers ground-level narratives and first-hand accounts from farmers, shedding light on how climate change has deeply affected their livelihoods and everyday experiences. It presents detailed, data-driven assessments of agricultural losses, revealing the severe financial strain faced by farming households.

But the impact goes beyond economics — the study also delves into the psychological, social, and cultural tolls of climate stress, from mental health struggles to the erosion of traditional farming knowledge and social structures. Importantly, the book concludes with a set of evidence-based recommendations, offering clear and actionable steps for building climate resilience through policy reform and adaptive agricultural practices.



“This book is more than just a study,” says the author, “It’s a voice for farmers, a documentation of their resilience, and a roadmap for reform.”

With its combination of rigorous data and compassionate storytelling, ELD and NELD is expected to become a valuable resource for policymakers, academics, and anyone interested in the intersection of climate justice and agriculture.

The book is a call to action — urging governments, institutions, and communities to respond to the evolving needs of vulnerable agro-ecosystems with empathy and urgency.

104 FRUIT TREES PLANTED AT RUH FARMS TO MARK EARTH DAY

Panayamuttam, April 22, 2025 — In a vibrant celebration of Earth Day, Ruh Farms in Panayamuttam witnessed a green transformation as 104 fruit trees were planted through a collaborative effort between environmental organization Thanal and global engineering firm RWDI.

This effort marked the official launch of the Fruit Forest Initiative, an ambitious step towards restoring biodiversity and promoting sustainable farming practices grounded in agroecology. The newly planted trees include a rich mix of tropical fruit-bearing species such as mango, jackfruit, rambutan, sapotta, and mangosteen — each chosen to thrive in the local ecosystem and contribute to long-term ecological balance.

“What started as a conversation around sustainability turned into something tangible and hopeful,” said a representative from Thanal. “Together with RWDI, we’ve taken the first step toward a long-term ecological vision.”

The launch was marked by a joint planting session where team members from both Thanal and RWDI came together, planting side by side to lay the foundation of the forest. The event was not just symbolic but also deeply participatory, reflecting a shared commitment to restoring our relationship with nature.

Thanal expressed its deep appreciation for RWDI’s enthusiastic involvement, noting that their genuine interest and energy brought a special meaning to every step of the planting process.

More than a one-time event, the Fruit Forest is envisioned as a living, learning space — a place for ongoing community engagement and education around sustainable food systems. The initiative aims to promote long-term ecological farming, improve soil health, and enhance local biodiversity. It also seeks to inspire the cultivation of chemical-free food and foster greater public awareness about the importance of sustainable agriculture.

Looking ahead, Thanal and Ruh Farms plan to continue nurturing the forest with community involvement, learning activities, and educational outreach. They hope the Fruit Forest will serve as a model to inspire similar actions across other regions.

“This is just the beginning,” said the organizers. “We invite everyone to join us in nurturing the land and our collective future — one tree at a time.”



Mannorukkam Begins: A New Chapter for Soil Health and Agroecology in Meenangadi



We are proud to announce the successful completion of the first phase of Mannorukkam: Enhancing Soil Health and Agroecology in Meenangadi Panchayath. This milestone marks a strong and hopeful beginning toward restoring soil vitality and building climate-resilient farming systems rooted in agroecology.

In this initial phase, the Mannorukkam Kit was distributed to 282 farmers across Meenangadi. Each kit was thoughtfully assembled to support the farmers in transitioning to ecologically sustainable agriculture. It included VAM, a bio-fertilizer that promotes root health and enhances nutrient absorption—an essential step in restoring soil structure and fertility. Farmers also received seedlings of chilly and bitter gourd, two crops well-suited to local growing conditions and an important part of regional diets.

In addition, the kit featured traditional crops such as chembu (colocasia), cherukizhangu (small yam), kachil (greater yam), and nilakadala (groundnut), supporting the revival of crop diversity and cultural food practices. Accompanying these materials was Jaivakrishi Sahayi, a farmer-friendly guidebook designed to assist and inspire farmers on their journey toward organic farming.

Mannorukkam is more than a distribution effort—it is the beginning of a deeper movement to reconnect with the soil, support biodiversity, and empower local communities through sustainable and context-specific agricultural practices. With this foundation in place, we look forward to the next steps in building an agroecological model that is led by farmers, supported by traditional knowledge, and shaped by the needs of the land itself.

LETHA'S SUSTAINABLE SURVIVAL

Letha lived in Kurumbanmoozhi hamlet. She is an inspiration to all single mothers. Twenty-six years ago, her husband abandoned her. She has only one daughter and a son, and they live with her mother. Her son is both blind and deaf. Her mother is old and needs medicine every week, which costs ₹345. Her only income comes from the work she does. She does all sorts of work, such as daily wage labour, housemaid services, and construction work, etc. She also has loans to pay. She works all day to provide proper care for her family.

During the implementation of the NABARD TDF project, she received 3 goats and 24 hens. By the proper training provided by the project, she was able to care for the goats and hens properly she successfully increased the number of goats. To manage her loans, she sold some of the goat kids. She reports a consistent income from goat and hen farming. she collects over 80 eggs from her hens, and by selling these eggs, she earns up to ₹2000 per week. This income helps cover her mother's medical expenses and her deposit to Self-Help Groups (SHGs). Her main achievement that she financed her daughter's education by selling goats. Her daughter has now completed her B.Sc. in Nursing. She says without this she can't afford her daughter education. Now she continues the project benefit and she also expanded goat cages for accommodating more Goats.



KULATHOOPUZHA ON THE DEVELOPMENTAL WHEEL

It has been a time of growth, learning, and renewed hope across several hamlets in Kulathoopuzha, as a series of community development programs unfolded — from skill-building initiatives to expert-led training sessions and field-level engagement by institutional leaders.

Tailoring Skills Take Root in New Hamlets

Tailoring classes led by veteran instructor Mrs. Deepa Chandran began in two new locations — Peruvazhikala and Kadamancode — expanding opportunities for women and youth to develop practical skills. The first session in Peruvazhikala was held on April 4, with 22 enthusiastic beneficiaries participating. The follow-up class on April 29 further built on their foundational knowledge. Meanwhile, classes also commenced in Kuzhaviyodu on April 8 and at Kadamancode on April 23, with 20 keen learners. Over the course of the month, four sessions were held, introducing participants to basic stitching techniques including pants, bottoms, and various styles of garment construction. These classes represent the beginning of a journey toward self-sufficiency, employment, and empowerment.



Building Confidence in Beekeeping

Alongside tailoring, apiculture training was also conducted under the guidance of Sri Vijayan, offering on-site, hands-on experience with honeybee management. Training sessions were held in Kadamancode and Kuzhaviyodu on April 3 and 16, followed by sessions in Peruvazhikala on April 10 and 22. These sessions focused on safe cage handling, use of extractors, and independent honey collection. The regular, practical training helped eliminate fear among participants, many of whom have now begun collecting honey confidently and independently. This marks a major step forward in creating sustainable, alternative livelihood options rooted in the natural environment.



Insights into Goat and Poultry Farming

On April 22, a comprehensive training on goat and poultry farming was conducted by Dr. Hisham for beneficiaries from seven hamlets: Peruvazhikala, Villumala, Kadamancode, Kuzhaviyodu, Cherukara, Edathara, and Kallupacha. Dr. Hisham shared insights from Malabari goat rearers, helping participants understand how to manage early adaptability issues in livestock. He also spoke in depth about different breeds of goats and hens, their economic benefits, feeding patterns, common challenges, and practical solutions. The session concluded with an interactive Q&A that addressed concerns from both new and continuing beneficiaries, further reinforcing the importance of knowledge-sharing in successful livestock management.



NABARD DDM Visit Strengthens Community Engagement

Adding to this month's momentum, Srimathi Rakhimol, District Development Manager (DDM) of NABARD, visited Villumala and Arippa hamlets on April 25. Her visit began with a tour of the newly inaugurated flour mill managed by the Karshakasree Self-Help Group in Villumala. She later visited agricultural fields in both Villumala North and South, engaging directly with beneficiaries to review the outcomes of Phase 1 and Phase 2 livelihood initiatives.

During a meeting with four SHGs from Villumala, discussions were held around savings practices, vegetable and crop cultivation, and challenges posed by wild animals and erratic weather patterns. The visit highlighted the critical role of institutional support in sustaining rural development and provided valuable feedback for future planning.





Thanal is on a mission to champion sustainability circular economy practices reducing carbon emissions organic farming and environmental conservation with a special commitment to uplifting marginalised communities. We invite you to be a catalyst in this mission.

Your donation will help provide resources, education and sustainable livelihoods to communities often overlooked ensuring they actively contribute to and benefit from environmental initiatives. Your contribution will support projects that promote organic farming practices preserving biodiversity ensuring healthier and safer food systems and reducing carbon emissions and preserving our planet's vitality.



Every contribution, big or small, counts.

All donations are eligible for tax exemption under Section 80G of the Income Tax Act.

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