

9.34 LAKSHADWEEP

9.34.1 Introduction

The Union Territory of Lakshadweep is located in the Arabian Sea and has a geographical area of 32 km². It consists of a group of 36 coral islands covering 12 atolls, 3 reefs and 5 submerged sand banks. Only 10 islands are inhabited. These islands lie scattered about 280 km to 480 km west of Kochi on Kerala coast between the latitudes of 8° 15' N & 11° 45' N and the longitudes of 72° E & 74° E. The mean annual temperature varies

from 23°C to 35°C. Average rainfall ranges between 1,000 mm and 2,000 mm.

As per *Census 2011*, the total population of the UT is 64,429 of which the rural population constitutes 21.92% and urban population 78.08%. The population density is 2013 persons per km². The livestock population is 82,000 (*Livestock Census 2007*).

Land use pattern of the Union Territory is given in Table 9.34.1.

Table 9.34.1: Land Use Pattern

Land Use	Area in '000 ha	Percentage
Total geographical area	3.00	
Reporting area for land utilization	3.00	100.00
Forest	0	0
Not available for cultivation	0	0
Net area sown	3.00	100.00

Source: *Basic Statistics 1993-94. Department of Planning & Statistics, Lakshadweep.*

9.34.2 Recorded Forest Area

The Union Territory is devoid of any natural forests. The islands are covered with coconut trees. There is no recorded forest area.

9.34.3 Protected Areas

There is only one Wildlife Sanctuary (Pitti), covering an area of 1 ha.

9.34.4 Forest Cover

The forest cover in the UT, based on interpretation of satellite data of January 2009 February 2009, is 27.06 km² which is 84.56% of its geographical area. In terms of forest canopy density classes, the UT has 17.18 km² area under moderately dense forest and 9.88 km² area under open forest. The forest cover of the UT is shown in Fig. 9.34.

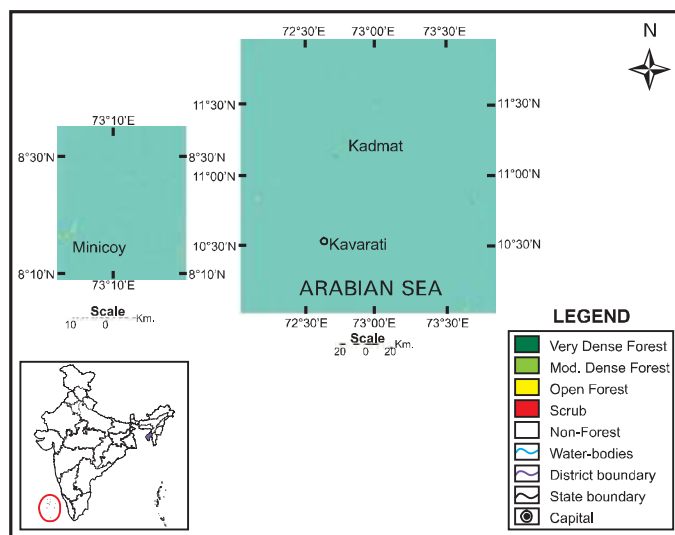
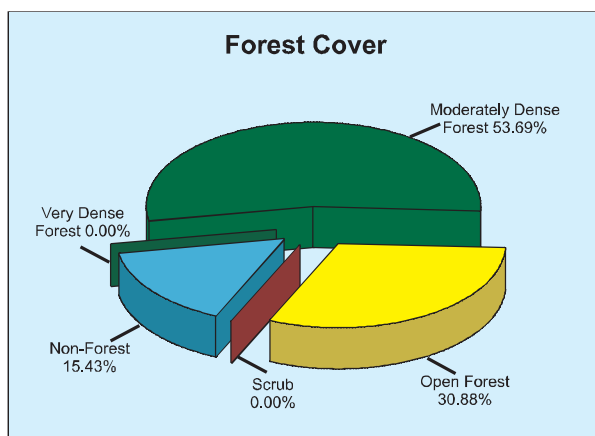


Fig 9.34 Forest cover map of Lakshadweep



District-wise forest cover in different canopy density classes along with the changes

compared to 2009 Assessment are given in Table 9.34.2.

Table 9.34.2: District-wise Forest Cover

(Area in km²)

District	Geographical Area	2011 Assessment				Percent of GA	Change	Scrub
		Very Dense Forest	Mod. Dense Forest	Open Forest	Total			
Lakshadweep ^T	32	0	17.18	9.88	27.06	84.56	0.58	0

Comparison of current forest cover assessment (satellite data of January 2009-February 2009) with the previous assessment (satellite data of Oct - Dec 2006) shows a gain of 0.58 km² of forest cover.

The change has been observed in Chetlat Island of Lakshadweep due to emergence of new area covered with TOF.

Table 9.34.3: Forest Cover Change Matrix (Area in km²)

2009 Assessment	2011 Assessment					Total 2009
	VDF	MDF	OF	Scrub	NF	
Very Dense Forest	0	0	0	0	0	0
Moderately Dense Forest	0	16.34	0.22	0	0.15	16.71
Open Forest	0	0.03	9.66	0	0.08	9.77
Scrub	0	0	0	0	0.03	0.03
Non Forest	0	0.81	0	0	4.68	5.49
Total 2011	0	17.18	9.88	0	4.94	32.00
Change	0	0.47	0.11	-0.03	-0.55	

The change matrix given in Table 9.34.3 reveals that there has been an increase of 0.47 km² in the moderately dense forest and 0.11 km² in open forest.

9.34.5 Altitude Zone-wise Forest Cover

Forest cover of the UT in different altitude zones is given in Table 9.34.4.

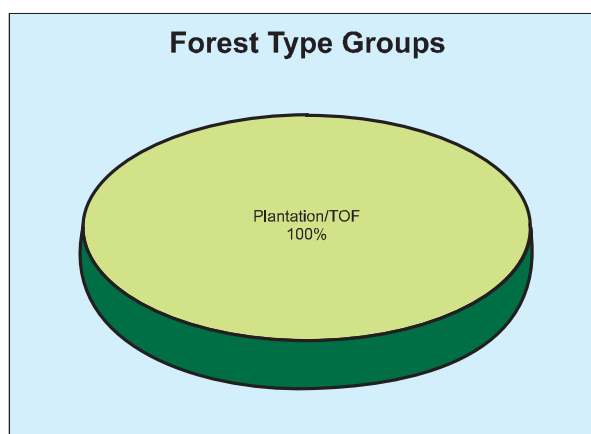
Table 9.34.4: Altitude Zone-wise Forest Cover (Area in km²)

Altitude Zone	VDF	MDF	OF	Total
0-500m	0	17.18	9.88	27.06
Total	0	17.18	9.88	27.06

(Based on SRTM, Digital Elevation Model)

9.34.6 Forest Cover in different forest types

The UT has no forest types as per Champion and Seth Classification. The UT is covered by coconut trees classified as plantation in the forest type map.



9.34.7 Tree Cover

Tree cover of the Union Territory has been estimated using TOF inventory data collected over a period of six years, i.e. 2004-10. The

estimated tree cover in the UT is 4 km² which is 12.5% of its geographical area. The forest and tree cover of the UT is presented in Table 9.34.5.

Table 9.34.5: Forest and Tree Cover (Area in km ²)		
Category	Area	% of Geographical Area
Tree Cover	4.00	12.5
Forest Cover	27.06	84.56
Forest and Tree Cover	31.06	97.06

9.34.8 Growing Stock

For trees outside forests (TOF), the growing

stock has been estimated using TOF inventory data. It is presented in the Table 9.34.6.

Table 9.34.6: Growing Stock (million cum)		
Forest	TOF	Total
0	.049	.049