

# REPORT OF ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED ON THE OCCASION OF WORLD WETLAND DAY

(2<sup>ND</sup> FEBRUARY, 2017)

As Part of Mission Mangroves, a United Way Mumbai Community Impact Initiative,  
Supported by a Corporate Partner



## World Wetlands Day- 2017

Every year, 2<sup>nd</sup> February is celebrated as World Wetlands Day. This day marks the date of the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands in 1971, in the Iranian city of Ramsar on the shores of the Caspian Sea. The first World Wetlands Day was observed in the year 1997.

This year, the theme for the day was “Wetlands for Disaster Risk Reduction”, aiming to raise awareness and highlight the vital role of healthy wetlands in reducing the impact of extreme events such as floods, droughts and cyclones, on communities and in helping to build resilience.

### **Activities organized by United Way Mumbai under the aegis of Mission Mangroves to observe the World Wetlands Day 2017:**

As part of Mission Mangroves, United Way Mumbai has been working for the conservation of mangroves in the coastal wetlands around Mumbai city. Thus, in alignment with World Wetlands Day, UWM, with support from a corporate partner and in collaboration with the Mangrove Cell of the State Forest Department and NGO partner, Vanashakti, we organized a number of activities at the Bhandup mangroves to raise awareness among the citizens about the importance of coastal wetlands.

The following activities were organized by United Way Mumbai on Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2017;

1. Mangroves clean-up drive
2. Mangroves sapling making workshop
3. Mangroves awareness trail

In all, 112 volunteers (citizens and school and college students) participated in these activities. Additionally, over 40 officials from the Mangrove Cell and the State Forest Department also participated in the activities.



Activities kicked off with an orientation for student volunteers about the day's agenda and a brief on World Wetlands Day. This was followed by an address by the chief guests, who appreciated the active participation of the volunteers in nature conservation and in creating mass awareness in the community. They also mentioned the importance of the wetlands to the wellbeing of the city of Mumbai and the need for conservation.

### **The following experts and officials of the Mangrove Cell, State Forest Department were present;**

- Mr. Sunil Limaye (IFS) Chief Conservator of Forest, Thane Circle
- Mr. Jayaram Gauda, Dy. Conservator of Forest, Mangrove cell
- Dr. Mahesh Shindikar, College of Engineering, Govt. of Maharashtra
- Mrs. Seema Aadgaokar, Range Forest Officer- Central Mumbai, Mangrove Cell
- Mr. Chaudahary, Range Forest Officer, Navi Mumbai
- Mr. Mayuresh Bothe, Range Forest Officer, Thane Creek Bhandup Sanctuary



## Mangrove Clean Up Drive:



A Mangrove clean-up drive was organized to clear the dry and non-degradable waste that accumulates in the mangroves, mainly comprising particle remains (largely, plastic, Thermocol, etc.) carried in by tidal waters. This waste hampers the healthy growth of the mangroves, as well as the associated eco-system. Over 60 college youth from K.B.P. College (Vashi), Krishna Menon College (Bhandup) and College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan (Churchgate); 30 representatives from United Way Mumbai and Vanashakti and the officials of the Mangrove Cell participated in the clean-up drive. The volunteers tirelessly cleared over 2.5 tons of garbage. Furthermore, the garbage collected was transferred to the dumping ground, with the help of the Solid Waste Management Department of 'S' Ward, Bhandup, MCGM.



## Mangrove Nursery Workshop:

This was a unique activity, organized for educating and sensitizing school students and college youth. Over 30 school children (Vidyadhiraj High School, Bhandup) and college youth (Vidyalankar College, Wadala) participated in the Mangrove sapling making workshop. During this hands-on workshop, the resource person explained and demonstrated the process of preparing mangrove saplings for conservation. 300 seeds of *Rhizophora mucronata* were made available for the workshop. The volunteers collected mud from the wetlands, with the help of labourers and prepared 300 saplings, which are now being nurtured at the Mangroves Nursery of the Mangrove Cell.



### **Mangrove Awareness Trail:**

A Mangrove awareness trail was organized for 22 students of Vidyalankar College, Wadala in the wetland area near the Bhandup Sewage Treatment Plant. The volunteers were guided through the mangrove forest by a mangroves conservation expert and were introduced to the various species of mangroves, mangrove associates, birds, water body structures, root systems of mangroves, etc.



Activities concluded with a de-briefing session, wherein the participating volunteers shared their experiences and learning during the activities, followed by an acknowledgement of the efforts of the officials of the Mangrove Cell, State Forest Department, in protecting Mumbai's Mangroves.