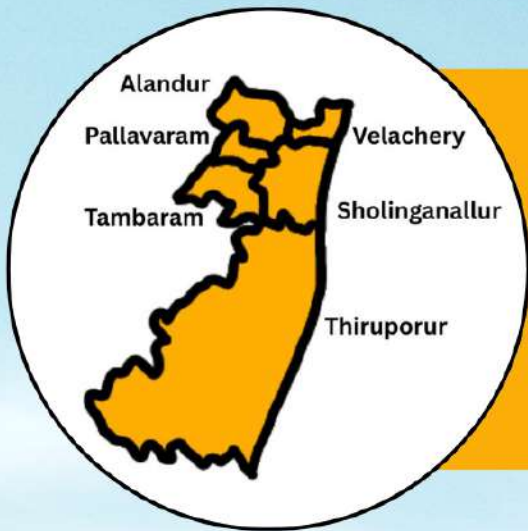


ELECTION MANIFESTO 2026



**For Constituencies in
Pallikaranai and
Kovalam Watershed**

**Collated by
Chennai Wetlands Action Collective
(CWAC)**





This Manifesto is a collective demand and platforms voices of the groups, collectives, activists and concerned citizens that is being addressed over the years to revive their own shared environment in their localized neighbourhood, for the upcoming Assembly Elections 2026 in Tamil Nadu, collated by the Chennai Wetlands Action Collective (CWAC) for 5 constituencies, namely Pallavaram, Sholinganallur, Thiruporur, Tambaram and Velachery in Pallikaranai & Kovalam watershed.

The manifesto highlights on water management as well as wetlands conservation, aquatic biodiversity, sewage management, underground drains (UGD), stormwater drains (SWD), natural canals, lakes, evictions etc.,. It also proposes the common manifesto for the Tamil Nadu state for urban and water governance. We advocate for watershed/basin based development, water use and water management.



Why Water basin based manifesto?

Water forms the base of life forms and Watersheds are primary natural boundary in the Earth. Society's development like civilisation, agriculture, drinking water source, industrial production, urban development, migration, etc are all relied on the water available in the basin or adjacent basin. Indian government also advocates for the water basin based development model. We also request for basin/catchment/watershed based water management and development.

Policy and Legislative interventions required for Tamil Nadu in this current Climate Crisis situation

The Tamil Nadu government policies from various departments drive the governance and the people's welfare in Tamil Nadu. As the society develops and advances with technologies, trade, foreign affairs in this global political environment, its continued development also requires the government to update its policies. This development have also has created vulnerable situations like high level plastic use, consumerism, poverty, climate change and its impacts like SLR, heat islands, flood, severe cyclones, etc.

We request a scientifically updated policy note addressing societal needs, security, accessibility & vulnerability. We need policies and legislative interventions to be enacted, updated, disseminated and practiced for the citizens.



Thirupuzhugal Committee Report

Chennai Metropolitan Area



Development Control Rules

Chennai Metropolitan Area

1. Tamil Nadu requires an exclusive **Urban policy** integrated with biodiversity, climate actions, conservation and water management along with developmental regulations similar to the Kerala Urban Policy of 2026.
2. Tamil Nadu requires an exclusive **Water policy**, which has not been updated since 1994. The unexecuted draft of the State Water Policy 2024-2025 requires people's consultation and must be constituted subsequently.
3. The Tamil Nadu government should release the report by the **Advisory Committee for Mitigation and Management of Flood Risk in the Chennai Metropolitan Area (CMA)** led by V. Thirupugazh publicly for transparency.
4. Implementation of the Flood Plain Zoning Act. Tamil Nadu government hasn't yet enacted the Flood Plain Zoning Act, even after 50 years since the Union Government has provided a template act to all the states in 1975. TN Water Policy 1994 also stresses for flood plain zoning acts, which has not been implemented.

5. Enact special developmental regulations and rules for Chennai Metropolitan Area (CMA) rather than combining with the Tamil Nadu Combined Building and Development Rules (TNCBDR), 2019.
6. All wetlands must be protected under Wetland (Conservation and Management) Act, 2017 and National Action Plan on Conserving Aquatic Ecosystem (NPCA).

Common manifesto for the Tamil Nadu State on waterbodies and water management

Sewage Management

1. Restriction of sewage drained into water bodies
2. Plan decentralised, catchment-based Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) and Underground Drainage (UGD) in urban regions.
3. Registered sewage tankers should be monitored with GPS by the Chennai Metro Water Supply and Sewerage Board (CMWSSB)

Rain Water Harvesting

1. Implement and monitor rainwater harvesting in large houses, flats and apartments as part of the Development Regulation policy/rules.
2. Implement community/region based public rainwater harvesting schemes like injection wells in the roads replacing the rainwater drains.

Storm Water Drains (SWD) Management

1. City-level action plan to stop sewage and sullage entering the storm water drains in the watershed.
2. Catchment based SWD plans to be implemented.
3. Existing storm water drains to be integrated with injection well for ground water recharge.

Canals

1. Providing buffer zones to canals as per the NDMA guidelines for **Management of Urban Flooding, 2010**
2. Inefficiency of Cut and Cover canals - provide proper desilting pits for every 50 meters/ regular intervals for the established cut and cover canals as it is provided for storm water drain. No more cut and cover canals for flood mitigation.
3. Canals should not be concretised or bound by retaining walls.
4. The canals which absolutely requires retaining walls should be provided and supported with it after careful assessment.

Wetland



1. Marking boundaries of all the waterbodies and preventing further encroachment.
2. Protecting and demarcating the wetland as per The Wetland (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017, and Wetland Guideline To Implement Rules, 2020.
3. Providing buffer zones to wetlands as per **The Wetland (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017** and NDMA guidelines for **Management of Urban Flooding, 2010** .
4. Demarcate the wetland, including flood plains of the wetlands.
5. No concretisation of lake area and no lake front development in the lake area.

Solid Waste Management



1. Segregation and collection of waste from the source, i.e. from houses as per the Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules, 2026 effective from April 1, 2026
2. No disastrous waste to the Energy Incinerator in Tamil Nadu

CONSTITUENCY : Sholinganallur

A. Demands for PALLIKARANAI Marshland

Protect this RAMSAR Site, a declared wetland of International importance

1. Dismantling the Pallavaram - Thoraipakkam 200 ft. Radial road which bifurcates the Pallikaranai Marshland . Replace it with an elevated corridor.
2. Reclaim the Perungudi dumpyard to its original state as a wetland, and not to be used for an eco-park.

MAP 1: MAP SHOWING 200FT RADIAL ROAD CUTTING ACROSS PALLIKARANAI MARSHLAND & INDICATING THE EXISTING PALLIKARANAI DUMPYARD



3. Dismantling of infrastructure built inside the protected Pallikaranai RAMSAR site and restoring the Marshland.

MAP 2: MAP SHOWING THE UPCOMING PROJECTS WITHIN PALLIKARANAI MARSHLAND



- (From top Right) Brigade Morgan Heights
- Casagrand First City in the 50m buffer no-development zone of the Pallikaranai marshland
- Casagrand Hola Chennai
- NCC Urban Tree
- Chennai Metro Rail Limited



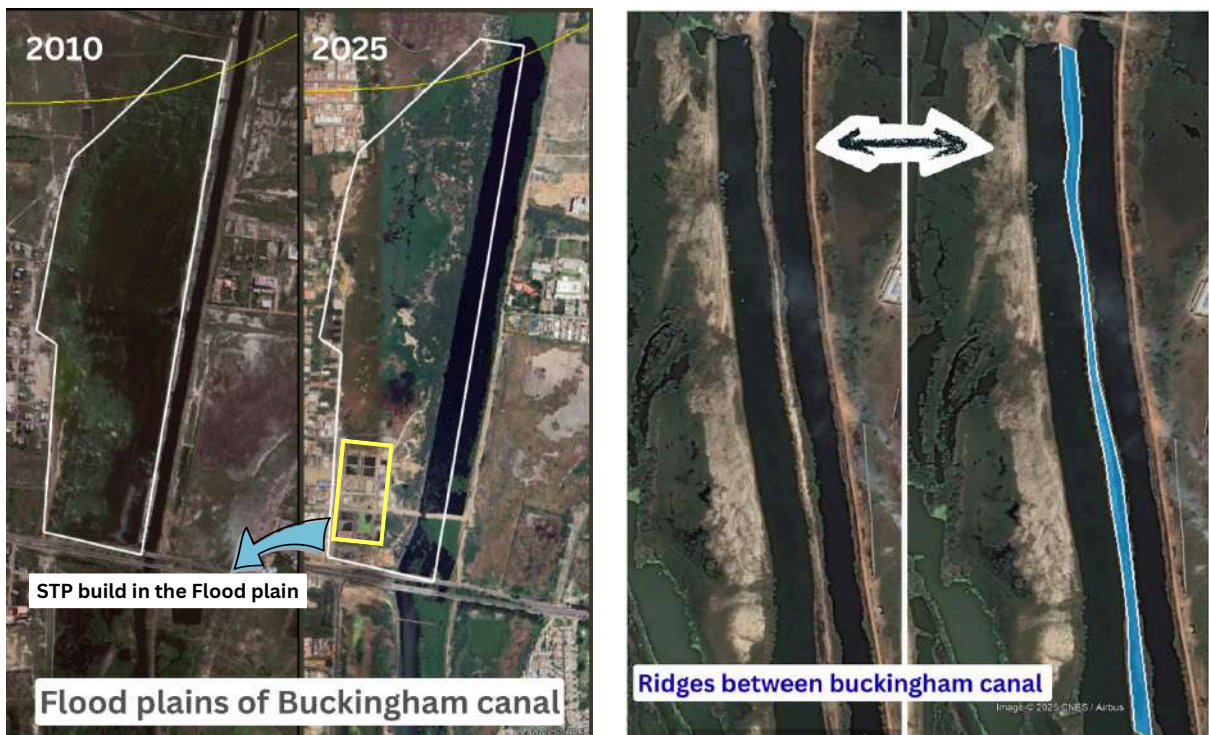
- No bunds on the edge of the marshland and no dredged channels inside the marshland. Remove the bunds built on the western edge of the marshland under the TN Shore project.



- No dredging and plantation inside the Pallikaranai marshland.
- Demarcate the extent of Pallikaranai marshland as per the 1911 revenue records as the NGT order of case no. Original Application No.91 of 2023 (SZ).

B. BUCKINGHAM CANAL

- Widen the Buckingham canal rather than keeping it a narrow path, i.e., to reclaim the flood plain of the Buckingham canal from Okkiyammadavu to Muttukaadu. (**Map 3.1 as below**)



COMPARING THE FLOOD PLAIN OF BUCKINGHAM CANAL IN 2010 & 2025

HIGHLIGHTING EARTH DUMP TO BE CLEARED IN THE BUCKINGHAM CANAL

- Clear earth material dumped into the canal, in the south of

Sholinganallur Akkarai Road and the Muttukadu Estuary. (Map 3.2)

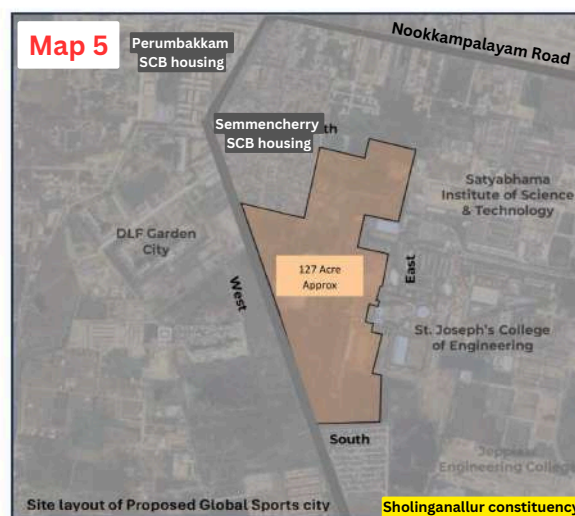
3. Desilt and remove the sludge in Buckingham Canal for free flow of water.

C. PERUMBAKKAM & SEMMENCHERY

1. Restore the canal from Perumbakkam lake to Pallikaranai marshland that have been encroached by Oxygen by Urban Tree and Casagrand First City (Map 4)



2. Develop a Flood Mitigation plan for Semmenchery and Perumbakkam resettlement site.
3. Maintain buffer zone of at least 50 meters for the Pallikaranai marshland as steps for flood mitigation.
5. Withdraw plans to build new canals extending from the Buckingham canal to the Bay of Bengal in Uthandi.
6. Withdraw **Sports City Project** over Semmenchery wetland (Map 5)



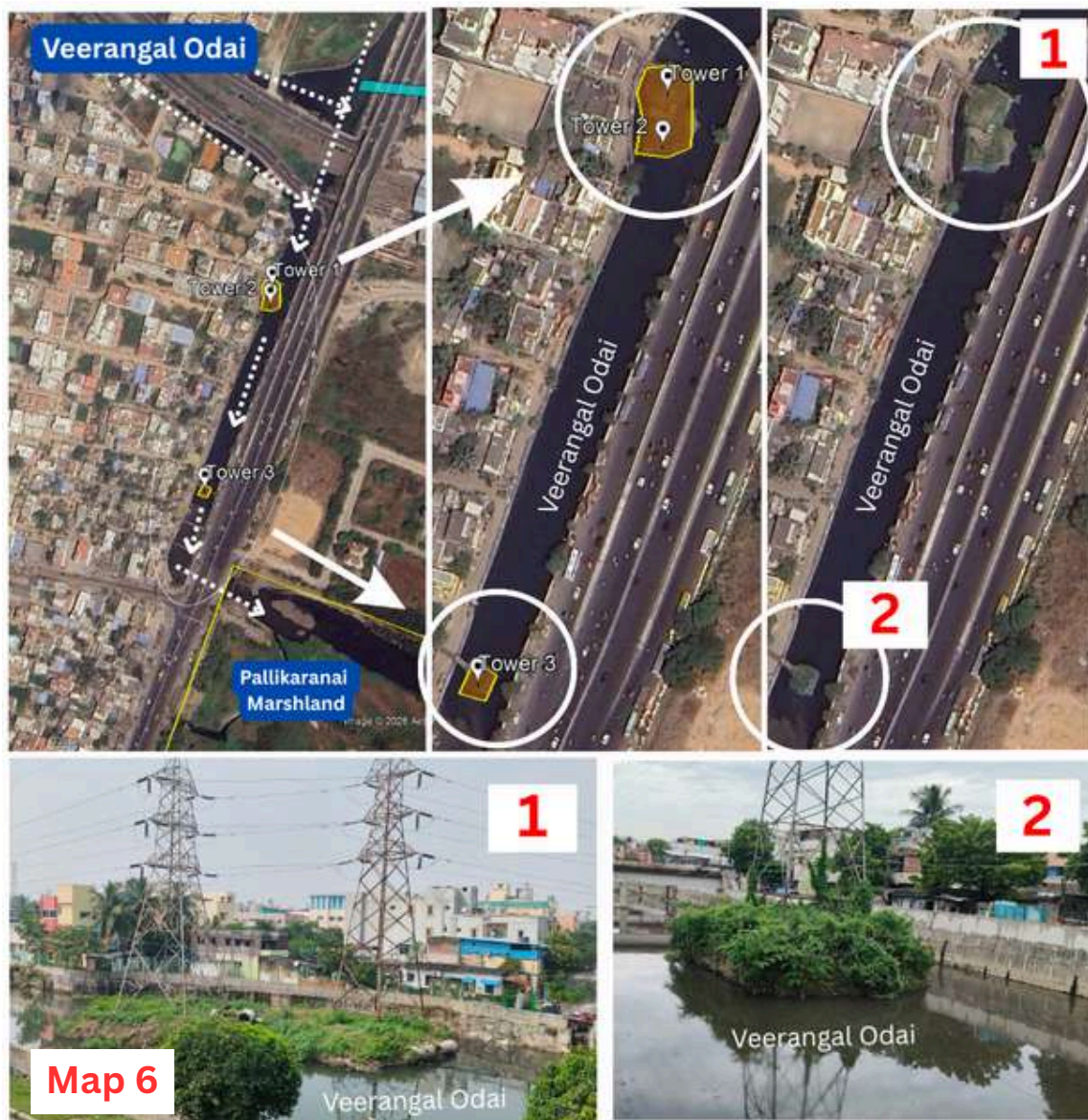
Proposed Sports City, Semmenchery rev. village, Chennai district.

CONSTITUENCY : Velachery

A. VEERANGAL ODAI and proposed canals for flood mitigation

Clear Veerangal Odai to mitigate the flooding in Velachery

1. Remove the 3 power transmission towers in 2 places obstructing 50% of the canal, blocking the flow of Veerangal Odai to Pallikaranai marshland and creating flood in AGS Nagar and its adjacent areas.



MAP 6: TOP MAP SHOWING THE LOCATION OF POWER TRANSMISSION TOWERS IN VEERANGAL OODAI, BOTTOM IMAGES OF THE TOWER OBSTRUCTING THE FLOW

2. The 15m width land parcel inbetween the MRTS rail track and Velachery-Perungudi MRTS road has to be converted as an open canal to carry the flood in Velachery. **(Map 7)**
3. Connect the Veerangal Odai to the 6 Vent canal by creating a new canal

through land acquisition. (Map 7)



MAP 7: MAP SHOWING THE VEERANGAL OODAI, PROPOSED CANAL & 6 VENT CANAL

B. New Sewage Pumping Station and Flood mitigation in Velachery

1. The current sewage pumping station in VGP Seethapathi Nagar in Velachery does not have the capacity to pump the current amount of sewage drained from Velachery area. An additional sewage pumping station with adequate capacity to be established to pump the sewage to Sholinganallur STP - Sewage Treatment Plant.
2. Storm water drainages' direction, dimensions have been built analyzing the water flowing direction, magnitude of rainfall, water crossing the particular regions.
3. Also, lost paths have to be reclaimed as mitigation measures for flooding in this region.
4. Remove the encroachment adjacent to Velachery -Perungudi MRTS road and use those land for for water flowing through the 6 Vent canal.

CONSTITUENCY : Tambaram

AREA : AGARAMTHEN LAKE

1. No reopening of waste to energy incinerator or waste processing centre located in Vengadamangalam next to Agaram Then lake.
2. Segregation of waste from households (segregation at source) as per the Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules, 2026 effective from April 1, and to stop open dumping of waste in the Mappedu - Vengambakkam road inside the canal to Agaram Then lake.



AREA : SEMBAKKAM LAKE



1. Stop sewage inflow into the Sembakkam Lake from Chitlapakkam and Sembakkam area.
2. Bring the UGD connections expeditiously to conserve the lake.
3. Measure the lake and demarcate the boundaries.
4. No CMDA's lake front development, instead Sembakkam lake needs restoration.

AREA : MADAMBAKKAM LAKE

1. Demarcate the boundary of the Madambakkam lake as per the Wetland (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017
2. Provide buffer space to the Madambakkam lake as per the Wetland Rules, 2017 and the NDMA urban flood mitigation guideline, 2008 (Map 8)



3. Withdraw the CMDA's proposal for an Madambakkam Eco park. Madambakkam lake is a declared wetland that has been protected under The Wetland Rules, 2017. Not to concretise the lake bunds, no Eco park or lake front development in the lake.



4. Withdraw the proposed STP project from the proposed site near Madambakkam Lake. The Tambaram City Municipal Corporation requires a decentralised UGDS & STP plan. STP need to built away from the residential area and water bodies.



IMAGE SHOWING THE PROPOSED SITE FOR STP - SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT AND THE

SURROUNDING SETTLEMENT

5. Withdraw 600 acres land pooling scheme by CMDA in Madambakkam revenue village over the agricultural area.



SATELLITE IMAGE SHOWING THE 600 ACRES OF AGRICULTURAL LANDS IN MADAMBAKKAM

CONSTITUENCY : Thiruporur

1. Protect the sand dunes on either side of the the East Coast Road (ECR).
2. Scrap 7000 acres Mamallan Reservoir Project over the 10,000 acres of Kovalam-Nemmeli-Manamai wetland complex.



- This project is proposed over Kovalam-Nemmeli coastal wetland, also called as the Great Salt Lake. This natural buffer that protects the entire coast of 25 kms from tsunami, cyclones, sea surge, coastal erosion is closed.
- The proposed Mamallan reservoir will cause severe flood in Kelambakkam, Thiruporur and areas adjacent to OMR.
- This project would erase the home of 1 lakh birds and other species including migratory birds from Himalayas, Europe and arctic regions.
- This land is livelihood space for thousands of tradional fishers from fishing communities, tribal communities, dalit communities and inland fishing communities.

CONSTITUENCY : Pallavaram

AREA : NANMANGALAM LAKE

1. Stop the sewage drained into the cut and cover canal from Sembakkam lake to Nanmangalam lake.
2. Desilt the cut and cover canal from Sembakkam lake to Nanmangalam lake which also requires adequate desilting opening to avoid blockage inside the canal.
3. Install temporary Modular STP until the complete UGD system is established.
4. Desilt the sludge in the lake bed and mark the boundary of the remaining lake to ensure conservation of the same. (Major portion of the lake is in the Sholinganallur Constituency, while the catchment area is in the Pallavaram constituency)
5. The **waste transfer station** inside the Nanmangalam lake boundary to be moved away from lake edge in Sembakkam - Nanmangalam road



Satellite image showing ground water extraction and sewage draining points on the edge of the Nanmangalam lake

6. Stop extraction of ground water by Water Tankers from Nanmangalam village.
7. Demarcate and establish a proper canal from Nanmangalam lake to the Keelkattalai lake.



We appeal to all the Legislative Assembly candidates of all the constituencies in the Pallikaranai and Kovalam watershed to hear the voices of people in their constituencies platformed through this manifesto document to protect the shared natural environment for good water, air and land for human and non human species.

We request the winning candidates and chosen governments to fulfil the people's manifestos. We also appeal to non-winning candidates to constantly push the elected Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) and the elected government to fulfil, enact these manifestos. This is a guidance document addressing the localised water management and urbanisation civic issues in the Pallikaranai & Kovalam watershed for the citizens and Chennai Wetlands Action Collective (CWAC)

This Manifesto is made after consultation with residents and action groups from Velachery, Tambaram (Chitlapakkam, Madambakkam), Sholinganallur (Nanmangalam, , Perumbakkam), Thiruporur (Kovalam, Nemmeli)

CWAC

Chennai Wetlands Action Collective



Chennai Wetlands Action Collective (CWAC) is a platform to transform on-ground wetland action and research into people-led movements and campaigns for eco-social justice. We stand in solidarity with communities impacted by flooding, resettlement, and exclusionary urban development. CWAC is a space for learning, collaboration, and collective action-inviting young people to engage in shaping just and resilient futures for Chennai city and its people.



Cwac Wetlands



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