



## India

The importance of environment and its link to development and the quality of human life were first addressed on a global level at the Stockholm Conference on Human Environment in 1972. It was the then Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, who focused attention of the Conference on this link, stating that “environment cannot be improved in conditions of poverty”.

The environmental movement in is based on traditions that date back several centuries. The movement blends concerns of development and environment, while reflecting a broad spectrum of perspectives. In its innovativeness, it reflects the vibrancy of . Both government and non-government organizations (NGOs) have taken significant initiatives as active partners in this movement.

Following the Stockholm Conference, set up a separate Ministry of Environment and Forests. Recognizing the need for specialized institutions in various fields of environment and development, the Ministry created centres of excellence in partnership with NGOs and academic institutions. The Centre for Environment Education, established in 1984, was on of the first such institutions.

The Ministry of Human Resource Development entrusted with the overall responsibility of education at all levels, has included environment education as a key input into the educational system. The Ministry supports several initiatives, both through government institutions and NGOs.

In , the UNESCO Commission in the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) is the **National Focal Point for ESD**. MHRD has appointed Centre for Environment Education (CEE) as the Nodal Agency for implementing ESD in India. In January 2006, the Indian National Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO constituted a National DESD Committee comprising experts and officials from Government, Civil Society, Academia and NGOs on Education, Environment, Culture, Social Sciences, Science Communication and other related fields.

### Centre for Environment Education

The Centre for Environment Education, over the past 22 years, has been working in the field of environment and sustainable development education and communication in the country. It has developed innovative programmes, educational materials, undertaken demonstration projects and built capacities in this field. Recognizing the complexity and vastness of the task, CEE has worked in partnership with a range of organizations at the national, regional and international levels. The strategy at CEE has been to collaborate with others in building synergies; achieve a multiplier effect; enhance effectiveness; and widen the range of its programmes. Since its inception in 1984, CEE has worked in areas of environmental education and sustainable development with diverse communities such as rural and urban, governments, teachers, school children, higher education authorities among several.

CEE has been designated as the Nodal Institution for the implementation of DESD in India . The National Action Plan for DESD in is under preparation for further consultation. CEE has reoriented several of its programmes to ESD and has special initiatives to foster the decade. These include capacity building programmes for teachers and in-service professionals in formal education, developing ESD modules for educators and facilitators in formal and non formal education, providing internship opportunities to youth in ESD, creating forums for interaction and exchange of experiences and views on ESD through website ([www.desd.org](http://www.desd.org)) and the proposed newsletter Education for Change,

documenting case studies, and the Journal of Education for Sustainable Development. In November 2007, CEE has been asked by the Government of India to host the International Conference on Environmental Education – Partnerships for DESD” on behalf of the Government of India, UNESCO, and UNEP.

The Decade was formally launched in on at the first meeting of the National Committee of the Decade. The key thrust areas of DESD in India have been identified as:

- Developing public understanding and awareness
- Improving access to basic quality education
- Reorienting existing education programmes
- Providing training

### **Consultations**

The National Committee for the Decade met twice to discuss the process of progressing DESD in the country. CEE has presented a Draft National Action Plan to the Committee. This was forwarded to the Planning Commission Working Group for the XIth Five Year Plan. The draft of the National Action Plan aims at the following:

- Incorporate ESD into National sustainable development plans and national education plans
- Align policy, mandates and other such frameworks to support ESD
- Enable widespread awareness and understanding of ESD
- Capacity build educators and trainers with relevant knowledge, information and skills to address ESD
- Promote research and development for ESD

The draft action plan has been placed on [www.desd.org](http://www.desd.org) website and a consultation process is underway to involve a wide participation of stakeholders.

### **Projects/Initiatives**

#### **National Bal Bhavan declares ESD as theme for 2007**

The DESD India Secretariat has discussed and developed with Bal Bhavan a strategy for reorienting their programmes. Bal Bhavan’s 73 centres across the country will work on the theme of ESD this year, the activities culminating into a National Children and Youth Conference around November 14, 2007, Children’s Day. Selected participants will later participate in the Tbilisi+30 Conference at Ahmedabad. The Secretariat will provide an Orientation and background material support to Bal Bhavan to conduct their programmes around the theme.

#### **in Formal Education**

CEE conducts an International Programme on ESD in Formal Education in partnership with Sida, which this year will have participants from , and the . The programme for each of the countries will further develop capacities and gain insights into the areas for integration of ESD within formal

DESD around the World

education.

### **Education for Change**

Education for Change (EFC) is the ENVIS (Environmental Information System) Newsletter of CEE. The EFC Newsletter seeks to share views about the role of education in different aspects of development; the need for reorienting educational processes, so that they become transformative; experiences of education for sustainability in different sectors, and resources on ESD and for learning about sustainable development. EFC is meant for practitioners in various development sectors and others interested in ESD.

### ***Journal of Education for Sustainable Development***

The Journal of Education for Sustainable Development is a forum for academics and practitioners worldwide to share and critique innovations in thinking and practice in the emerging field of Education for Sustainable Development. The Journal is published twice a year and contains articles, reports, reviews and news on ESD.