



# UPDATES

Vol. 04 | Issue 08

August 2025



## YOUTH LEAD THE WAY

TOWARDS A CARBON NEUTRAL MEENANGADI

2025



## MEENANGADI SUSTAINS MOMENTUM FOR A NET-ZERO FUTURE

WAYANAD: It has been a month of action and collaboration in Meenangadi, with the Net Zero Accelerator Lab (MNAL) driving climate initiatives under the Carbon Neutral Meenangadi (CNM) and Mannorukkam programmes. From youth awareness sessions to farmer engagement and capacity building, July's activities reflected a shared commitment to building a sustainable, carbon-neutral future.

### EVENTS: CNM TEAM SHARPENS CARBON ASSESSMENT SKILLS

On 19 July 2025, the CNM team attended an orientation session on carbon assessment calculations led by Anju M. Nair, Staff Scientist. The session focused on methods for calculating carbon emissions, reductions, and offsets across sectors such as waste, energy, transportation, and Agriculture, Forestry, and Other Land Use (AFOLU). Participants discussed real-life examples, including waste management practices at Anganwadis and energy assessments in public facilities.



## YOUTH DRIVE CARBON NEUTRALITY IN MEENANGADI

At IHRD College, twenty-two National Service Scheme (NSS) students joined an awareness session on CNM's vision, strategies, and the vital role of youth in achieving carbon neutrality. The Principal expressed interest in partnering on reassessment surveys and soil carbon evaluations.

At the Government Polytechnic College, forty-three NSS students attended a similar session that introduced the project's goals, key interventions, achievements, and sustainable practices. The programme included a Geographic Information System (GIS) - based soil carbon mapping exercise, which identified sixteen Greenhouse Gas (GHG) testing points on campus.

In total, fifty-four students – thirty-seven from Polytechnic and seventeen from IHRD – have now registered as Climate Volunteers, committing their time to field surveys and awareness campaigns.

The annual report of the Meenangadi Net Zero Accelerator Lab, detailing project milestones and impacts, is now available for reading on our website.

## SMRITHIVANAM UNITES COMMUNITY FOR GREEN HERITAGE



The Smrithivanam Project team convened on 18 July 2025 at the Purakkadi Temple Auditorium, bringing together Thanal representatives, the Purakkadi Devaswom

Board, and panchayat leaders. The initiative aims to create a green memorial space in honour of Sugathakumari Teacher's legacy, blending cultural heritage with ecological restoration.

The meeting discussed the selection of native plant species, measures for site protection, and opportunities for community involvement. The Trustee of the Purakkadi Devaswom Board expressed his interest in the project and assured support. The Agricultural Officer from Meenangadi also shared valuable suggestions based on the area's soil and climate conditions. It concluded with an agreement to conduct a joint field visit to finalise the planting zone before the next phase begins.

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## FIELD VISITS, SOIL TESTS AND NEW MASTER FARMERS BOOST MANNORUKKAM



The Mannorukkam Project made steady progress this month with field visits to twenty-five Master Farmers and data collection from 180 farmers. The surveys recorded details of current farming practices, crop plans, and the use of organic inputs. Biodiversity monitoring conducted in five organic farms showed a greater variety of species compared to chemically farmed areas. Farmers also learned techniques for tracking biodiversity on their own farms.

Modern tools like the Arkashine Soil Lenz and the Pusa Soil Health Meter were used for soil testing, checking pH, EC, OC, and essential micronutrients through lab analysis.

Cluster meetings with women farmer groups covered pest control using fruit fly traps, seasonal crop choices, and preparation of low-cost organic inputs. During cluster meetings, farmers shared the positive changes they observed after joining farmer groups, as well

as the challenges they continue to face.

As part of the project, three new Master Farmers were selected from wards where farmer group activities had not been active before. They were chosen for their experience and commitment to organic or sustainable farming methods:

**George Kavungal** – Ward 3, Mylambadi: An experienced organic farmer with 4.5 acres of land, of which 10 cents have been set aside for Mannorukkam activities.

**Raghavan Nadaparambil** – Ward 2, Appad: Practices integrated farming with crops and livestock, and has also set aside 10 cents for the project.

**Savitha** – Ward 19, Manivayal: Grows vegetables and manages dairy farming, with a long-standing interest in sustainable agriculture.

These new Master Farmers will help expand the project's reach and inspire more farmers to follow eco-friendly practices.

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## MARIGOLDS BRIGHTEN MANIVAYAL FARMLANDS



On 2 July 2025, the Nanma Manivayal Farmers Group launched the Gantham Vasantham marigold cultivation programme with support from Meenangadi Krishibhavan. A total of 1,800 marigold saplings, each treated with *Pseudomonas* to prevent disease, were distributed to farmers. Four members of the group took part in the first phase, marking a fresh burst of colour in the paddy landscapes of Manivayal. Follow-up visits revealed well-tended flower gardens and the successful reactivation of a tiller, now operated by local farmer Balaraman. The tiller has already been used to prepare five plots, and the addition of a new cage wheel has improved efficiency.

## NATURE SPOTLIGHT NEW DRAGONFLY SPECIES FOUND IN KERALA

A new dragonfly species, *Lyriothemis abrahami*, has been recorded in the Western Ghats of Kerala. This striking species inhabits tiny tree-hole water pools, an uncommon and fragile microhabitat. The discovery underscores the exceptional biodiversity of the region and the need to protect even its smallest ecosystems.



Reference : [Entomon Journal](#)

# SCHOOL FRUIT FORESTS GROW GREEN LEARNING SPACES

The school fruit forest programme is steadily transforming Trivandrum International School (TRINS) and Lecole Chempaka into vibrant green learning spaces. Of the 360 saplings planted earlier this year, 115 at TRINS and 50 at Lecole remain healthy and thriving. Teachers and students have cared for the trees through the monsoon, with composting, watering, and pest management keeping them strong. Already, pollinators, butterflies, and small birds are visiting, creating healthy mini-ecosystems on campus.

Launched to improve air quality, enhance biodiversity, and foster environmental

responsibility among youth, the initiative also serves as a "living classroom." Students have been involved from planting to maintenance, learning practical lessons in ecology, teamwork, and care for the environment. As the trees mature, they will provide shade, seasonal fruits, and cooler, more comfortable school grounds.

Looking ahead, each sapling will be adopted by small student groups for long-term care, supported by regular maintenance, soil monitoring, and workshops on topics such as climate resilience, waste management, and organic gardening.

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## FRUIT FOREST FLOURISHES AT PANAYAMUTTAM

The Fruit Forest Initiative at Rauh Farms in Panayamuttam, launched on Earth Day, 22 April 2025, is progressing steadily as a model of community-based organic farming. Supported by RWDI and guided technically by Thanal, the aim is to promote healthy food, protect the environment, and improve soil through natural methods. A total of 104 fruit saplings have been planted, including mango, jackfruit, rambutan, sapotta, and mangosteen.

All cultivation is chemical-free, relying on organic preparations such as Jeevamrutham to enrich soil health, along with mulching and manual weeding to retain moisture and control weeds. The monsoon rains have helped the young trees establish well, and all plants remain healthy and pest-free.

In the months ahead, regular care and natural treatments will continue, with plans to develop the site into a learning space for school students, farmers, and youth. Within one to two years, the trees are expected to bear chemical-

free fruits for both home use and community sales. The farm already supports birds, bees, and butterflies, making it a biodiverse and eco-friendly space, and the team plans to apply for Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) certification to market its organic produce.



# FROM CHAPATHIS TO PICKLES, WOMEN COOK UP SUCCESS IN KULATHUPUZZHA



The chapathi-making and flour mill units, launched in April 2025 in Kulathupuzha under local Self-Help Groups (SHGs), have quickly gained ground as promising women-led enterprises. Alongside fresh chapathis, the food processing unit now produces local honey and traditional pickles made from Garcinia, lemon, and mango, all appreciated for their fresh taste and absence of preservatives. This variety has helped build a strong and growing customer base.

The Flour Mill Unit has also expanded its product range, now producing rice flour, turmeric powder, coriander powder, and chilli powder alongside regular flour. All products are cleaned, processed, and packed inside the unit to ensure hygiene and quality. Customers have responded positively, with many placing repeat orders, reflecting trust in both the quality and freshness of the products.

From April to July, sales reached ₹60,640 for the food processing unit and ₹59,303 for the flour mill. Items are currently sold through local shops, SHG networks, and community outlets. The team is in discussions with supermarkets, grocery stores, and institutions to expand sales and increase visibility, with plans to extend supply chains to Thiruvananthapuram. Efforts are also underway to introduce chapathis, flour, and curry powders to the Thanal Organic

Bazaar, which has a loyal urban customer base. These steps aim to strengthen market presence while ensuring that the women-led units gain steady, long-term income opportunities.

## THANAL AT KERALA INNOVATION FESTIVAL 2025



On 14 August 2025, Thanal had the honour of participating in the “What Can We Do” panel discussion organised by Mattam as part of the Kerala Innovation Festival at Kerala Startup Mission. Our representative, Anju Babu, shared Thanal's experiences and learnings in community-led climate action.

The panel featured environmentalist I B Manoj, education policy expert Dr. Shakila T Shamsu from CPPR, and urban planner Ar. Shobitha Jacob from C.HED, with moderation by Shawn Sebastian. The discussion centred on how collaboration across sectors can accelerate sustainable development and climate resilience.

Reflecting on the event, Anju remarked, “Sitting with fellow dreamers, doers, and defenders of our shared future reminded me how powerful collective action can be. We need more spaces where ideas meet action, and partnerships build hope.”

We thank Mattam and Kerala Startup Mission for creating a platform that brings together diverse voices and fosters meaningful dialogue on climate and sustainability.

## MEENANGADI LAB ANNUAL REPORT AVAILABLE ONLINE

The annual report of the Meenangadi Net Zero Accelerator Lab, highlighting key project milestones, achievements, and impacts, is now available for reading on our website. Visit Thanal Trust website to explore the full report and learn more about upcoming plans.

[CLICK HERE](#) 



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