CHAPTER 4

AREA PROFILE

4.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA

Tamil Nadu is the southernmost state in the Indian subcontinent. It lies in the shape of a Rhomboid between Deccan plateau and the sea, stretching from latitude 8° N in the southwest at Kanyakumari, to the Pulicat Lake in the northeast at 11° N. The Western Ghats in the west, the Bay of Bengal in the east and the Gulf of Mannar, constitute natural boundaries of the State on three sides. Tamil Nadu covers a little over 130,000 sq. km, representing about 4 per cent of India’s geographical area.

Tamil Nadu has undergone changes in its administrative divisions. According to the Census of India 1971, the state had 14 districts in 1981 the number of districts increased to 16 with the effect of bifurcation and trifurcation, it is further increased to 22 in 1991 with the population of 55,858,946 of which 50.66% are men and 49.33% are women, who constitute half of the total population.

Nilgiris (district) is a hill found in the Western Ghats, which begins in Maharashtra, extends all the way along the western border of Tamil Nadu right up to Kanyakumari district. They reach a peak in the Nilgiris plateau in Dodabetta, where the Eastern Ghats join. Also these two places are gifted with
distinct rainfall distribution in Tamil Nadu. In all, quantum of rainfall the districts with highest rainfall are Nilgiris and Kanyakumari.

Among the other few districts with rainfall, above the State average falls South Arcot district. South Arcot district (which is presently known as Cuddalore after bifurcation taken place) among the other districts is with relatively high intensities of irrigation. This district is benefited by all the three main modes or sources of irrigation; rivers, tanks and wells. In the well-intensive parts of the district commercial crops such as sugarcane, groundnuts are the predominant crops.

4.1.1 Kanyakumari District

In Kanyakumari district two villages (intensively cultivated and less intensively cultivated) have been selected for the study (fig 1). Patharai is one among the two villages that comes under Kalkulam Taluk, Colachel Revenue Village has 417 households. The major crops grown are Paddy, Coconut tree, Black gram, Tapioca, Tamarind and Palm trees. The cultivation of paddy is in two to three seasons. The major caste groups are Christian Nadars, Hindu Nairs, Hindu Sambuvar and Krishna Vellalar. The primary sources of irrigation is taking place with the help of the Spring Channel called Pamburi Vaikal - Sittrar II.

Irumpili is the village which is less intensively cultivated with 278 households. The major crops grown are Paddy, Coconut, and Tamarind Here the cultivation of Paddy is in one to two seasons. The predominant caste groups are Christian Nadars, Hindu Nairs and Harijans. The source of irrigation is from Irumpili Kulam - Sittrar II.
LANDUSE MAP OF THE STUDY AREA

LEGEND

- PLANTATION
- CROP LAND
- ENERGY PLANTATION
- FALLOW/HARVESTED LAND
- CASHEW PLANTATION
- LAND WITH SCRUB
- LAND WITHOUT SCRUB
- SETTLEMENT

SCALE

- 0
- 1
- 2 Kms

South Arcot District

T O P O S H E E T S N O : 58M/0
4.1.2 South Arcot District

In South Arcot (Fig. 2) for the intensively cultivated village Pacharapalayam that comes under Panruti Taluk, Kiloor Revenue Village that has 400 households. The crops grown are Sugarcane, Groundnut, Paddy, Banana, Cashew, Tamarind. The cultivation of Paddy is cultivated 2-3 seasons. The caste groups are Vanniar and Scheduled caste. The sources of irrigation are from well irrigation and Tank Irrigation –Cholan Eri.

Kiloor is the village that is less intensively cultivated with 396 households. Sugarcane, Groundnut, Paddy, Cashew and Banana. The cultivation of Paddy here is one to two seasons. The Caste groups are Padayachi and Scheduled Castes. The sources of irrigation are from Cholan Eri (Tank) and well irrigation.

4.1.3 Nilgiris District

In Nilgiris, (Fig. 3) the intensively cultivated is Arsedin that comes under Coonoor Taluk, Hulical Revenue Village. The total household are 290. The crops grown are Tea and Coffee. The Caste groups are Scheduled Caste and Backward Caste and Scheduled Tribes. The sources of irrigation are drip and wells.

Hilical is a less intensively cultivated district with 272 households. The major crops grown are Tea and Vegetables. The cast groups such as Badaga, Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Caste are seen. The source of irrigation is from wells in majority.