



3rd Environment Educators' Conference 2010
27-29 October 2010
New Delhi

**“Participatory Approach towards Environment Education:
Stakeholder’s Perception and Roles”**

India is one of the few countries where Environment Education has a formal status in the educational system. The wide range of living traditions in India led to efforts to integrate environmental concerns in the education system very early. These initiatives were strengthened by India’s National Policy of Education (1986) which advocates that environmental issues must be integrated with teaching-learning strategies at all ages and for all sections of the society. This was supported by the Supreme Court of India in 1991, reiterated in further years, directing all education departments in the country to make Environment Education compulsory at all levels of education including the higher education in all regions of the country. National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT) then integrated environmental issues in various subjects as well as developed a stage wise syllabus for Environmental Education as a separate subject in 2004. In the following year CBSE directed all schools to follow the same.

Following the guidelines and recommendations by different statutory bodies, considerable efforts have been made on the promotion of knowledge, skills, attitude, and values, while designing of the curriculum, transaction and evaluation strategies in Environment Education. One of the important components of Environment Education is teacher education and training that not only enhances their capacity and skills for incorporation of Environment Education in different subjects but also enable them to share and learn from experiences of others also involved in this area. Keeping this in consideration, TERI’s Environment Education and Youth Services division has taken a step to bring together educators of different levels and areas and providing them a platform for knowledge sharing and skill development.

TERI organises a three-day Environment Educators’ Conference every year since 2008 which brings together about 300 teachers from different parts of the country as

well as from Sri Lanka, Brunei and Bangladesh. Eminent personalities from the related government ministries and departments grace the occasion. Their interactions with the academia reinforce the trust that school education is an important component of the government's policies and such events can surely act as catalysers of change.

The first such conference was organised from 13-15 November 2008, at TERI GRAM, Gurgaon. It was attended by over 300 teachers from India (both rural and urban backgrounds with a special representation from Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas) and select Asian Commonwealth countries. The event addressed concerns of the teaching community on Environment Education with a special focus on the issue of climate change. The sessions revolved around formal and non-formal approaches. The residential event also helped in establishing networks within the teaching fraternity. The conference threw light on critical issues of concern and possible interventions at the teacher's level which can be applicable in the classroom. Focus was kept on the school curriculum and the ways and means of integrating climate change issues within the existing curriculum. The sessions on value education and leadership, level of Environment Education incorporated in NCERT textbooks, non formal and formal tools and methods of teaching provided appropriate required guidance for the breakaway working group session. The conference was followed by a stakeholder seminar wherein emphasis was laid on how to take this event forward so as to ensure its sustainability in the coming years. The participants felt that the focus for the next conference could be on, 'how to make a sustainable and eco friendly school?'

This was the genesis for the theme of second Environment Educators' Conference, "Road to a Sustainable School" held from 3-5 November 2008 in New Delhi. This conference – a first of its kind brought together stakeholders from school environs, ranging discussions on the Environment aspects of the processes linked with education. The event was attended by around 300 teachers hoping to raise issues of immense concern related to the future impact of current education policies. It also provided an interactive platform for Indian entrepreneurs to come together and discuss the adoption of possible, economically viable, and innovative solutions to the challenge of 'Education for Sustainable Development'.

The third Environment Educators Conference will be held from 27-29 October 2010, in New Delhi. The conference theme for this year is, "Participatory Approach towards Environment Education: Stakeholder's Perception and Roles". Educational

methodologies based on participatory approach promote sharing of knowledge, experiences and reflections amongst the learners as well as educators. This has been considered significant for teaching and learning Environment Education. To facilitate and promote Education for Sustainable Development, it is vital to understand and share the perceptions and roles of all stakeholders. Keeping this as the base, the conference this year aims to bring together teachers, experts, corporate groups, policy and curriculum developers from across the nation to share their thoughts and experiences in this respect.

This year the conference will observe sessions on how schools can address some of the critical environmental issues by integrating them creatively in their education process. A separate session on 'green curriculum' will look into the aspects of integration of environmental issues into the curriculum at all levels and in all regions of the country. This will also consider the current status of this integration, along with some of the obstacles in achieving the same. A special group activity session will also be taken up focussing on linking Environment Education to classroom activities through various subjects.

The sessions on 'Environment Education resources' and 'appreciating environment – role of eco clubs' will throw light on how various available resources such as print, electronic, etc. and formation of eco clubs has and can have an impact on learners and best practices in utilising these by the teachers. This conference will also look forward to address the issue of training of educators in Environment Education and its methods by looking at the role of universities. There will be a special session on Environment Education as a corporate social responsibility (CSR) and will share experiences from some of the corporate groups that focus their CSR activities towards Environment Education.

Throughout the event, school educators, guests and speakers will be given ample space and freedom to discuss their concerns, reflect on the issues, and think of innovative and creative ways to meet the goals of 'Education for Sustainable Development'.

The conference in the past years has been endorsed by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Department of Environment – Delhi Government, UNESCO, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti, GTZ, NCERT and SCERT-Haryana, Tetrapak India Pvt. Ltd, DELL, Hewlett Packard India Pvt Ltd.

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