



Andaman and Nicobar Islands

9.31.1 Introduction

The Union Territory lies between latitude 6° – 14° North and longitudes 92° – 94° East. It comprises the Andaman and the Nicobar groups of Islands which are separated by the 10° N parallel. Majority of the islands (about 550) are in the Andaman group, of which only 26 of which are inhabited. The Nicobar group comprises 22 main islands out of which only 10 are inhabited. The climate is humid and tropical. The average annual rainfall varies from 1,400mm to 3,000mm and annual temperature varies from 24°C to 28°C. The territory is drained by several small rivulets which end up as creeks often with dense mangroves. Kalpong is an important river in Diglipur Island. The geographical area of the territory is 8,249 sq km, constituting 0.25% of the total area of the country. Port Blair, the capital of the territory, is about 1,200 km from the main land. As per Census 2011, the UT is divided into 3 districts, all of which are tribal districts and has a total population of 0.38 million which constitute 0.03% of the country's population. Rural population constitutes 62.30% and urban population 37.70%. The population density is 46 persons per sq km. The livestock population is 0.15 million (19th Livestock Census 2012).

Table 9.31.1 Land Use Pattern

Land Use Types	Area (in 000 ¹ ha)	Percentage
Total Geographic Area	825	
Reporting area for land utilization	757.38	100
Forests	717.07	94.68
Not available for land cultivation	8.82	1.16
Permanent pastures and other grazing lands	3.69	0.49
Land under misc. tree crops and groves	4.09	0.54
Culturable wasteland	3.09	0.41
Fallow land other than current fallows	3.28	0.43
Current fallows	2.63	0.35
Net area sown	14.71	1.94

Source: Land Use Statistics, Ministry of Agriculture, GOI, 2013-14.

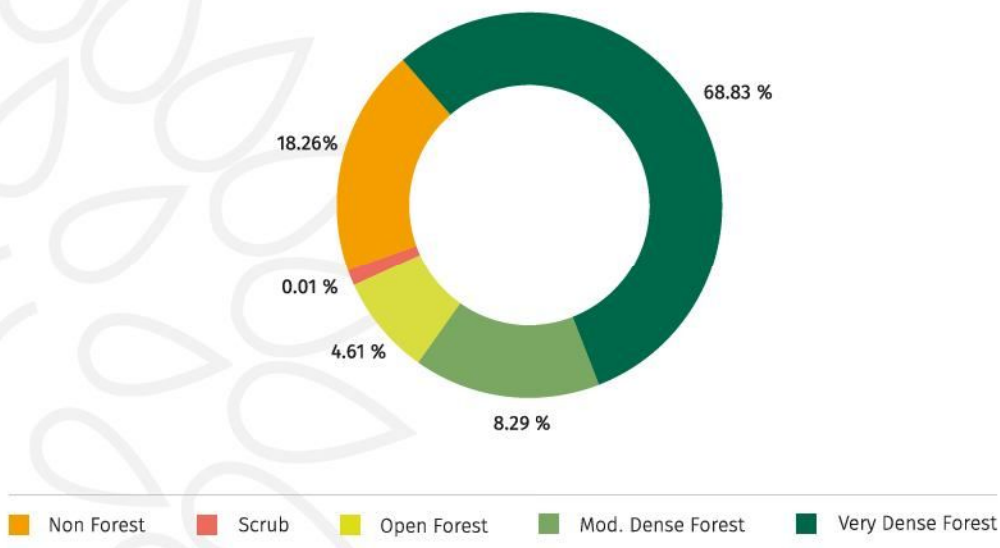
9.31.2

Forest Cover

Based on interpretation of satellite data pertaining to Oct-Dec 2015, the forest cover in the UT is 6,742 sq km which is 81.73% of the UT's geographical area. In terms of forest canopy density classes, the UT has 5,678 sq km under very dense forest, 684 sq km under moderately dense forest and 380 sq km under open forest.



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Forest cover of Andaman & Nicobar Islands

Pie chart showing forest cover of Andaman & Nicobar Islands

9.31.3

Forest Cover within and outside Recorded Forest Area

The recorded forest area of the UT is 7,170.69 sq km which is 86.93% of its geographical area. The Reserved and Protected Forests are 78.27% and 21.73% respectively of the recorded forest area. However, as the digitized boundary of recorded forest area from the UT covers only 6,940 sq km, the analysis of forest cover within and outside this area is depicted below.

Table 9.31.2 Forest Cover within and outside Recorded Forest Area

Forest Cover within Recorded Forest Area (Area in Sq km)

Very Dense Forest (VDF)	5,383
Moderately Dense Forest (MDF)	579
Open Forest (OF)	299
Total	6,261

Forest Cover outside Recorded Forest Area

Very Dense Forest	295
Moderately Dense Forest	105
Open Forest	81
Total	481

Total Forest Cover	6,742
Tree Cover	35
Total Forest & Tree Cover	6,777
Of UT's Geographical Area	82.16%
Of India's Forest & Tree Cover	0.84%
Per capita Forest & Tree Cover	1.78 ha

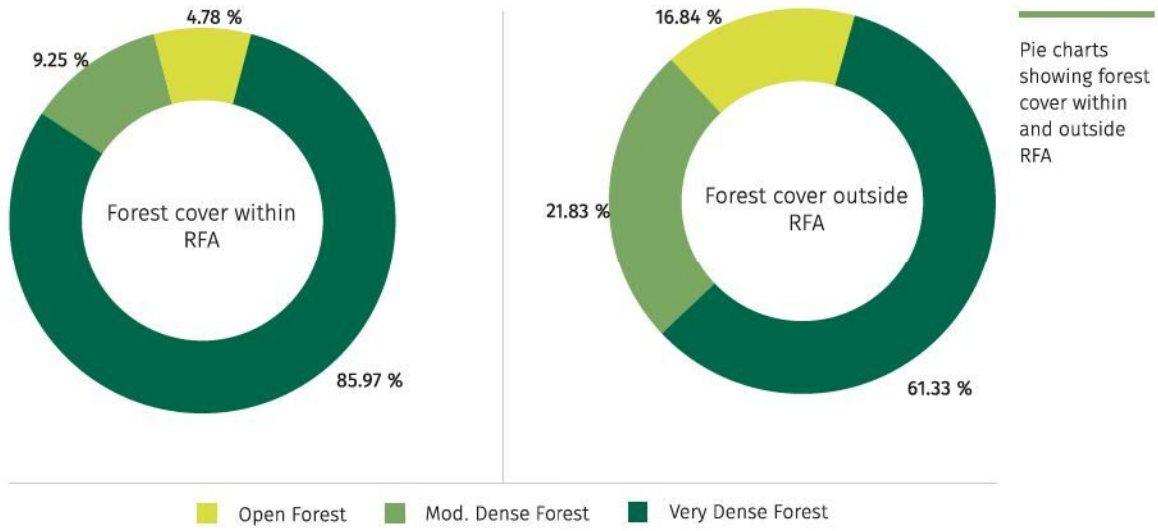


Table 9.31.3 Altitude-wise Forest Cover (area in sq km)

Altitude Zone (m)	Geographical Area	VDF	MDF	OF	Total
0-500	8,238	5,667	684	380	6,731
500-1000	11	11	0	0	11
Total	8,249	5,678	684	380	6,742

(Based on SRTM, Digital Elevation Model)

Table 9.31.4 Forest Cover in different Patch Size Classes

S.No.	Patch Size Range (sq km)	No. of Patches	Area(sq km)	%age
1.	≥ 0.01 ≤ 1.0	798	70	1.04
2.	> 1.0 ≤ 10	49	155	2.30
3.	> 10 ≤ 100	21	628	9.31
4.	> 100 ≤ 500	5	709	10.52
5.	> 500 ≤ 1000	2	1493	22.14
6.	> 1000 ≤ 5000	3	3687	54.69
	Total	878	6742	100

Table 9.31.5 Growing Stock

	Growing Stock	% Contribution to country
Growing Stock in Recorded Forest Area	55.928 m cum	1.33
Growing Stock in TOF	0.584 m cum	0.04
Potential Production of industrial wood from TOF	0.02 m cum	0.03
Bamboo bearing area within forest area of the UT	-	-
Total number of culms	-	-
Total green weight equivalent of culms	-	-

9.31.4

Carbon Stock

The total Carbon stock of forests in the UT is 115,073 million tonnes (421,934 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent) which is 1.62% of total forest carbon of the country.

9.31.5

Decadal Change in water bodies within Forest

A decrease of 0.43 sq km has been observed in the water body coverage within forest compared to 2005. The graphical and tabular comparison is as depicted below.

Extent of
water bodies
within forest

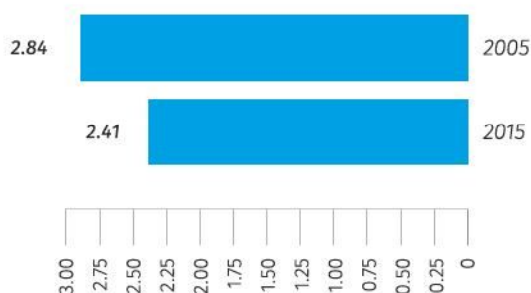


Table 9.31.6 Water bodies within Forest for the years 2005 and 2015

Area/Coverage	2005	2015
Extent of water bodies (sq km) within Forest	2.84	2.41
% of water bodies to Forest Cover	0.042	0.036

Table 9.31.7 District- wise Forest Cover of Andaman & Nicobar Islands (area in sq km)

District	Geo-graphical Area	2017 Assessment				% of GA	Change *	Scrub
		Very Dense Forest	Mod. Dense Forest	Open Forest	Total			
Nicobars ^T	1,841	1,148	105	153	1,406	76.37	0	1
North & Middle Andaman ^T	3,736	2,671	327	73	3,071	82.20	-3	0
South Andaman ^T	2,672	1,859	252	154	2,265	84.77	-6	0
Total	8,249	5,678	684	380	6,742	81.73	-9	1

*Change compared to updated 2015 assessment.

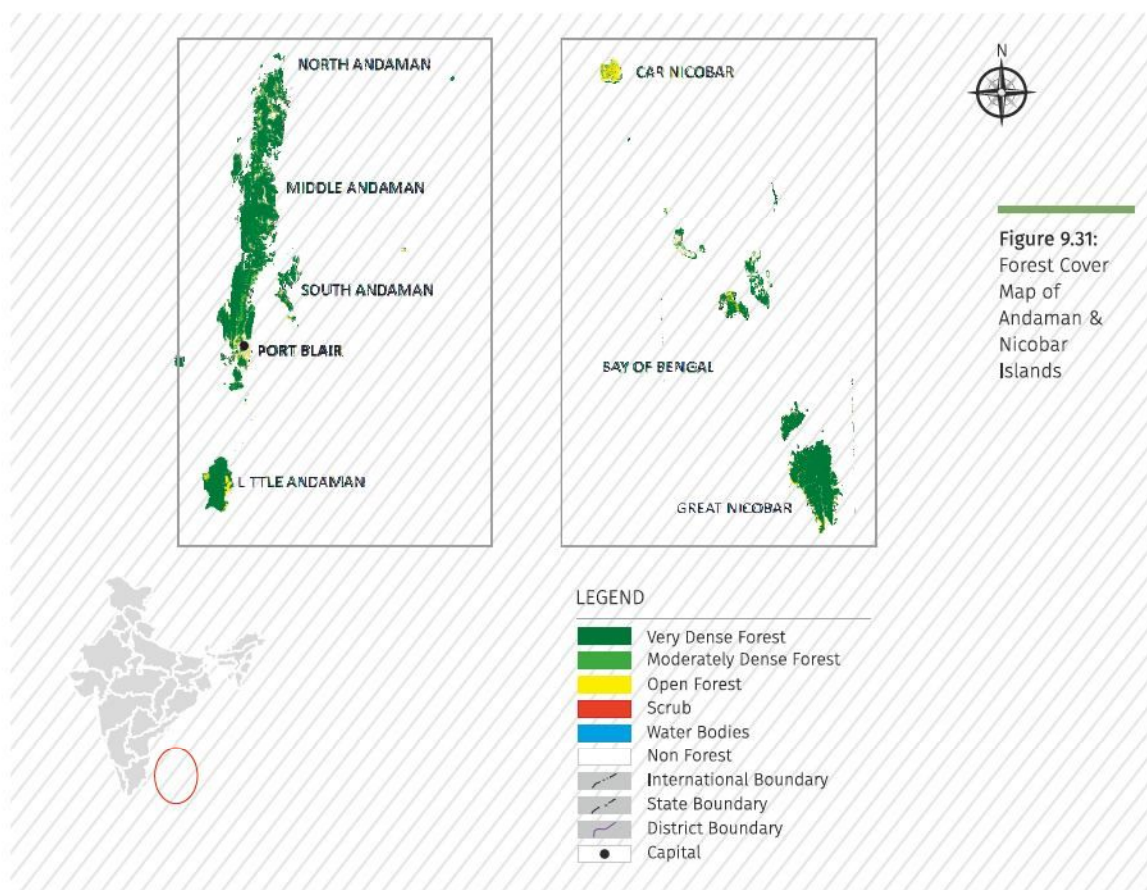


Table 9.31.8 Forest Cover Change Matrix

(area in sq km)

Class	2017 Assessment					Total ISFR 2015 updated
	VDF	MDF	OF	Scrub	NF	
Very Dense Forest	5,675	2	2	0	7	5,686
Moderately Dense Forest	2	680	1	0	2	685
Open Forest	1	0	375	0	4	380
Scrub	0	0	0	1	0	1
Non Forest	0	2	2	0	1,493	1,497
Total ISFR 2017	5,678	684	380	1	1,506	8,249
Net Change	-8	-1	0	0	9	

9.31.6

Reasons for change detected in 2017 assessment

A net decrease of 9 sq km in forest cover observed is mainly due to developmental activities.