

Report on National Green Mentors Conference

2019



29 JUNE AHMEDABAD



CERC-ENVIS Resource Partner
Consumer Education and Research Centre
Ahmedabad, India



A National Green Mentors Conference was organized on two consecutive days of 29th- 30th June 2019 at Karnavati University, Gandhinagar, Gujarat. The event was organized by Green Mentors - An organization that promotes sustainability through educationin association with Green Mentors Guild - a Network of Green School Principals, University Vice Chancellors and Trainers.

The objective of the conference was to provide a platform and bring together all the key players to make the Schools and Universities green. More than 200 delegates - Principals, Teachers, and Educators belonging to different academic sectors around the world attended the conference. On behalf of CERC-ENVIS (Consumer Education andResearch Centre), Ms. Divya Namboothiri attended the two day event.

First Day: 29th June, 2019

The event was inaugurated by Hon. Minister of Education, Gujarat: Shri Bhupendrasinh Chudasama in presence of Smt. Bijalben Patel: Hon. Mayor, Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation; Smt. Varshaben Doshi: Board Member of BAO University, Ahmedabad; Dr. Deepak Shishoo: Provost, Karnavati University and Mr. Virendra Ravat: Founder of Green Mentors.

During the inaugural session Hon. Minister of Education, Gujarat laid emphasis on the changing climate and imbalance in nature that is caused due to human intervention. He appealed the teachers and mentors to spread more awareness on environment to imbibe a sense of responsibility in children towards environment. He ended the note saying that all the outcomes and suggestions from this conference will be inculcated in the school curriculums of Gujarat.

Mr. Mukesh Shah, Joint Secretary Climate Change Department, Gujarat talked about how world is facing terrorism and climate change. He appealed everyone to take the concept of Green School to cover the entire education sector. Around Rs100 Cr. has been allotted to Climate Change department this financial year under Green Budget provision to fight Climate Change and Global Warming. Government has been promoting solar energy as a renewable source and Electric Vehicles (EVs). New Policies on Electric Vehicles are under drafting stage and the government intends to promote EVs by using subsidy.

1st Session: Green School and Practices

The session on Green Schools – Principles and Practices began with Ms. Sri Rekha, Head of Green Schools, Indian Green Building Council,Hyderabad. She shared the vision of Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) to enable a sustainable built environment for all and how Green Movement in India has taken the momentum by accepting Indian way of sustainable practices. IGBC follows 5 elements of nature (Panchabhutas) for rating the green buildings namely Prithvi

(earth) that covers the sustainable sites, Jal (Water) covering water efficiency, Agni (Fire) covering energy and atmosphere, Vayu (Air) covering indoor environment quality, Akash (sky) covering daylight , night sky pollution.The ratings systems are applicable to all five climatic zones of the country.To achieve the IGBC rating, the project must satisfy all the mandatory requirements and the minimum number of credit points. The certification by IGBC is provided to the existing schools and New schools based on the sustainable practices. The level of certification includes Certified, Silver, Gold and Platinum. Ms. Rekha also provided an overview of Green Schools and its key features advantages. She also preached about sustainable water practices using 3Rs concept, Rain water harvesting and Phytoremediation technique. She also presented a video that showed low flush fixtures, aerators and sensor based fixtures save water as compared to the contemporary taps without fixtures. She also emphasized in adopting waste management like wet waste compost and BEE labeled energy efficiency appliances. She also informed the audience about the “Green Your School”contest conducted by IGBC. They invite students to suggest “How they can make their school green.” IGBC award schools Rs 4 lakh to winner and 1.5 lakhs to 1 and 2 runners up for implementing the suggestions given by students in making their schools green.

Dr. Kavita Sharma, Professor at National Council of Educational Research & Training, called all the mentors to plan the school curriculum accordingly that fulfills all the aspects of environment and make it mandatory to teach environment in schools. She urged the mentors that environment education should not be undertaken just to win awards or to visit countries but continue throughout and look beyond the textbooks.

The next speaker was Dr. Cinthya Christopher, Professor at All Saint's College, Thiruvananthapuram. She shared some strategic approaches to encourage conservation and plantation for “Green Cover” in college campus and school premises through education.

2nd Session: New Education Policy- First step towards New India

The second session began with Mr. Kulbhushan Sharma, President of National Independent Schools Association. He requested the government to provide poor people with a voucher of Rs 3000. This will help them to select the school of their choice. He also requested to formulate an Act pertaining to teacher’s safety. He also suggested to give maximum weightage to board results, as now a days, students do not attend schools as they are preparing for the entrance examinations.This move will help in regulating tuition classes. He also suggested conducting an entrance exam before joining the BEd courses.

The event continued with Dr. Dheeraj Mehrotra, an academic evangelist from Lucknow, giving a peer review on the education policies. He also suggested inclusion of 4 year integrated course for BEd. All extracurricular activities should be a part of the curriculum.An early child education should also be introduced. The draft education policy 2019 is built on fundamental pillars of ‘Access, Equity, Quality, Affordability and Accountability.’

Dr. Shanti Pawar, Chairman of Shantiram Educational Trust, Hyderabad gave a short speech on the implementation of plan of action of education related policies. A teacher should be the one in bringing out the talent from students and incorporate morals in students.

Dr. Naik, Principal and Trainer of Drone group of Schools, requested the government to comprise the National Education Policy. This will help in easy way of understanding the policy. More trainers are required to empower teachers. He had also requested to introduce green concepts in the school curriculum.

3rd Session: ‘Green Monitoring – Future of Sustainable Education’

The third session began with Mr. Aditya Pundir, Head, Climate Reality Project India, emphasizing on the implementation of 17 Sustainable Development Goals. A way of Awareness, Action & Award should be introduced in Green Schools. Clean energy, energy efficiency, green cover, water conservation and rain water harvesting should be introduced in making schools green.

Ms. Sunita Diwaker, Principal, KendriyaVidyalaya, Baroda shared the environment related activities taken up in their school premises. They conduct ‘Class room Clean Days’ once a month, wherein the students and teachers participate in cleaning their classrooms. They have two waste bins and asked the students to dump their dry waste and wet waste separately. Students are asked not to bring junk food in lunch and avoid plastic bags. They have a “Green Student Club” wherein the students participate in street plays, health and hygiene campaigns and save water campaign wherein students are asked to empty their water bottles in plant pots and grow their food in school gardens. They have compost bins where the funds are raised by the students. They even organize “Garden Day” and ask the students to adopt a plant as a birthday gift. They also request their students staying nearby to come by cycle or take walk and encourage reusing of books by donating them to lower grade students. At the end, a video was shown where a girl was teaching to make paper bags through newspaper.

Mr Chandresh Shah, New Digamber Public School, Indore shared their initiatives in making their school green even by involving the teachers and management other than the students. They have a “Green Allowance” system, wherein teachers and staff who come by school bus are given an additional allowance, whereas people coming by their own vehicles have to pay for their parking spaces. For carpooling and CNG vehicles no charges for parking. They have reduced their number of buses from 45 to 41 by using more seater buses. LPG has been replaced by biomass pellets, use of Eco Man Foodie compost in green space. They have asked their students to voluntarily donate books to their junior. They make use of e-circulars and e-invites to have any interaction with students or parents. They also do e-waste management with the help of authorized e-waste management dealers.

Mr Rohit Mehra, Additional Commissioner, Income Tax, Ludhiana Punjab, out of passion he does vertical gardening using PET bottles. He also showed a video of making of seed balls, roof

and vertical gardening. They gave the seed balls as “Prasad” to the devotees during the RathYatra. He is also nominated in LimcaBook of Records twice.

4th Session: Green Educators – Crusaders of Sustainable Education

Mr Pravinsinh Solanki, Sr. Professor, National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad showed a video and gave a speech on the sustainable practices which are part of their curriculum. How they make use of reused, recycled and upscaled products in making new items viz. raincoat, sleeping mat and convertible bag out of flex, making use of tyres as bird feeder and construction material in garden benches etc.

Followed by Dr. Hitesh Solanki, Professor Environment Dept. Gujarat University, shared the topics undertaken by the environmental science students and related topics.

Ms. Kalpana Chaudhary, Principal, N.H. Goel World School, Raipur shared the practices undertaken in their school like conducting “Green Audits”, recycling and reusing of grey water, green waste compost, using solar panels in bus sheds etc. They have also received National Sanitation Award.

Ms. SnigdhaGhose, Principal, Western Odisha Residential Public School proudly announced that they have received “PrakrutiMitra” state award. She urged everyone to give away seed balls in invitation letters as a green initiative.

5th Session:Green Resources - Energy, Air, Water, Space & Technologies

Mr. Naresh Duble, Head Asia & FMD Armstrong World Industries (Mumbai), gave information on designing of the class room ceilings based on the reverberation time. This would increase the audibility of the last benchers and would save the teacher’s energy.

Dr. Akash Davda, Scientist GERMI, Gandhinagar, gave a speech on how to install solar panels and its technical aspects.

Mr. Amit Doshi, Director Vardham Envirotech Ahmedabad, discussed the benefits of rain water harvesting and showed 2-3 videos on the same.

Eventually the day concluded with the screening of the film ‘Jhalki’ based on children cause by Mr. Brahmanad S. Singh, an award winning Bollywood Film Producer, Mobius Films, Mumbai

Second Day: 30th June, 2019

1st Session: UN SDGs & India – Facing Climate Challenges through Education

The first speaker of the second day was Dr. NarottamSahoo, Advisor Gujarat Council on Science & Technology, encourages students to take part in National Children’s Science Congress. He

spoke about the Atal Tinkering Labs in partnership with NITIAyog. He presented a video showcasing their work and different science centers in Gujarat.

Ms. GayatriRaghwa – Education Consultant, United Nations Environment, New Delhi covered per capita carbon emission, ecological footprint, green audits in schools and colleges and environment related courses. She also informed that United Nations is targeting youth through Youth Education Alliance to integrate environment education across higher educational establishments. He requested the audience to sign pledge letter for “Youth Advocacy” and “Support- the SDG Accord”. She advised CEOs of the video gamesto come up with the games pertaining to planet, thus making them addicted to the idea of sustainability. She also urged to create and promote more “Green Collar” jobs.

Mr. Swetal Shah, Advisor, Department of Climate Change, Gandhinagar, gave a weather pattern scenario of Gujarat since 1950's till date. He discussed about the work undertaken by the department and also claimed their contribution in being the Asia's largest Solar Power.

Dr. SarveshUniyal, Member, Umang, NamaniGange Mission, Uttrakhand described the 'SairSalika' campaign, which sought to inculcate travel manners among locals and tourists. He campaigned for SairSalika to save Ganga and its tributaries. He concluded his short speech by saying ‘Green is the Grey without Clean.’

2nd Session: Green Universities – Ocean of Opportunities

Mr. Ranjan Purohit addressed the gathering on behalf of Dr. Mahendra Sharma, Director General & Provost, Ganpat University, Gujarat. He gave a speech on how they have turned the arid and termite prone zone into a lush green sustainable campus, followed by a video of their campus.

Mr. Manoj Kumar – Head – NET Zero Campus, Nalanda University, Bihar showed a video about the old Nalanda University and the New project of Nalanda, their architecture and sustainable practices.

Dr. P.P Badoni, Professor, HNBG Central University , Srinagar, Uttrakhand discussed about the Sparsh Ganga Campaign and showed snapshots of the environment related activities undertaken by them.

3rd Session: Climate Champions – Inspiring Stories of Planet Saviors.

The session on inspiring stories began with Ms. Lakshmi Kumar, Director, the Orchid School, Pune, Maharashtra. She discussed about the various environment related projects undertaken by them namely, the Warkari Sampradaya Spirals, the Spiral project etc. She explained about the 7Cs in detail like Curriculum, Context, Connect, Communicate, Campaign, Commit and Continuous. She promoted ‘Students as Climate Change Champions’ .

Mr. Swarndeep Hundal – Professor & Head, Punjab Agricultural University, Punjab enlightened the audience with the importance of water and significance of bio-indicators to control pollution.

Mr. Dinesh Goswami – Climate crusader of Kodinar, Gujarat showed videos of their activities around the coastal zone.

The last session was followed by lunch. After that, the event continued with Green Award. The mentors were felicitated with a “Green Award”, acknowledging their contribution in the field of environment. Eventually the event concludes with a valedictory note by Mr. Virendra Ravat, founder of Green Mentors.

Gallery:



Hon. Minister of Education, Gujarat: Shri Bhupendrasinh Chudasama giving a speech at National Green Mentors Conference



Ms. Sri Rekha, Head of Green Schools, Indian Green Building Council, Hyderabad.



Gayatri Raghwa – Education Consultant, United Nations Environment, New Delhi.



Mr. Kulbhushan Sharma, President of National Independent Schools Association



Pravinsinh Solanki, Sr. Professor National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad



Ms. Divya Namboothiri (CERC-ENVIS), attending the two day conference