



## **Press Note**

### **Vedaranyam Project**

*New Delhi, 29<sup>th</sup> July, 2011*

Eighty years ago (1930), Mahatma Gandhi led the Dandi March to establish that seawater is a social resource and that making salt from seawater is a basic right of every Indian. Gandhiji protested in a non-violent manner against the then colonial Government's decision to impose tax on salt manufacture. While Gandhiji led the Salt Satyagraha in Gujarat, C. Rajagopalachari (Rajaji) led a similar March in Vedaranyam in Tamil Nadu. The peaceful marches were ruthlessly beaten up by the colonial police and Gandhiji and Rajaji were arrested and imprisoned.

On the occasion of the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the "Salt Satyagraha", the Ministry of Environment and Forests initiated the conservation and development of Vedaranyam Coastal Zone project based on Gandhian Principles. The above project is being undertaken by Society of Integrated Coastal Management (SICOM) under the World Bank assisted Integrated Coastal Zone Management project. This project would be implemented by M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF), Chennai under the Chairmanship of Prof. M.S. Swaminathan.

The above project includes, restoration and conservation of the coastal resources, promote scientific management of land and water resources and promote community based joint management and implementation of the coastal zone management programme.

Under the project the Vedaranyam swamp which has a vast mangrove, salt marsh and migratory bird population will be restored, income generating activities for the local communities would be taken up. The project was officially announced on 26<sup>th</sup> December, 2010.

The Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Society of Integrated Coastal Management and MSSRF. The cost estimated for the project is around Rs. 10 crore for a period of 3 years. First installment of Rs. 4 crore is being released on the day of signing of the MoU.

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