

To  
The Hon'ble Chief Minister,  
Government of Karnataka

**Subject: Submission of Appeal / Proposal for Strengthening Coastal & Marine Environmental Governance in Karnataka**

Respected Sir,

We respectfully submit the enclosed **Appeal / Proposal** outlining the urgent need for systemic reforms in the governance of Karnataka's coastal and marine ecosystems. Extensive field observations, stakeholder engagements, and documented evidence collected by *Khushi Parisara* indicate that the State is facing a **rapidly intensifying ecological crisis**, particularly along the coastline, where unchecked violations and non-enforcement of environmental laws have led to severe environmental, social, and long-term developmental consequences.

Despite Karnataka possessing advanced satellite imagery, GIS systems, KSRSAC digital mapping capabilities, and well-established forest governance structures, **these technologies and institutional strengths are not being applied with similar rigour to coastal and marine protection**. Critical issues such as marine pollution, biodiversity loss, habitat degradation, and escalating CRZ violations continue to remain institutionally unaddressed.

The enclosed appeal details:

1. **Foundational governance deficits**, including gaps in accountability, enforcement, and administrative responsibility.
2. **A strong need to deploy existing satellite and digital tools** for real-time monitoring of coastal violations.
3. **Structural imbalance** wherein forests receive extensive institutional support while marine ecosystems – despite a significantly larger ecological footprint – lack dedicated cadres, task forces, or monitoring mechanisms.
4. **A two-part strategic reform proposal:**
  - Creation of **State and District Coastal & Marine Ecology Expert Cadres**, and
  - Establishment of a **Statutory Centre for Coastal & Marine Action Research**, focused on field-based, actionable ecological restoration and governance support.

These reforms are essential to restore ecological integrity along the Karavali coast, support sustainable livelihoods, and uphold constitutional, environmental, and human rights obligations. They also align with national commitments, NGT directives, and international environmental standards.

We humbly request your kind attention and necessary directions to initiate examination of these proposals, and to empower relevant departments to take timely action in the interest of Karnataka's environmental future.

We remain at your disposal for any further explanations, presentations, or field evidence that may support informed decision-making.

**Yours  
faithfully,**

*Khushi Parisara*

**Attachment:** Copy of Appeal



## APPEAL TO THE HONOURABLE CHIEF MINISTER SHRI SIDDARAMAIAH

### OVERVIEW

The fast-mounting environmental disaster (notoriously the coastal one), with its explicit points of destruction, mostly caused by the intense and widespread environmental illiteracy of governors, along a blatant inaction to enforce environmental rules (as recurrently noticed by NGT) needs an urgent stern enforcement of all framed environmental laws. As the environmental concern is patently absent from governance, in huge opposition to the financial concern, the flagrant violation of environmental rules by liable Public Servants to implement them, brings inconceivable and unacceptable consequences – ecological, social and anthropological.

*Khushi Parisara*, aware of the coastal moving activities, and of their development divides, catalysing the involvement of various stakeholders, mainly governors to prioritise the needful solutions for the current coastal ecological disastrous issues, dares to deem that the **RULE OF LAW IN ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE** should imperatively tackle

- the need of administrators & Local Bodies (key actors for the protection of environment) to act with knowledge, efficiency, integrity and independence, being clearly exposed to accountability
- the responsible performance of bodies, authorities, regulators, and officers assigned with environmental duties for the protection and recover of ecology at all its extents
- the measures to promote institutional efficiency and accountability
- the current cases of non-compliance – and non-implementation – of laws & rules for environmental protection, keeping them unenforced & vainly effected

### QUESTIONING INCEPTION

1. We are witnessing that the State is neglecting the protection of Karnataka coastal environment in many ways. One of them is the failure of liable government officers to tackle the permanent structures sprouting at the coast, especially with the current available technology to verify what is happening *in situ*.<sup>1</sup>

Karnataka has access to a rich technology to map information in digital format, using remote sensing images for natural resources inventory. Moreover, with the availability of high-resolution satellite images, enabling the organization of GIS, combined with GPS, the accuracy of these spatial datasets/maps is extremely high. Such resource of accurate spatial data must ensure environmental excellence to the raising economic growth. GIS, along other tools, such as satellite images and documentation, is meant to help organizations to save forests.

Why the power of these tools is not extended to coastal marine protection, mapping wild coastal life and detecting, inventorying and monitoring encroachments?

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<sup>1</sup> Several site inspection reports were requested, and, after the irresponsiveness of officers, alarm expressed at the authorities' inaction, particularly KSCZMA's failure to act on the illegal spreading constructions barely 20 metres from the seashore.

2. The Government is creating task forces, committees, panels, etc, for forest environment to tackle the current forest issues such as Special Investigation Teams, Expert Committees, District-level panels, Standing Committee of the State Board of Wildlife, High-Level Committee for Project Approvals (led by CS to streamline the process of obtaining necessary approvals of developmental projects by the Forest Department).

Additionally, the Forest department is conducting recruitment for various positions, (such as Forest Watchers, Forest Guards, Range Forest Officers), to address the forest issues at stake.

But, what about marine pollution, marine wildlife protection? marine legacy?

Why no positions, no task forces, no panels, no committees are being endorsed to tackle the huge marine environmental issues?

3. a) The Forest Department, headed by Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, has a total working strength of around 8000 executive personnel including Indian Forest Service Officers and officers/ field staff of various cadres.

b) It's acknowledged that the total recorded forest area of the State is **43,382km<sup>2</sup>** Karnataka's marine waters alongside a 320 kms coastline, seems to have a continental shelf area of  $\approx 27,000$  kms<sup>2</sup>, and an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of  $\approx 87,000$  kms<sup>2</sup>, and Brackish Water  $\pm 80$  kms<sup>2</sup>, a total of  $\approx$  **115,000km<sup>2</sup>**

If such enormous difference of environmental area of forest ecology and coastal ecology is considered, why the assigned bodies and positions are so disproportionate?

## APPEAL

To balance such disparity, powerful changes must be prompted by the sole empowered authorities for it. Thus, on a

### **FIRST MOVE – to create Official Posts for State & District Coastal Ecology experts**

Only the presence of coastal/marine environmental expert officials can ensure accurate guidance to **ALL COASTAL GOVERNING BODIES** on the needful measures to solve the damages inflicted at the coast, properly handling the current disasters, and purposely, preventing further ones. The current officials are not knowledgeable, nor experienced enough, nor trained for it.

### **SECOND MOVE – To create a Specialized statutory body for coastal/marine protection & recover, a CENTRE to build knowledge, practice and experience to manage coastal ecology.**

As widely acknowledged, and witnessed, our coast is facing multifarious disasters, largely resultant from mismanagement of this natural capital, stemming itself from the scarcity of the accurate Knowledge to make proper decisions and to act.

Coastal Karnataka is in threatening need of such body to proficiently and accurately reverse the disastrous situation stamped in manifold petitions to NGT, for which only the provision of excellent knowledgeable routes – completely unavailable by now – will divert the current perilous track we are in and rescue coastal ecology (sea, backwaters, mangroves, estuaries, salt marshals, etc., etc.), coastal livelihoods, and coastal ecological development.

We propose it to be a Centre for Action Research, rather than a classical academic research centre, rather focused to identify snags and produce iterative genuinely well-informed plans of action with strategies striving to solve the problems by imparting knowledge, practice and experience, impacting learning, deciding, acting.

Thus, focused on providing a theoretical input along an actionable one, balancing problem-solving actions, it should realize co-operative research to cognize underlying causes for upcoming plans.

Action research, being a problem-based investigation, is an outstanding methodology for intervention, development and change within groups and communities, as it is concerned with effective & steady needful change. Thenceforth, if communities are learnedly active in decisions affecting them, they are more apt to adopt new behaviours.

*Khushi Parisara* APPEAL to restore the Karavali coastal belt and its the coastal areas to their natural condition bids your excellence to

**I - create Official Posts for State & District Coastal Ecology experts to ensure accurate guidance for the accurate performance to ALL COASTAL GOVERNING BODIES.**

**II - create a Specialized statutory body, an Action Research Centre for coastal/marine protection & recover.**

Kindly find attached, for your concerned appraisal, a more technical outline of our **APPEAL**.

Looking for your appraisal of our APPEAL, we deeply demand you to grant a return to it.

With our best greetings and always at your service,

1 December 2025

Ana S.

President

<https://www.khushiparisara.in/>



# APPEAL TO THE HON'BLE CHIEF MINISTER

Strengthening Coastal & Marine Environmental Governance in Karnataka

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## 1. OVERVIEW (PROBLEM STATEMENT BLOCK)

Karnataka is witnessing a **rapidly escalating environmental crisis**, most visibly along its coastline. The destruction is driven by:

- Persistent **environmental illiteracy** among decision-makers,
- Chronic **non-enforcement of environmental laws** (repeatedly noted by NGT),
- Administrative bias prioritising **financial interests over ecological security**, and
- **Systemic violations** of environmental rules by officers responsible for implementing them.

These failures are producing severe ecological, social, and long-term anthropological consequences.

**Khushi Parisara**, based on extensive coastal monitoring and engagement with stakeholders, submits that *rule of law in environmental governance* must address the following foundational deficits:

### 1.1 ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITY

Administrators and Local Bodies must act with **knowledge, efficiency, integrity, independence**, and be held to **clear accountability**.

### 1.2 PERFORMANCE OF REGULATORY BODIES

Authorities and officers assigned environmental duties must demonstrate responsible action in **protection, restoration, monitoring, and enforcement**.

### 1.3 INSTITUTIONAL EFFICIENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

Mechanisms must be strengthened to ensure efficient institutional coordination and accountability for failures.

### 1.4 ADDRESS NON-COMPLIANCE & NON-IMPLEMENTATION

Existing cases of **non-enforcement of environmental laws** must be examined, rectified, and prevented from recurring.

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## 2. QUESTIONS THAT TRIGGER THE NEED FOR REFORM

### 2.1 TECHNOLOGY GAP: WHY IS AVAILABLE SATELLITE & GIS CAPABILITY NOT APPLIED TO COASTAL PROTECTION?

Karnataka already possesses advanced technologies:

- High-resolution satellite imagery
- GIS-based spatial datasets
- Real-time remote sensing
- GPS-integrated monitoring
- KSRSAC digital mapping capabilities

These tools are routinely used for **forest mapping**, encroachment detection, resource inventory, and planning.

**Yet these same technologies are not being deployed rigorously to:**

- Map marine biodiversity,
- Monitor coastal wildlife,
- Detect and catalogue CRZ violations,
- Track unlicensed construction,
- Audit encroachments,
- Provide real-time environmental alerts.

This represents a **critical governance gap** in the coastal domain.

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### 2.2 STRUCTURAL IMBALANCE: WHY ARE FOREST ISSUES PRIORITISED BUT MARINE ISSUES NEGLECTED?

**Forest Governance Today:**

- Multiple **task forces**, **expert committees**, **district panels**, **special investigation teams**, and **high-level clearance committees** exist.
- Recruitment is underway for **Forest Watchers**, **Guards**, **Range Officers**, and others.

**Coastal/Marine Governance Today:**

- **No equivalent task forces**
- **No specialised committees**
- **No dedicated posts**
- **No marine ecology enforcement units**
- **No structured monitoring mechanisms**

**Marine challenges—pollution, biodiversity loss, illegal activities, habitat destruction—remain institutionally unaddressed.**

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## 2.3 SCALE MISMATCH: WHY ARE FOREST AND COASTAL GOVERNANCE RESOURCES DISPROPORTIONATE?

Category	Area (Approx.)	Human Resources
Forest Ecology	43,382 km <sup>2</sup>	~8,000 officials
Marine & Coastal Ecology (Coastline + Shelf + EEZ + Brackish waters)	~115,000 km <sup>2</sup>	<b>0 specialised officials</b>

Despite marine/coastal ecological areas being nearly **3× larger**, the governance resources dedicated to them are negligible.

**How can Karnataka restore its coastal ecology without a functional governance system?**

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## 3. THE FIRST STRATEGIC ACTION BLOCK

Creation of Official Posts for Coastal & Marine Ecology Experts\*\*

To restore the Karavali coastal belt, Karnataka must establish **dedicated State and District-level Coastal Ecology Expert cadres**.

These experts must:

- Provide scientific guidance to all coastal governance bodies,
- Design and monitor restoration pathways,
- Ensure compliance with CRZ and environmental rules,
- Assess ecological impacts of development,
- Lead coastal disaster mitigation efforts.

**Current FEE/IFS cadres do not possess the specialised training required for marine systems.**

A new cadre with domain expertise is essential.

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## 4. THE SECOND STRATEGIC ACTION BLOCK

Creation of a Statutory “Centre for Coastal & Marine Action Research”

Karnataka urgently needs a specialised statutory institution focused not merely on academic research but on:

## 4.1 ACTION-ORIENTED KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS

A Centre that integrates:

- Field-based action research
- Diagnostic ecological assessments
- Applied problem-solving
- Iterative learning and adaptation
- Cross-disciplinary scientific expertise
- Community-driven environmental stewardship

## 4.2 PURPOSE OF THE CENTRE

- Reverse coastal ecological degradation
- Restore mangroves, estuaries, mudflats, dunes, creeks, and backwaters
- Address marine pollution and biodiversity loss
- Provide scientific input for coastal policy and approvals
- Support NGT, NCZMA, and KSCZMA proceedings with authoritative data
- Build a trained workforce for long-term coastal governance

## 4.3 WHY ACTION RESEARCH?

Because it:

- Identifies problems *in situ*,
- Produces immediate, evidence-based corrective strategies,
- Enables community participation,
- Ensures sustained behavioural and institutional change.

**Communities that participate in informed decisions adopt sustainable practices more effectively.**

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## 5. SUMMARY—THE “LEGO BLOCK” SOLUTION MODULE

### Block 1: Recognise the Crisis

Coastal Karnataka faces a multi-layered ecological emergency.

### Block 2: Correct the Governance Gap

Deploy existing technologies and enforce existing laws.

### Block 3: Create a Professional Cadre

Establish State & District Marine/Coastal Ecology Expert Posts.

### Block 4: Establish a Statutory Coastal Action Research Centre

A powerhouse for coastal/marine recovery, planning, and enforcement.

**Block 5: Ensure Accountability & Enforcement**

Apply rule of law and restore integrity in environmental governance.

**Block 6: Enable Community Participation**

Make coastal stewardship collaborative, informed, and sustainable.