

# Better Bengaluru

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Better Bengaluru aims to create lasting improvements and celebrate those who are championing civic change, helping conserve heritage and the less privileged. Through October, we will draw the spotlight on Bengalureans who make a positive difference to the city we love.

T.V. Ramachandra's research and advocacy have weaved their way into public policy

## Taking science out of lab to the people



T.V. Ramachandra's report on the Bellandur wetland was cited in the case against an upcoming Special Economic Zone there - PHOTO: BHAGYA PRAKASH K.

MOHIT M. RAO  
BENGALURU

Science is only useful when it is taken beyond the lab and to the people. This motto has characterised the works of T.V. Ramachandra, Coordinator of Energy and Wetlands Research Group at the Indian Institute of Science, whose research and advocacy have weaved their way into public policy.

If roof-top solar units have become a buzzword in the government, it may be credited to the recommendations of Mr. Ramachandra. Similarly, his research on lakes has made its way into the High Court initiated committee on protection of lakes, while his report on the Bellandur wetland was cited in

the case against an upcoming Special Economic Zone there.

After completing his doctoral research in IISc, in 1996, he has authored over 600 research papers on energy and environment. Many have become pivots on the debate on the rapid urbanisation and environment degradation of Bengaluru (one study, for instance, shows that the city has grown by 925 % while water bodies and vegetation have reduced by nearly 79%). Despite the grave findings, he remains optimistic and engages with government bodies. The wealth of knowledge has seen him nominated as member in State Audit Advisory Committee, KSPCB Technical Committee (Biodiversity) and Centre-appointed committee on bio-fuels.

"I have been working for

14 hours a day for the past 25 years. I have no problem accepting responsibilities... But, when the atmosphere turns hostile, like in the State-level Environment Expert Appraisal Committee, I move out without hesitation."

His tryst with science began in 1996 following fish deaths in Sankey Tank. His report was used by environmentalists to campaign for a cleaner lake while civic authorities too took note.

Since 1998, he has conducted over 120 workshops while his team has been educating school children on environmental science. "Thousands of students are trained to track pollution and use statistics for environment protection. It is heartening that many of these students have formed groups and communities to protect the environs around them," he says.



T.V. Ramachandra

### PROJECTS HE IS WORKING ON

1. Monitoring the health and status of 80 lakes
2. Report on wetlands in Karnataka
3. Mapping bio-diversity of Western Ghats
4. Using algae ponds in polluted lakes to generate bio-fuels

### SUGGESTIONS FOR GOVT.

1. Discuss and implement scientific research
2. Ensure lakes are developed with wetlands and algae ponds, instead of just engineering solutions
3. Implement court recommendations for lakes in full spirit

### SUGGESTIONS FOR BENGALUREANS

1. Have a sense of belonging and responsibility for the city
2. Engage with regulatory bodies
3. Become custodians of the city



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[the.ws/1MeuzNI](http://the.ws/1MeuzNI)

1. VANI MURTHY, Solid Waste Management Round Table
2. N.S. RAMAKANTH, Solid Waste Management Round Table
3. ARCHANA KASHYAP, Kasa Mukta Bellandur