



# Thanal Newsletter

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As Earth Day approaches on April 22, 2024, we are reminded of the dire state of our planet and the overwhelming challenges we face. This year's theme, "Planet vs Plastics," highlights the ubiquitous presence of plastics in our lives and the catastrophic impact they have on the environment and human health. While plastics offer convenience and innovation in various industries, their detrimental effects cannot be overlooked. From contaminating our food and water sources to releasing toxic chemicals into the air we breathe, plastics have become a pervasive threat to our well-being.

Despite efforts to address the plastic crisis, progress towards meaningful change has been hindered by the powerful influence of the oil and gas industry and plastic-producing nations. The production and disposal of single-use plastics contribute to greenhouse gas emissions, environmental pollution, and health hazards. The industry's track record of accidents and negligence only exacerbates the situation, leaving us questioning the true meaning of environmental justice and harmony with nature.

In the face of these challenges, it is imperative that we take responsibility for our actions and strive to reduce our carbon footprint. By practicing the principles of "reduce, reuse, recycle" and supporting sustainable businesses, we can make a positive impact on our planet. While the road ahead may seem daunting, let us not lose hope and continue to do our part in protecting the Earth for future generations.

APRIL 2024

**22**  
**EARTH**  
**DAY**

# NAVIGATING THE EDGE

UNDERSTANDING AND MITIGATING HUMAN-ANIMAL CONFLICT  
IN A CHANGING WORLD”



*Photo | Anju Babu*

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Kerala, known as “God’s Own Country,” famous for its rich biodiversity that encompasses verdant forests, serene backwaters, and vibrant wildlife is however facing challenges due to various anthropogenic interventions. This picturesque landscape with harmonious coexistence between humans and animals in the past, is now under strain due to Human- Animal conflicts. The increasing frequency of human-animal conflicts in Kerala has garnered attention in recent times, prompting stakeholders to come up with sustainable solutions that preserve both wildlife and livelihoods.

In the past, the forest areas in Kerala had plenty of

edible indigenous vegetation and water holes. During summer, elephants, wild boars, deer, and monkeys used to come here in search of food and water, and during the advent of monsoon they returned to their home forests. This traditional migration continued for centuries and both humans and wildlife coexisted peacefully for years. Tribal communities, which comprise 1.45% of the total population of the State (2011 census)<sup>1</sup> used to live in hamlets within these forest areas. The incidents of human-wild animal conflicts were low and the amount of loss was affordable in the past.

Later on, settlers from various parts came and the

forest area gradually became settlements. Increased population density and changes in the landscape and cropping pattern increased the incidents of human-wildlife conflicts in the region. According to statistics, the human, as well as wild animal population, has gone up over time while forest vegetation depleted drastically over the past years. Invasive species such as Lantana and Eupatorium have dominated some patches of forest in Kerala. Infrastructure development for residential, tourism, and coffee plantations changed the landscape. Crop raiding incidents by Indian Spotted Deer (*Axis axis*), Asian Elephants (*Elephas maximus*), Wild boar (*Sus scrofa*), and Bonnet Macaque (*Macaca radiata*) became frequent.

Consequently, animals began to venture into human settlements in search of food and shelter, resulting in crop raiding, property damage, and occasionally, human casualties.

Tragically, retaliatory killings, accidents involving trains or electric fences, and conflicts with farmers have claimed numerous elephant lives. For instance, in 2021, the death of a pregnant elephant after consuming a pineapple stuffed with firecrackers sparked nationwide outrage, shedding light on the severity of human-induced threats to wildlife. In 2024, Thaner Komban, the rogue tusker from Karnataka, who was captured by forest officials in Kerala by administering tranquilizer shots, died in Bandipur to capture attention.

On the other hand, wildlife-induced human threats also raise concerns. The information received across different states showed that 605 people were killed in the human-elephant conflict alone in 2022-23 (Down to Earth). Instances of leopards straying into residential areas have been reported, triggering panic among locals.

At present in Kerala, managing man-animal conflict is the responsibility of the forest department, which acts as per the Wild Life Protection Act of 1972. In a significant move, the Kerala cabinet declared instances of man-animal conflict as a state-specific disaster. The decision was taken considering the recurring incidents of loss of lives in human settlements due to attacks by wild animals, especially elephants.

It takes a multifaceted strategy that incorporates ecological, social, and economic viewpoints to address human-animal conflicts. To protect natural habitats and reduce conflict, conservation measures that prioritize wildlife corridors, habitat restoration, and land-use planning are essential. Furthermore, early warning system implementation—like installing sensor-based alert mechanisms—may assist in alerting communities ahead of time to animal movements so they can take precautionary action. Additionally, raising awareness about the importance of wildlife through campaigns and eco-tourism projects can help cultivate a culture of empathy and tolerance for wildlife. Over time, conflicts can be reduced by easing communities' reliance on natural resources through the provision of alternative livelihood options, sustainable agricultural methods, and education on wildlife behavior.

## References

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2. Interview with N. Badushah (local activist and President of Wayanad Prakriti Samrakshana Samiti and Wildlife Conservation Society)
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6. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/thiruvananthapuram/man-wildlife-conflicts-now-a-state-specific-disaster-in-kerala/article-show/108281953.cms>

# Events

## Solar powered irrigation as a solution to the drought and carbon emissions in Manivayal

Introduction of solar-powered irrigation as a solution to the drought and carbon emissions in Manivayal. With more than 8 acres of cultivable land left dry for years, Thanal's assistance aims to revitalise the livelihoods of Manivayal natives. The project was inaugurated by Meenangadi Panchayat President, K E Vinayan, marking a significant milestone in our efforts to combat drought and promote sustainable farming practices in the region. The inclusion of women farmers in this initiative is a key step towards encouraging broader participation in this emission reduction journey. By promoting agri-

culture retention, food security, and financial independence, Thanal ensures ecological sustainability while supporting local communities. Our mission to reduce carbon emissions in collaboration with Meenangadi Panchayat will continue through such green initiatives, as we strive to make a positive impact on both people and the planet.

Here is a news report of the same at Malanad news channel :

<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/cerLyiTHxst-8ktio/?mibextid=w8EBqM>





In line with KIMS Cancer Centre's CSR initiatives, Thanal has embarked on a project to transform the Law Academy Law College in Trivandrum into a 'Zero Waste Campus'. To kickstart the process, a meeting was convened with Sri Anil Kumar, Director, Law College, TVM and Ms. Reshmi Ayesha, CEO of KIMS Cancer Centre. It was agreed upon to conduct an initial waste management survey on the campus to identify sources of waste, the types of waste generated, common dumping areas, and current waste management practices. Mr. Ajay Sreedhar, a member of our Zero Waste Team, conducted awareness sessions for the NSS unit members to introduce them to waste management principles and outline our plan of action. The students and the NSS Coordinator have expressed their willingness to support this initiative.

In an effort to educate and inspire young children, the Thanal team conducted a session at St. Thomas School in Mukkola, Trivandrum on March 18th. Approximately 80 students enthusiastically participated in the session, which was led by Project Officers Ms. Athira and Mr. Bharath. Recognizing that many of the students reside in urban areas with limited space, the session aimed to encourage them to cultivate plants and understand the significance of healthy soil. Topics covered included the preparation of potting mix, suitable indoor plants for home cultivation, and plant maintenance practices. Additionally, the students were enlightened about the adverse effects of pesticides on their health and the environment. It was heartening to witness the children actively engaging in discussions, with many already possessing knowledge about indoor plants and having made previous attempts at home gardening. Thanal's activities are driven by the principle of promoting environmental education in all, especially the future generation.

**മാസ്ക് ഓൺ ചെയ്തു  
നല്ല ആരോഗ്യം  
ജനിപ്പിപ്പിച്ചെത്തും**

**ഓർഗാനിക് ബസാർ**  
മാസ്കിംഗ്

**20**  
വാർഷികം

**ഓർഗാനിക് ബസാറിലെ  
ശുദ്ധമായ പഴങ്ങളും പച്ചക്കറികളും  
കൂടാതെമറ്റ് നിത്യോപയോഗ ആഹാര  
സാധനങ്ങളുംവിടുകളിൽ എത്തിക്കുന്നു.**

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15 കിലോമീറ്റർ വരെ സൗജന്യ ഡെലിവറി ലഭ്യമാണ്

[thanal.org.in](https://www.thanal.org.in)



## Vimala

### A Resilient Model of our NABARD Sustainable Livelihood project at Ranni

Vimala, hailing from Kurumbanmoozhi village, Ranni, has faced numerous hardships in her life. Married at a young age, she endured the harassment of her irresponsible husband before eventually moving out with her two young daughters, burdened with debts. She remarried, but her disabled husband was unable to provide for her, forcing Vimala to rely on odd jobs to support her family. However, her situation took a positive turn when she became a beneficiary of the NABARD- TDF project, receiving three goats.

Devoting herself to caring for the goats as if they were her own children, Vimala saw her efforts pay off when the first three lambs were sold, fetching her Rs. 9000. This income brought not only relief but also a sense of pride to Vimala. Recognising the potential of goat rearing as a sustainable source of income, she continued to invest her time and efforts into the venture, even during challenging times when she had to tend to her sick husband and the goats simultaneously. Despite setbacks, her perseverance paid off, and she has since earned approximately Rs. 33,000 from goat rearing alone.

Additionally, Vimala's income further increased when she began selling eggs from the chickens provided through the project. Grateful for the timely assistance she received from NABARD and Thanal, Vimala credits the goats as a symbol of hope and survival during her darkest days. Her story serves as a testament to the transformative impact of sustainable livelihood initiatives in empowering individuals to overcome adversity and build a better future for themselves and their families.

## Video of the Month



Don't let viral infections hinder your gardening dreams any longer. Watch our video, make your own Turmeric-Garlic solution, and witness the incredible results for yourself. It's time to take control of your plant's health the natural way!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGWLF-mOaSx8>

*Your donation  
no matter how small,  
shall make a difference towards a  
greener, more equitable future.*

Thank you for considering our cause.  
Together, let's create a planet where  
environmental health and justice prevail.

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Account number : 21780100017799  
Bank name : Federal Bank, Sasthamangalam  
IFSC code : FDRL0002178

