

International Conference on Biodiversity Conservation and Education for Sustainable Development - Learning to Conserve Biodiversity in a Rapidly Changing World

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The International Conference on Biodiversity and Education for Sustainable Development was conducted at Hyderabad International Convention Centre on 13-14 October, 2012. The Conference was attended by about 280 speakers. The Conference was inaugurated by H.E Smt D. Purandeshwari, Minister of State, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India.

As the nodal agency for the UNDESD in India, this Conference was organized by Centre for Environment Education (CEE) for the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India. The Conference partners included UNESCO, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), Government of India.

The DESD more recently the announcement of the Decade of Biodiversity (2011-2020) provided an opportunity to include Biodiversity in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). India hosted the eleventh meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP 11) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Hyderabad from 1 - 19 October 2012. Governments from around the world and international experts on biodiversity participated in the deliberations. The ESD conference proposed to be held alongside the COP 11 provided an opportunity to use this expertise in strengthening ESD.

The recommendations of the Conference was shared and discussed with members of COP 11 in a side event followed by the conference.

Working group

One of the Working Groups was on Zoos and Gardens and the group met on 13th and 14th October and after discussions and deliberations came up with Recommendations focusing on the vital role played by Zoos and Gardens in Biodiversity Conservation Education.

Working Group Delegates:

Dr.Mallika Arjun Rao, Director, Nehru Zoological Park, Hyderabad; Mr. Shankaran, Curator, Nehru Zoological Park, Hyderabad; Mr. S.Saravanan, Curator, Venkateswara Zoological Park, Tirupati; Mr. G.Ramalingam, Curator, Indira Gandhi Zoological Park, Vishakapatnam; Mr. Mathew, Tropical Botanical Research Institute; Ms. Bitapi Sinha, Professor, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun; Ms. Gayathri, Education Officer, Madras Crocodile Bank Trust, Chennai; Mr. Waheed, Former Curator, Nehru Zoological Park, Hyderabad

Panelists

Mr. B.S.Bonal, Member Secretary, Central Zoo Authority, CZA; Mr. Raghuveer, Director, AP Forest Academy, Mr. Agnihotri, Director, National Zoological Park, New Delhi

CEE team:

Ms Meena Nareshwar, Senior Programme Coordinator, Zoo Education and Interpretation Programmes and Mr. S. Sivakumar, Programme Officer, Sundarvan, Centre for Environmental Education, CEE



XI Conference of Parties
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
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Recommendations: Towards a Strategic Plan: Some Initial Ideas to Build on

Over the course of the two days and during the discussions at the thematic working groups, specific ideas were suggested. These would be helpful in developing an educational strategy for the achievement of Aichi biodiversity targets. These action points serve to demonstrate the range and variety of ideas and strategies that can form part of an overall ESD strategy for Biodiversity conservation.

Only zoos are covered in this article. To see the entire programme please see this url.

<http://www.cceindia.org/cee/esd-cop11/index.html>

2. Biodiversity and non formal education

2.1 Facilities: Zoos, Botanical Gardens, Museums and others

- We suggest that at least one Education Officer be dedicated to carry out education programmes in zoos and gardens. For zoos to function as effective Biodiversity Conservation Education Centres,

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programmes and activities need to be conducted on free ranging fauna and local flora in and around the zoo.

- We recommend the development of educational programmes around zoos, gardens, parks, museums in which school and college students and members of the communities are involved as volunteers, interns, research assistants or guides.
- Zoos must be encouraged to set up an education and interpretation centre to orient visitors to the history role of the zoo, zoo ethics, management aspects, information about fauna, flora, conservation efforts and issues.
- We emphasise the need to develop conservation education programmes and resource materials with a focus on local biodiversity, wildlife and conservation issues, targeting children, youth and the general public in zoos and gardens.
- We recommend that interpretative techniques be used in larger educational efforts for sustainability and that biodiversity be interpreted in scientific, livelihood, larger socio-economic and cultural contexts to enable visitors to, and communities living near wildlife areas and zoos, as well as other sections of society, to appreciate and imbibe the sustainability values of biodiversity-rich areas.



A working group from Indian zoos on topic of "Zoos and Gardens" was conducted for two days



The Working Group made judicious recommendations for zoo and other institutions education featuring biodiversity.

