

## 8.34 LAKSHADWEEP

### 8.34.1 Introduction

The Union Territory of Lakshadweep is located in the Arabian sea and has a geographic area of 3,200 ha. It consists of a group of 36 coral islands covering 12 atolls, 3 reefs and submerged sand banks. Only 22 islands are inhabited. These islands lie scattered about 280 km to 480 km west of Kochi on Kerala coast between lat 8°15' & 11°45' N and long 72° & 74°E . The islands and beaches are covered with dense coconut trees.

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

The population of the UT is 60,650 (*Census 2001*) of which rural population is 55.54%, and urban 44.46%. The population density is 1,895 persons per km<sup>2</sup>. The Scheduled Tribes population is 94.5%. The livestock population is 52,000 (*Livestock Census 2003*), which has nearly tripled since the census of 1992.

Land use pattern of the Union Territory is given in Table 8.34a.

### 8.34.2 Forest Resources

The Union Territory is devoid of any natural forest. There is no recorded forest area.

### 8.34.3 Protected Areas

An area of 1 ha is being managed as protected area under one Wildlife Sanctuary.

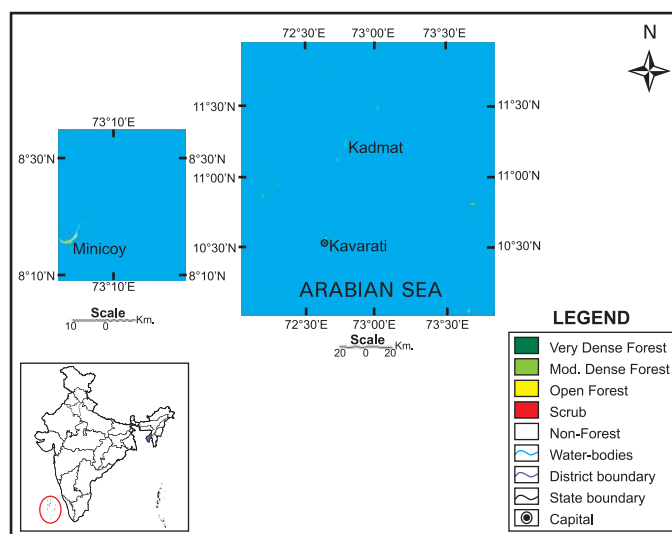
### 8.34.4 Forest Cover

The forest cover of the UT, based on satellite data of December 2004 and January-February 2005, is 25 km<sup>2</sup>, which is 77.94 % of the geographic area. Moderately dense forest, 15 km<sup>2</sup>, and open forest, 10 km<sup>2</sup>. The forest cover of UT is shown in Fig. 8.34.

**Table 8.34a: Land use pattern**

Land Use	Area in ha	Percentage
Total geographical area	3,200	
Reporting area for land utilization	3,200	100.00
Forest	0	0
Not available for cultivation	445	13.91
Net area sown	2,755	86.09

Source: *Basic Statistics 1993-94 Deptt of Planning and Statistics, Lakshadweep*



**Fig. 8.34 : Forest Cover Map of Lakshadweep**

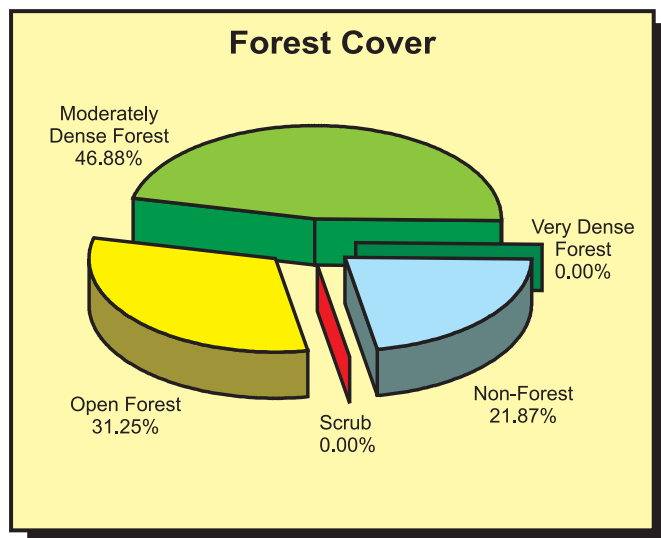
There is no change in forest cover and its density as compared to the previous assessment (based on satellite data of November-December 2002) hence no change matrix is given.

Since there is only one district in the UT the details of forest cover provided for the UT is also valid for Lakshadweep district.

### 8.34.5 Tree Cover

Tree cover of Lakshadweep has been estimated following a sampling based approach. A separate exercise was carried out where high resolution satellite data (5.8m) has been used for identification of tree patches for field inventory. The estimated tree cover in the UT is 4 km<sup>2</sup>.

The forest and tree cover of the UT is presented in the



**Table 8.34b: Forest & tree cover**

(area in km<sup>2</sup>)

Category	Area	% of Geographical Area
Tree Cover	4.26	13.31
Forest Cover	24.94	77.94
<b>Forest &amp; Tree Cover</b>	<b>29.20</b>	<b>91.25</b>