

## 4. Species in News

The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) has sanctioned ₹82 lakh to the Andhra Pradesh Biodiversity Board for the conservation of Red Sanders, an endemic and endangered species of the Eastern Ghats.

### Red Sanders (*Pterocarpus santalinus*)

#### Scientific Classification -

Family - Fabaceae (Legume family)

Scientific Name - *Pterocarpus santalinus*

Common Names - Red Sandalwood, Red Sanders



**Native Range & Habitat** - Found primarily in the Eastern Ghats of southern India, especially in Andhra Pradesh districts like Chittoor, Kadapa, Kurnool, and Anantapur. Thrives on rocky hillsides, dry deciduous forest zones, often on steep slopes with shallow soils.

**Wood Characteristics** - Deep reddish hue, dense, fine-grained, heavy, and highly durable. High aesthetic value and strong, suitable for carving and inlay work.

**Uses** - Luxury furniture and decorative veneers. Musical instruments (both woodwind and percussion). Carvings and intricate inlay work. Traditional medicine (Ayurveda, Siddha). Staves and prestige wood products

#### Economic & Conservation Concerns

**High commercial value** - Scarcity and demand have led to illegal harvesting and smuggling.

**Major threats** - Illegal logging, habitat loss and fragmentation, low natural regeneration, seed predation, and grazing.

**Legal & Conservation Status** - Schedule IV of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 (India). Appendix II of CITES — trade allowed only under strict regulation. IUCN Red List Status - Endangered

#### Red Sanders Conservation Initiative

**Objective** - To raise 1 lakh saplings of Red Sanders and distribute them to farmers under the Trees Outside Forests (ToF) programme.

**Funding & Mechanism** - Funded via the Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) mechanism, ensuring fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from biological resources with local communities and Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs).

**Community Involvement** - Local and tribal communities participate in nursery development, plantation, and maintenance. Promotes skill-building, employment, and grassroots stewardship in biodiversity conservation.

#### Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) Mechanism

**Definition** - Framework under Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), 1992 and the Nagoya Protocol, 2010. Ensures benefits arising from the use of biological resources are shared fairly with resource providers, including local and indigenous communities.

**In India** - Implemented under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 (amended 2023). Overseen by National Biodiversity Authority (NBA), State Biodiversity Boards, and local BMCs.

**Purpose** - Promote sustainable use of biodiversity. Ensure equity for local/tribal communities who are custodians of biological resources. Strengthen conservation by reinvesting benefit-sharing funds into protection and regeneration efforts.

**Process** - Users (companies, researchers, industries) must obtain approval to access biological resources. Monetary and non-monetary benefits (royalties, technology transfer, capacity-building, research collaborations) are shared with local communities and conservation bodies.

#### Significance of the Initiative

**Biodiversity Conservation** - Protects a critically threatened endemic species.

**Community Empowerment** - Provides skill-building and employment opportunities linked to conservation.

**Policy Implementation** - Demonstrates effective translation of ABS provisions into on-ground action.

**Global Commitments** – Reinforces India’s adherence to CBD and National Biodiversity Targets.

Source – <https://indianmasterminds.com/news/red-sanders-conservation-andhra-pradesh-82-lakh-148455/>

