

JUSTICE A.V. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI
(Former Judge, High Court Of Kerala)
CHAIRMAN

State Level Monitoring Committee, Kerala

(An authority constituted by the
National Green Tribunal)

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15.07.2019

Dear Registrar,

Kindly see the appended report in O.A.No.582/2018 relating to the polluted stretches of Thirur – Ponnani River. A consolidated Action Plan for the entire polluted river stretches in Kerala has been submitted by the Kerala State Pollution Control Board in the matter. It contains the Action Plan for Thirur – Ponnani River also.

As the case stands posted to 17.07.2019, the appended report may kindly be placed before the Hon'ble Tribunal for consideration.

Yours Sincerely,


JUSTICE A.V.RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI,
(Chairman, SLMC, KERALA)

To
The Registrar,
National Green Tribunal,
Principal Bench, Faridkot House,
Copernicus Marg, New Delhi-110001.

**BEFORE THE HON'BLE NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL
PRINCIPAL BENCH, NEW DELHI.**

O.A. No.582 OF 2018

INTERIM REPORT

PRESENTED BY JUSTICE JUSTICE A.V.RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI

(FORMER JUDGE HIGH COURT OF KERALA)

CHAIRMAN STATE LEVEL MONITORING COMMITTEE, KERALA

(FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE AFORESAID COMMITTEE)

POSTING DATE: 17.07.2019

INTERIM REPORT

In the meeting of the State Level Monitoring Committee (SLMC for short) held on 1st July, 2019, the Action Plan for rejuvenation of polluted stretches of ***Thirur – Ponnani*** river came up for consideration. It was informed by the Member Secretary that a consolidated action plan for the rejuvenation of entire stretches of polluted rivers in the State was prepared and submitted before this Hon'ble Tribunal. The SLMC considered the action plan for ***Thirur – Ponnani*** river stretches which forms part of the said consolidated action plan.

Exhibit X1 is the map of polluted stretches of ***Thirur – Ponnani*** river which were identified. Exhibit X2 maps shows the pollution load at the spots identified by the Kerala State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB for short). It appears that, while preparing the action plan, the KSPCB has mainly concentrated on those spots made mention of in Ext.X2.

The SLMC in the meeting referred to above, resolved that a report be submitted before this Tribunal, after a site inspection by the Chairman SLMC.

I therefore, conducted a field visit on 12th July, 2019 along with the Member Secretary, Engineers of the District Office, KSPCB, Revenue Divisional Officer, Engineers of Water Authority and Irrigation Department, Municipal Secretary, Thirur, officials of other various departments as well as the petitioner in the O.A.582/2018. During the visit I was taken to other spots also.

Thirur river is a small tidal river. Originating from ***Athavanad***, this 47 km long river meets ***Bharathappuzha*** a major river in the State, before its joins ***Arabian Sea*** at ***Ponnani*** estuary.

Thirur river cannot be analysed as an independent river. It joins Bharathappuzha naturally on the south side and Poorappuzha artificially through an Inland Navigation Canal namely Thanoor Koottayi canal. Hence, it is one of the rivers in a system of naturally and artificially connected rivers.

The reason for pollution of ***Thirur*** river can broadly classified into two.



- a. The river is polluted by sea (tidal), through the Inland water way canal that connects *Poorappuzha* and *Thirur* river and also by the solid and liquid waste it carries en route.
- b. The river is latterly polluted by the discharge of domestic, industrial and trade waste.

It appears that the degree of pollution is maximum near downstream at *Thalakkadathoor*.

The Superintending Engineer, Irrigation North Circle, Kozhikode who was with me at the time of field visit has furnished the following pieces of information regarding the irrigation structures in the area. They are as follows:

1. Koottayi Regulator cum Bridge

The Inland Navigation Route in Kerala – National Waterways No:3 has now been extended to *Kozhikode* from *Kodungallur*. The river-stretch from *Bharathappuzha* to the mouth of *Canoli Canal/Tanur-Koottayi Canal* is in the alignment of National Waterways No.3.

The Regulator – cum-Bridge at *Koottayi* across *Thirur* river prevents entry of salinity into the river. Presently, the shutters of the regulator are damaged. Therefore, the water is stagnated at this point. Estimate for repairing the shutters have already been prepared. A navigation lock shall be provided at the RCB to facilitate inland water transport through this structure. The navigation lock will have shutters on both ends of the lock chamber to let vessels from seaside into riverside and vice versa. The shutters can be easily operated to flush off accumulated water as and when required.

2. Lift Irrigation Pumping Stations

To rejuvenate the river with fresh water it was suggested to make use of the two lift irrigation pumping stations maintained by Minor Irrigation Wing of Irrigation department.

The two Lift Irrigation Pumping Stations are:

- i. *Thirunavaya Stage I @ Thazhaththara*
- ii. *Thirunavaya Stage II @ Koluppalam*

Lift Irrigation Pumping has to be made use of, because the level of water in *Bharathappuzha* would be lower than that of *Thirur* river during summer season. At present irrigation water is lifted from *Bharathappuzha* through *Thirunavaya Stage I* located on the right bank of *Bharathappuzha* known as *Thazhaththara* to irrigate agricultural lands, and to provide water to *Thirunavaya Stage II* located at *Koluppalam*. Irrigation canal discharges water into *Valillappuzha* and the *Thirunavaya Stage II* make use of this water. *Valillappuzha* joins *Thirur river at Kattachira*. However, it was pointed out by the Revenue Divisional Officer who was with me at the time of field visit, that at present the said water course is not in its original form because of slitting and other encroachments. If those obstructions are cleared sufficient water from *Bharathappuzha* can be brought to *Thirur* river from the canal discharge points in *Valillappuzha*. (Kindly refer to Exhibit.X3 map attached).

At present due to scarcity of water in *Bharathappuzha*, *Thirunavaya State II* could not be supplied with sufficient quantity of water for irrigation from *Stage I*. It was opined that the situation would change, once the *Chamravattom* project is commissioned.

It was also informed that a navigation lock at **Tanur** in *Poorappuzha* end and *Koottayi* Lock at *Tirur* river end, which are to come up as part of inland waterways development project, can seal salinity intrusion into the canal.

It is relevant to note that the aforesaid exercise alone will not solve the entire issue because of the pollution load of another canal by name *Kanoli* canal which joins *Thirur* river. The **Kanoli** canal from *Tanur* area, before reaching *Koottayi* passes through densely populated areas. Same is the case with *Thirur* river also especially the stretch between *Thalakkadathur* and *Koottayi*. The solid and liquid wastes in this canal is likely to contaminate *Thirur* river even if it is rejuvenated by linking it with *Bharathappuzha*, and made salinity-free by constructing navigation locks at *Tirur* and *Koottayi*.

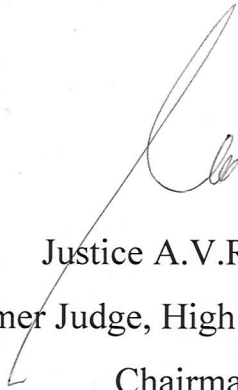


Therefore, the Revenue Department will have to take care of the issues related to encroachments, and local bodies will have to check river pollution.

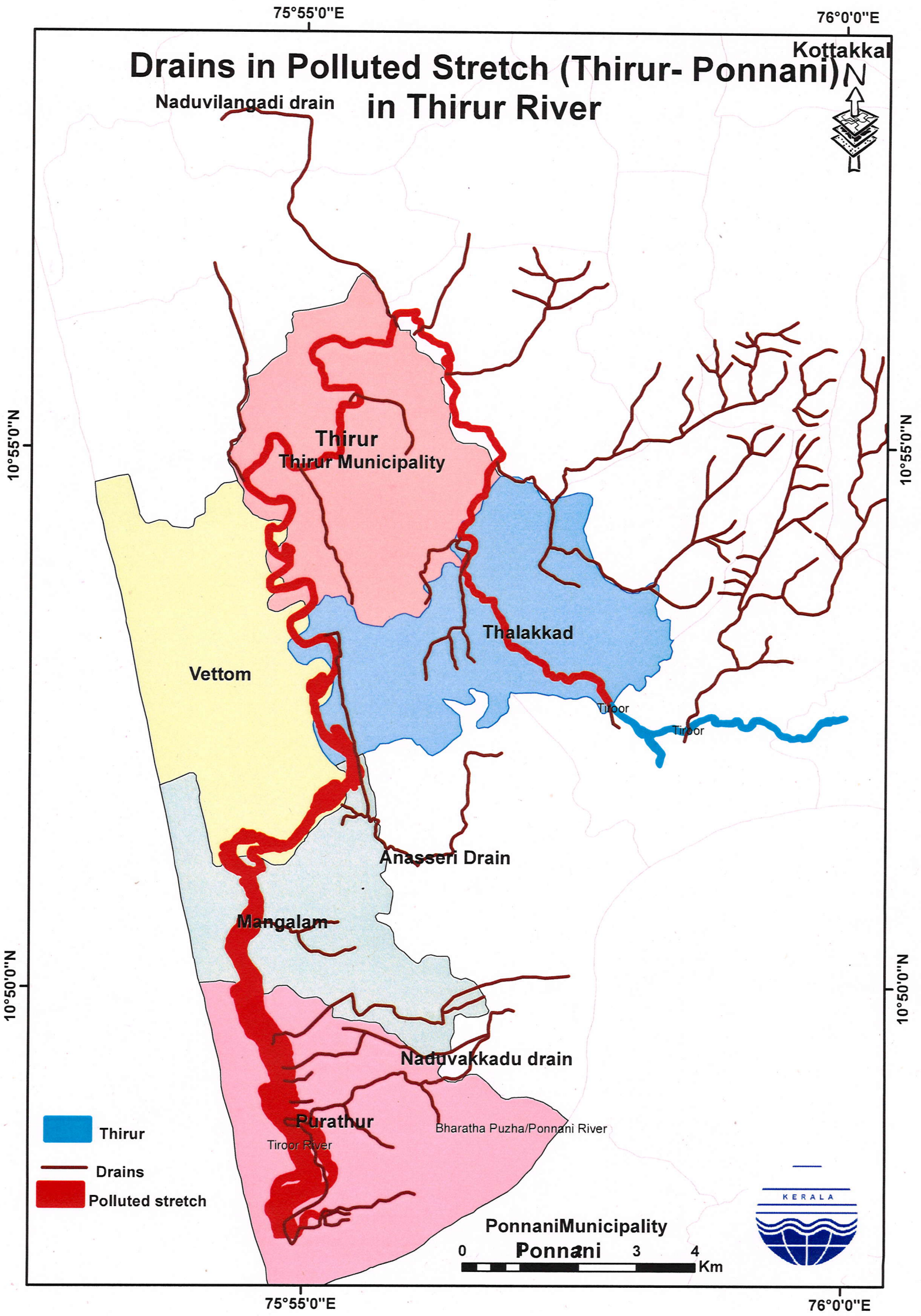
In addition to the above, there are connected problems like discharge of leachate from the Thirur Fish Market and discharge of septage waste into the public drains from houses and other establishments. Because of the scarcity of land, establishment of common septage treatment plant and construction of a large network of drainage system may not be possible in the town. Therefore, the possibility of installing intercepted modular STPs has to be explored by the KSPCB.

As the aforesaid major issues have escaped the attention of the KSPCB, those issues are not properly addressed in the action plan now submitted. Therefore, the same has to be revised and the KSPCB may be directed to submit a revised action plan within a time limit. A detailed report of my field visit shall be submitted later.

Dated this the 15th day of July, 2018.

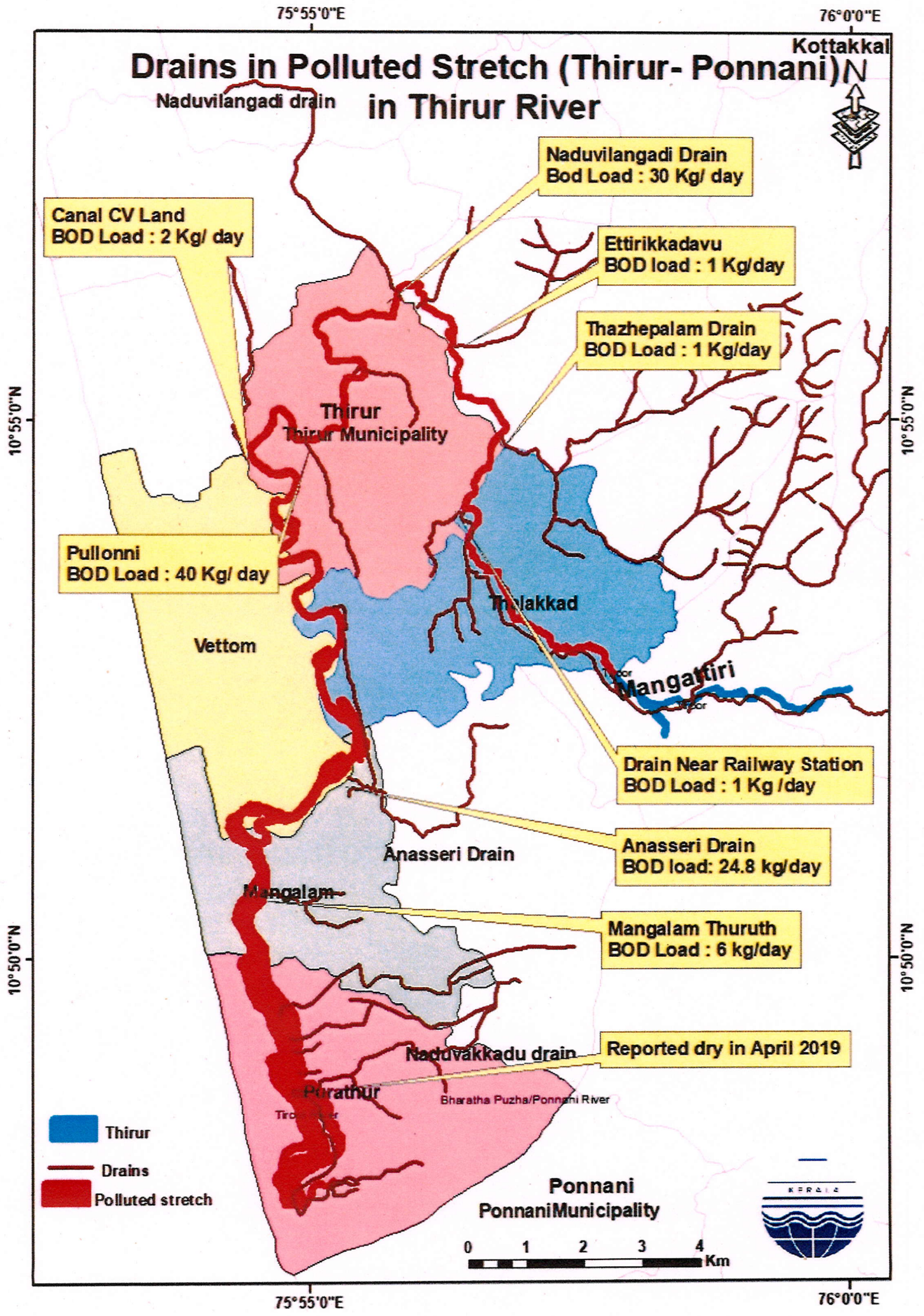


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EXHIBIT X2

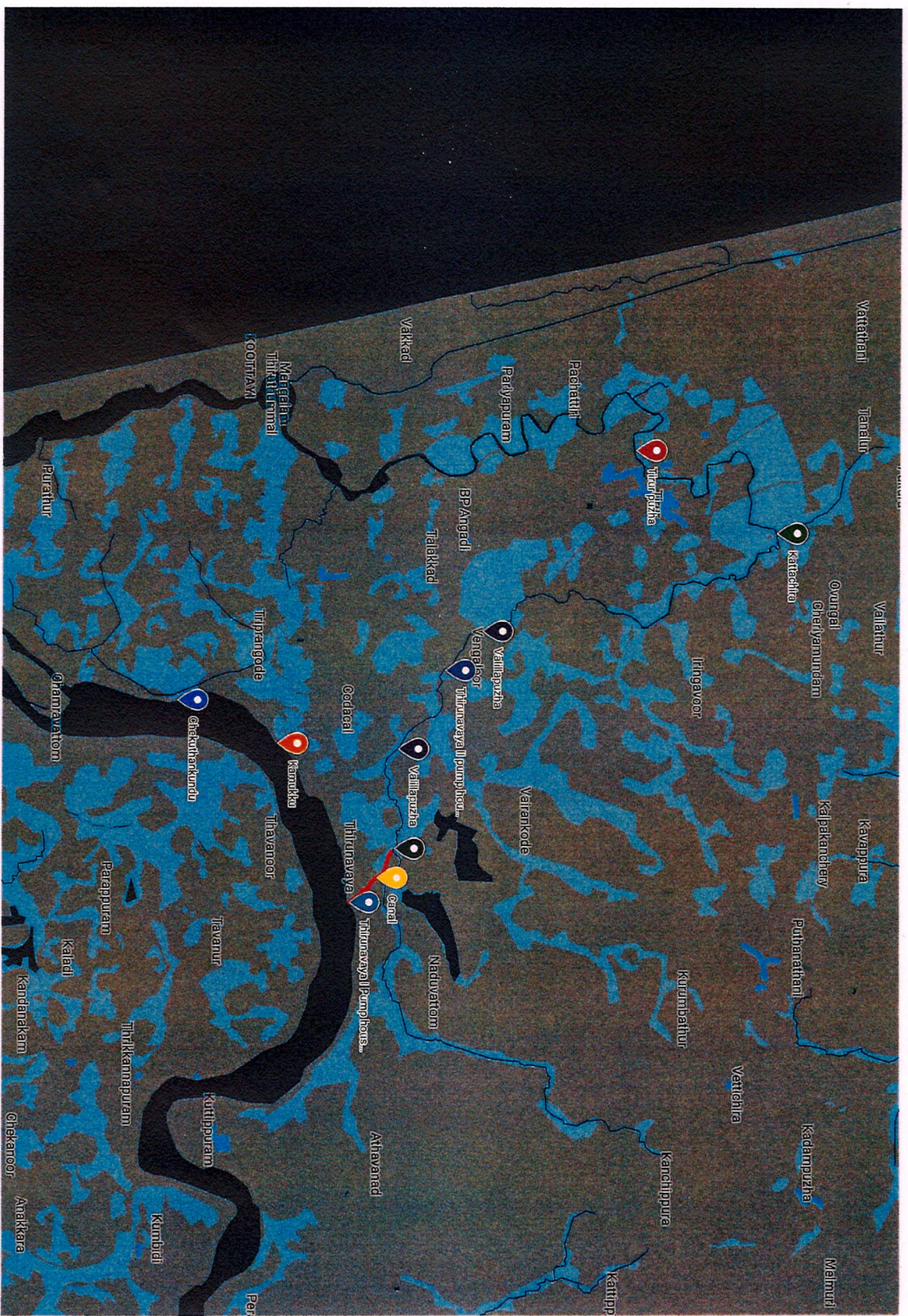


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EXHIBIT, X3

Lift Irrigation schemes under MI Sub Division Parappanangadi

- Tirur section**
 - Vallilpuzha
 - 5.75km
 - Skm point
 - Bakkkayam Regulator
 - Canal
 - Canal end point
 - Chammakkeyam Weir
 - Chekuthankundu
 - Field 1
 - Kamukku
 - Kattachira
 - Mannattampara weir
 - Proposal 1
 - Proposal 2
 - Proposal 3
 - Thekkepadam
 - Thirunavaya Canal
 - Thirunavaya I Pump house
 - Thirunavaya II pump house
 - Tirur puzha
 - Other / No value
- Thirurangadi section**
 - Benchali
 - Benchali IR
 - Iringallur
 - Irunbothingal
 - Kolappuram
 - Kooriyad
 - Mullankuzhi
 - Thrikkulam
 - Ullanam
 - Vallyora
- Kondotty section**
 - Vazhakkad



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