

Safeguarding wildlife: Mumbai group plants 3.9 mn trees across India

With an average survival rate of 85% for their plantations, the group calculated that they reduce carbon emissions by 78.25 million kg every year.

MUMBAI Updated: May 27, 2019 08:49 IST

ht HT Correspondent
Mumbai



A city-based environmental organisation has carried out 3.9 million tree plantations over the past 10 years in its attempt to safeguard and restore wildlife habitats, and provide forest-based resources to local communities in India.



A city-based environmental organisation has carried out 3.9 million tree plantations over the past 10 years in its attempt to safeguard and restore wildlife habitats, and provide forest-based resources to local communities in India.



With an average survival rate of 85% for their plantations, the group calculated that they reduce carbon emissions by 78.25 million kg every year.



Started on World Environment Day, June 5, 2010, Grow-Trees is a Colaba-based social enterprise, recognised by the Central government, with nine full-time team members. It has a presence across 16 states in India with local teams.

Under its campaign 'Trees for Wildlife', the focus has been protection of endangered wild animal habitats. In this regard, the group has planted trees across wildlife habitats in India.

"We plant trees surrounding the buffer zones of forests so that the forest-dependent communities do not need to venture deep into the jungle, causing human-animal conflict," said Bikrant Tiwary, chief executive officer, Grow-Trees. "Earlier, deforestation robbed these endangered species of their habitats, but our program is restoring their home focusing on reducing fragmentation of forests."

Some of their other campaigns focus on tree plantations for Indian Giant Flying Squirrels in Rajasthan, Gibbons in Assam, Hornbills in Arunachal Pradesh, and migratory bird habitats in Puducherry.

"We always plant trees on public land. The work of the plantation programmes is spearheaded by tribal and local communities, mostly women, whose lives are intertwined with forests and the activity helps generate revenue for them (by selling the produce). At the same time, in particular plantation zones, we grow only local species of trees (that are native to that area)," said Tiwary.

"The work by Grow-Trees is commendable and I really support their plantation activities but for any plantation across India, especially around forests, ensuring a good survival rate is crucial. We need to have better follow-up for our plantation activities," said Belinda Wright, wildlife conservationist and executive director, Wildlife Protection Society of India.