

CEE

Centre for Environment Education



SAYEN

South Asia Youth Environment Network



UNEP

VOL.1, NO.2 JULY-2008, A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTH ASIA YOUTH ENVIRONMENT NETWORK

“Intergenerational Partnerships for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation”

The Fourth International Conference on Environmental Education (4th ICEE) held at Ahmedabad, India in November 2007 brought together individuals and representatives from various youth and environment related networks, and effectively demonstrated the efficacy of education as a tool. Youth participants at the conference felt the need to sustain this effort to integrate education into sustainable development. They acknowledged the need to create a convergence amongst networks, especially youth networks, in order to fight against climate change and to propagate the values and principles of sustainable development.

Taking inspiration from this common aspiration, youth from different organizations gathered in Bangalore for a workshop on ‘Intergenerational Partnerships for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation’ from 22nd to 25th April.

Organized by: Global Citizens for Sustainable Development (Bangalore, India)

Supporting Partners: China-India Forum
SAYEN
Earth Charter Youth Initiative (ECYI)
Charter of Human Responsibilities
Friendship Foundation

Content:

“Intergenerational Partnerships for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation”1
Delhi Youth Summit on Climate (DYSoC)2
National Consultation for Development of ToT Module on Education for Sustainable Development 4
World Environment Day (WED) 2008 5
Youth and Climate Change Campaign 6
Announcements 8

Compilation: Aparna Susarla

Coordination: Gopal Kumar Jain

SAYEN Secretariat

Centre for Environment Education (CEE)
Thaltej Tekra, Ahmedabad 380 054
Gujarat, India
Phone: 91-79-26858002 to 09
Fax: 91-79-26858010
E-mail: sayen@ceeindia.org
Website: www.sayen.org

Compiled and circulated by CEE

The objectives of the workshop were:

1. To create an Asia-Alliance for Intergenerational Partnership for Sustainability sharing common interests, on ESD and climate change.
2. To define the vision, mission, goals and values of the network
3. To establish a mandate for the alliance for working towards SD through contributing to the fight against climate change
4. To create an educational guidebook on climate change, which incorporates the goals and fulfils the objectives of ESD
5. To consult various stakeholders, including civil society representatives, students and youth participants, on the content of the book
6. To solicit inputs for similar upcoming initiatives on ESD and climate change
7. To disseminate the content of the guidebook amongst stakeholders
8. To contribute to the efforts of an Asian Citizens Assembly in 2010 led by the China-India Forum through this Alliance



As a part of the workshop, sessions were conducted to discuss the causes and impacts of climate change and analyse the Climate Change Training Module - targeted towards youth and community workers and educators working on climate change and sustainable development. Role of Youth in climate change mitigation and adaptation was conversed and representatives from several youth networks such Hyderabad

Climate Alliance, Indian Youth Climate Network, A N College, Patna voiced their opinions and shared their experiences.

There was a special panel to discuss the theme: Water and Climate Change by Shree Padre, Magsaysay Awardee and eminent environmentalist and Dr. Bhavani Shankar who has worked as a Chief Engineer in the Water sector in India.

One of the highlights of this workshop was a field trip to the site of the first and only pro poor Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) project in India - being implemented by ADATS, a grassroots community NGO based in Bhagepalli, Karnataka, and engaged in development and rural upliftment work in nearly 600 villages around Bhagepalli.

There was a discussion on Asian Citizens Alliance with students of School of Peace, who were from different countries such as Lao, Indonesia, Nepal, Vietnam, Myanmar, Hong Kong, and other Asian countries. These students along with the participants of the workshop felt the need of an Asian Citizens Alliance and wanted their countries to be part of the Alliance.

Delhi Youth Summit on Climate (DYSoC)

Climate change poses the single largest threat to the future of humanity. Scientific reports are indicating that to slow down the effects of a runaway climate catastrophe, carbon emissions must not exceed 350 ppm. In the wake of this threat, nations around the world are grappling for solutions to establishing pathways towards low carbon economies to avoid a wave of mass planetary extinction. Though we may attempt to fix the problems technologically, it is widely acknowledged that real solutions will only come from changes in lifestyle. Lifestyles are greatly impacted by none other than the planning of cities—the rise of which gave birth to “civilization.” But unsustainable use of local resources has, in the past, led to the collapse of entire city states.

Thus, to tackle climate change and the challenges it poses to already struggling developing economies, we must address development issues at the city level. Many cities around the



world are already planning vigorously to reduce emissions and adopt efficient use of energy and resources. In the United States alone, nearly 800 cities have pledged to sign the Kyoto Protocol and ensure that emissions from those cities meet the international targets.

Delhi, the seat of power of the “world’s largest democracy,” makes little mention of the words “climate change,” in its *Master Plan 2021*. With the capital very much under construction in its attempt to become a “world class city,” there is much to be done to incorporate mitigation and adaptation to the changing climate now, while there is still time. If we fail to incorporate the policies that will help us to account for the changes that the nation’s capital may face, then all attempts to turn it into a “world class” city may fail. The challenges for Delhi are many including waste management & sanitation, water supply, energy & transportation, and ensuring that the city is properly planned to accommodate the burgeoning population and the in-migration of people from not only other cities, but also the rural areas.

The Indian Youth Climate Network (IYCN) recognizes the importance of youth in this debate.

Youth, who are the future citizens and leaders of the country and its capital, must have their voices heard to ensure their policy perspectives are incorporated in the plans of the decision makers of the city. It is the youth that will inherit the city (and the planet) from the present generation. With this in mind, the Delhi Youth Summit on Climate (DYSoC) therefore aimed to bring together the youth and young professionals of Delhi, from all across the city and from all backgrounds to begin the dialogue on Delhi’s fate in the wake of climate change. The two day summit was held on May 28th and 29th at former Prime Minister Nehru’s residence of Teen Murti Bhavan. Over 150 participants including observers from several NGOs and business gathered at the Nehru Memorial Museum & Library to discuss key issues like waste, water, energy & transportation, and urban planning in the capital.

Key speakers, Bittu Sahgal, Editor of Sanctuary Magazine, Dr. Leena Srivastava, Executive Director of TERI, and Dr. Mridula Mukherjee, chair



of the NMML gave the inaugural address. Speakers from Toxics Link (*Piyush Mohapatra*), the Center for Science & Environment (*Salahuddin Saify & Anumita Roychowdhury*), and the Center for Development Studies at SARAI (*Awadhendra Sharan*) also came to introduce the special topics and set the tone of the working groups which followed to help generate solutions.

These solutions were taken and were used to generate the draft Delhi Youth Charter on Climate.

The impressive eight page document contained many innovative solutions to the challenges up for debate at the Summit. The key declaration that resulted from the two day summit was the demand that there be a youth representative on the Delhi Master Plan Reviewing Committee. This will ensure that youth are engaged in the planning process and give importance to the fact that the future of the city, have a say in how their future is being planned. The draft charter was presented to Secretary of Environment, Delhi Government, Mr. J.K. Dadoo. It will be formalized after final input from DYSoC participants and handed for review to Mr. Nitin Desai, who will then pass it along to the President of India and the UN Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki Moon.

A brain-storming session at the end of the summit allowed the participants to look beyond the summit at what the immediate action plan needs to be. Plans are afoot to organize a campaign to engage Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) of Delhi in sustainable living concepts and also launch a campaign in support of public transport in the city. The IYCN is busy organizing the national summit, the Indian Youth Summit on Climate Change (IYSoCC), to be held in Hyderabad in early August. It aims to bring together 200 youth from around the country to set the youth vision for India's agenda on climate change mitigation and adaptation and also a post-2012 youth vision. The members of the first Indian Youth Delegation to the upcoming UN Conference on Climate Change in Poland will also be gathering there to map out their strategy.

National Consultation for Development of ToT Module on Education for Sustainable Development

The National Consultation for Development of Module on Education for Sustainable Development for Youth functionaries was held during June 18-19, 2008, at Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD), Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu.



The Module is being developed by Centre for Environment Education (CEE) and is being supported by RGNIYD. The module is intended to be a three and a half day Training of Trainers (TOT) module for Youth Functionaries, specifically those associated with the National Service Scheme (NSS) and Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS), Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Govt of India.

The module contains six major sections. One of the starting sections describes how environment and environment education has developed and is considered to be a priority at all levels of education. Another section describes how there has been a paradigm shift from development to sustainable development and focuses on key sustainable development concerns in India. While describing each sustainable development concern, linkage maps have been included that explain economic, environment and social linkages with the particular concern. Along with

each concern related activities have also been added, that help in understanding the aspects of the particular concern of which it is related to.



The module also has a section on “Youth as Change Agents”. The section includes case studies on kinds of projects and activities conducted by youth. The section also includes information on what type of initiatives youth can undertake towards sustainable development. The Consultation Meeting included members from NSS, NYKS, RGNIYD, CEE and other NGOs. Few students of NSS were also a part of the consultation. The members went through the module and discussed upon improvements that could be done since the module being in its draft stage. The consultation meeting also helped the members of NSS and NYKS understand the various issues and perspectives of Sustainable Development and also how this module shall be useful for them.

World Environment Day (WED) 2008

The World Environment Day 2008 at CEE focused on the theme customized to the Indian context, CO₂: Pick Right, Towards Growth and Sustainability. This positive message was reinforced through all activities, games and competitions. People were presented with a bouquet of options like puppet shows, film shows, face painting, pottery making, best out of waste,



Pandora's box and a fashion show that made everyone want to 'pick right'. Competitions like make your own cloth bag, treasure hunt, slogan writing, quizzola, and photography showed how innovative one could be in interpreting the theme.

The youth group aka 'Green Riders' who had been working on the Youth and Climate Change campaign over the past month created a theme pavilion. An exhibit of the banners, posters and other resource material that they had developed through the campaign was put on display. They presented a street play, 'Seekh' (Learn), speaking



to people about how if we don't learn now, it may be too late. A student group also put up a *Bhavai* (folk drama) and a puppet show highlighting the need to clean up the world.

The activities came to a close with quizzola and the prize distribution. Prizes were given to people who had come to the venue on a bicycle, walking or on an electric bike. The *Kaun Banega Bharat ka Paryavaran Ambassador* campaign was launched before the closing ceremony and received an overwhelming response of people casting their votes into the ballot box that was placed at the venue.

A two day food festival treated people to traditional Gujarati and Rajasthani dishes like *keri-no-baflo*, *Varyali-no-sharbat*, *Findla Sharabat*, *mahua ke laddu*, *Raab*, *chaas*, *khichu*, *roti* and *ras*. Many of these foods and beverages have been substituted by synthetic options and are slowly becoming rare palate pleasers. Organic commodities like honey, jaggery, soap, organic colours etc. were also available at stalls

Media coverage for the event in print media was in three major English dailies Times of India, DNA and Ahmedabad Mirror and via radio on All India Radio, Radio Mirchi, Radio One, and MyFm. The Sponsors were Print Vision, Bharti Airtel, Yo Bykes and Pujan Decorators.

Youth and Climate Change Campaign

CEE, SAYEN and UNEP along with Times of India conducted the “Youth and Climate Change” Campaign from 22nd April, 2008 (International



Earth Day) to 5th June, 2008 (World Environment Day). The campaign brought together about 50 youth from different backgrounds and gave them a platform to use their energy for a common cause – curb Climate Change. These dynamic and enthusiastic youth of Ahmedabad were oriented to Climate Change and related issues.

As a part of this campaign, four events – The Green Hunt and The Green Drive, Seekh (Street Play) and Youth Haat were organized.

“The Green Hunt” was a treasure hunt competition for ambavadi youth between the age group 13 to 27 years. The participants had to interpret the clues given to them and hunt for green spaces in the city on their bicycles. The idea was to identify the Green Lungs of the city and simultaneously bring awareness among the youth about the decreasing green cover in the city. More than 30 ambavadi youth took part in this competition, riding high on their bicycles, updating themselves with the information on the green spaces of the city and ultimately, making a huge difference.

“I was born and brought up in Ahmedabad, but I never thought that the city has so few green spaces. I am in the second year of my graduation but still I use only a bicycle, so bicycling through the city was not a tough part for me. This event gave me an opportunity to know my city and the environment I breathe in.”

Maxwell Frank
(One of the winning participants of the Green Hunt)

After this event, 20-25 young people desired to come together and take the campaign further. They conducted some basic research on Climate Change and its linkage with issues such as Water Pollution, Increasing Atmospheric Emissions, and Improper Waste Disposal amongst others. An interactive orientation session was organised for the youth with Prof. Shyam Lal from Physical Research Laboratory (PRL), Ahmedabad, who introduced new concepts, facts and figures related to the causes and the effects of the climate change. These youth met regularly to



discuss the major environment related problems in the city and collected background data on each of these issues. After a series of discussions on several issues such as decreasing green cover and Wastage of Energy, the youth zeroed in on taking up the issue of vehicular pollution.

These youngsters then came up with the “The Green Drive” – the event focusing on Vehicular pollution, in which they had organised several activities including a rally, a signature campaign and capturing the voices of the people on a canvass. They developed posters on their own and slogans with the objective to inspire the locals of Ahmedabad to make four, small yet very effective changes in their life

- Service your vehicle regularly
- Prefer Cycling or Walking over biking for less than 5 kms.
- Turn off your ignition at signals
- Prefer Car Pooling or Public Transport

The spirited youngsters interacted and informed the people about the need to reduce vehicular pollution. The response from the public was incredible. The canvas which was set up for people to write their pledges and opinions had some very inspiring messages.

“I will mostly use cycle for traveling,”

-
Niyati Parikh
Housewife

“Use public transport, grow trees,”

- Pratik Dave
BRTS project officer

“Awareness is needed among all citizens for environmental issue,”

-Ayan
College Student

People in Ahmedabad had never witnessed such a mass movement especially initiated by Youth.

With the success of both these events, the youth were very successful in catching the attention of the Amdavadis. New ideas were surging up among the Green Riders to make more impact, to tell the whole of the city that its time for action.

Thus, taking a step further and to drive the Amdavadis into action mode, they planned to set up a “Youth Haat” where in they provided the people of Ahmedabad with eco-friendly options to choose from. The objective was to “Say NO to plastic bags”. The youth presented before people the alternatives available to them that they can adopt instead of using plastic or non degradable things that are harming the environment. Various stalls consisting of *Kullars* (earthen tea pots), cloth bags, organic food, solar lights and things best out of waste were displayed, to show people the alternatives they have.

I had done many plays in school, but a street play was really challenging, as we needed to be unrefined and speak out the issues in a way that would melt people’s hearts. This is the beauty of this medium. The entire process of scripting and then the amalgamation of humour with hidden reality is the most amazing part of it. It was fun being out there, right in front of the audience, face-to-face and performing, where the whole world is a stage,”

Sowbhagya Rao, a Green Rider

The youth also developed a ‘street play’ titled “SEEKH” to spread the message across to the people in an innovative way in the Haat. The script

of the street play was developed on the theme of World Environment Day, 'CO₂ Pick Right, towards sustainability and development'. The script was developed in a manner that it covered all the sub-themes of Pick Right. It spoke about why people should be energy efficient, why people should be resource savvy, and prefer walking instead of driving to short distances. It also showed the importance of plants and trees in our



lives. They performed the street play for the audience at the Vastrapur Lake, World Environment Day Celebrations at CEE and Ahmedabad City Mall (Kankaria).

The Campaign was successful in sensitizing all those who were associated with it. Moreover, the response that the group received from the public in the city, those who watched the street play and those who bought the products from the haat was over whelming.

It is now planned to take this campaign ahead to the South Asia level and bring together the youth of South Asia to work on fighting against Climate Change.

Announcements

Indian Youth Summit on Climate Change

Organized by the Friendship Foundation (Hyderabad), Global Citizens for Sustainable Development (Bangalore), Nature & Biological Sciences Society and the Indian Youth Climate Network

Supporting Partners of the Workshop:

Asian Citizens Alliance
China-India Forum

Date: 7th to 10th August, 2008

Location: Hyderabad

Please email all queries and registration forms to iyscc08@globalcitizens.org.in AND/OR iyscc08@gmail.com.

Alternatively call Vikram Aditya on +91-9396618878, Rabindra Biswas on +91-9985708762 or Anugraha John on +91-9448192010

SAYEN National Youth Meet

SAYEN is organising the National Youth Meet from 12th-14th August, 2008 at CEE, Ahmedabad. For more information, log into our website www.sayen.org.

Complete and return the application form latest by July 25, 2008. Two youth from an organisation can be nominated, one of whom will be selected for the Meet. Individuals can also apply. The agenda for the meet will be Climate Change.