

FOREST MANAGEMENT

not only for timber production but also as an ecosystem that sustains marine life - as spawning grounds for shellfish, marine fish and prawns. The trees also protect the coastline from erosion. Production areas go through a 20-30 year renewable cycle with about 1,500 ha being planted and regenerated annually.

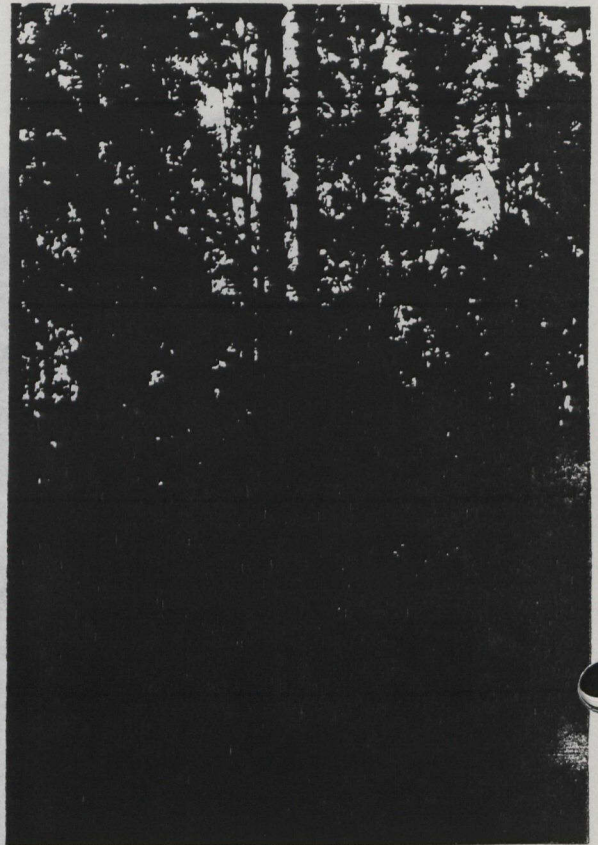
To supplement timber supply from natural forest, plantation programmes have been promoted.



ABOVE : Mangrove forest ecosystem sustains marine life and protects coastal erosion.

RIGHT : Close view of mangrove forest.

TOP RIGHT : Fast-growing plantation forest of *Acacia mangium*.



Currently, a total of 90,000 ha of productive commercial tree plantations have been established mainly with fast growing species such as *Acacia mangium*, *Paraserianthes falcataria*, *Gmelina arborea* and *Pinus* on a 10-15 year rotation. There are plans to develop 500,000 ha of forest plantations by the year 2000.

With the growing demand for rattan, a climbing palm, the Government has embarked on the planting of rattan in natural forests as well as promoting it as a crop. At the end of 1988, a total of 24,155 ha have been planted, largely on a commercial basis.

Over the last three years, a programme has been undertaken to plant fruit trees along the fringes of natural forests as part of community forestry development. This provides additional income for the rural population and promotes the multiple uses of forest land on a sustainable basis.