

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT

ACTIVITY REPORT ON NGC PROGRAMME IN TAMIL NADU

FOR THE YEAR 2007-08

The best way to attempt to bring about a change in the society is through children. They have no vested interests. They are impressionable. They are our future. They are the single most important influence in any family.

With the realization, the State Government and the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India have launched the Eco-clubs / National Green Corps (NGC) programme in all the districts in Tamil Nadu.

At present this scheme is implemented in 40 schools as Eco-club and 250 schools as NGC in each district. Thus, a total on 1200 schools and 7500 schools are with Eco-clubs and NGC now functioning in Tamil Nadu.

OBJECTIVES

- To make children understand environment and environmental problems.
- To provide environmental education opportunities for school children.
- To utilize the unique position of school children as conduits for awareness of the society at large.
- To facilitate children's participation in decision making in areas related to environment & development.
- To bring children into direct contact with the environmental problems facing the society they live in and make them think of solutions.
- To involve children in action based programmes related to environment in their surroundings.

About 40-50 students are enrolled in each school under this programme and hence about 2.50 lakh students are participating in the programme making it a massive student movement in the recent times.

Financial assistance at Rs.2500/- per school was released for NGC activities as continued financial support as grant. The amount released from the date of commencement is as follows:

| <u>Year</u> | <u>No.of schools</u> | <u>Amount released</u> <u>(Rs.)</u> |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 2002-03 | 2885 | 14,42,500.00 |
| 2003-04 | 4350 | 43,50,000.00 |
| 2004-05 | 4350 | 43,50,000.00 |
| 2005-06 | 4500 | 1,12,50,000.00 |
| 2006-07 | 7500 | 1,87,50,000.00 |
| 2007-08 | 7500 | 1,87,50,000.00 |

The grant for the year 2007-08 has also been distributed to all the schools, through District Educational Officers of the concerned districts.

The following activities are carried out as regular activities by the NGC eco-clubs.

1. Schools Campus Cleaning
2. Tree planting
3. Environmental Awareness Rallies
4. Celebration of atleast six green days
5. Vermi composting
6. Enviro-expo
7. Enviro competitions
8. Anti plastic campaign
9. Cultural programmes on Environmental Awareness
10. Nature Camp

Apart from the above, several “Mass awareness programmes” were conducted during the year 2007-08. Some of them are detailed below:-

Preparation and supply of NGC Manual:-

The Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India have given guidelines on the NGC functioning. In order to ensure effective functioning of the NGC/ Eco-clubs, the framing of detailed guidelines for the activities to be undertaken systematically has been felt necessary. These guidelines have been framed for minimum 120 hours of activity per year under four major headings:

- i) Orientation
- ii) Campus activities
- iii) Community activities
- IV) Eco-camp activity

A drafting committee was constituted with five experts drawn from the Environmental awareness co-ordinators as follows:-

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Detailed guidelines have been formulated after having several discussions. Books were printed together with a “Student Members work diary” and distributed to all eco-club/NGC co-ordinators with the instructions to follow the guidelines. The said guidelines have been followed from the year 2007-08.

A copy of booklet is enclosed.

Enviro Wiz 2007:-

Department of Environment in collaboration with Eureka Forbes conducted a summer camp titled “ENVIRO WIZ” for the online quiz winners. The summer camp was held from 7th to 11th May 2007 and was aimed to educate the students on the beauty of nature, the harm caused by various environmental concern and the remedies that can save our environment. The Special Guest, Thiru M.B.Nirmal, Founder of EXNORA International spoke to the students about the power of how young minds can save the environment.

World Environment Day Celebrations 2007:-

World Environment Day 2007 had been celebrated on 5th June, all over the world with the avowed objective of awareness about conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. The theme for the current year celebration is “**Melting Ice**”-a Hot Topic?

The Department has taken various arrangements to celebrate the day in a grand manner and to spread the theme and the create awareness on the above matters, not only among the students but also to public. Celebrations will be held on various days in June

2007 in all over Tamilnadu with the active participation of all sections of the society viz., students, public, NGOs, environmentalists, elected representatives of State Legislature, Parliament, Local bodies, Government and Non-Government officials.

The Department of Environment has organized various programmes on the world environment day at Ramanathapuram. An Seminar on **Climate Change** was organized and various resource persons, experts in the field of Environment gave away their valuable informations to the student participants. A student's rally was organized at Ramantahapuram on 5th June 2007 and the District Superintendent of Police Thiru R. Thiruganam I.P.S., flagged off the rally. More than 1000 Eco-club/NGC students of Ramanathapuram district belonging to various schools, have participated in the rally.

Marking the occasion, manual on eco-club/NGC and students guide was released by Thiru R. Rajagopal,I.A.S., Secretary to Government, Environment and Forests Department on 5th June-2007 at Schwartz Hr. Sec. School, Ramanathapuram. On the occasion Hon'ble Minister for Housing and Slum Clearance Board Thiru S. Thangavelan facilitated ten State Environment award winners. Hon'ble Minister for Environment Thiru T.P.M. Moideen Khan released a CD on Status of Environment of Tamilnadu. High dignitaries and officials from Government of Tamil Nadu viz. Thiru N. Sundaradeven, I.A.S. Chairman, Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board, Thiru K.S. Neelakantan, I.F.S., Director of Environment, Dr. T. Sekar, I.F.S., Member Secretary, Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board, Thiru R. Kirlosh Kumar, I.A.S., District Collector of Ramanathapuram have attended the function.

All the District Educational awareness coordinators and Chief Educational Officers were requested to ensure the celebration of World Environment Day by conducting rallies, competitions, workshops, seminars, cultural programmes etc in schools in the state, where the NGC and Eco Clubs are functioning not only on 5th June 2007 but on any day during June 2007. Accordingly reports have been received from various parts of the State on the celebration of World Environment Day 2007.

The following special programmes were also conducted during June 2007 commemorating the World Environment Day.

1. Rally at Manjoor, The Nilgiris District through The District Environmental Awareness Coordinator of The Nilgiris district.
2. A seminar was organized at Annai Lea High School, Sevapur, Karur District by M/s. Inba Sevasangam, Karur
3. Rally at Maravaneri, Salem District and competitions to students at Bala Barathi Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Maravaneri by Environmental Awareness Coordinator, Salem District.
4. Rally at Nagercoil, Kanyakumari and Marthandam
5. Rally at Vellore
6. Human chain, Street Play at Erode by District Environmental Awareness Coordinator
7. Cultural programme at Theni by District Environmental Awareness Coordinator
8. Seminar at Ramanathapuram by District Environmental Awareness Coordinator

State level training on Green school programme:-

A State level training on Green school programme was conducted at Trichy. The programme was conducted on 29.06.2007 and 30.06.2007. 29 Environmental Awareness Coordinators participated in the programme.

Online chat:

The Department of Environment in collaboration with National Informatics Centre (NIC), Chennai is organizing an online web chat by the administrators and experts with the public on important environmental issues like Pollution control, Solid Waste Management, Rain Water Harvesting, Environmental Education, and Biodiversity Conservation etc from January 2005. This initiative enables the public to understand and ask questions on the various aspects of environment. The transcripts of the chat are available on the Department of Environment website. This year on 18th July 2007 an

online chat was conducted with the public on the topic 'Global Warming'. Dr. R.V.Sharma, Deputy Director General, Meteorology Station Chennai was the expert with whom the public interacted.

Madurai Symposium:-

The seminar on pollution abatement in the water bodies and state coastal zone management was organised by the Department of Environment, Govt. of Tamil Nadu and DHAN Foundation, Madurai from 24-29 September 2007. Thiru K.S. Neelakantan, I.F.S., Director, Department of Environment, Govt of Tamil Nadu delivered the welcome address. Mr. Deivasigamani, Dy. Director, chaired the seminar on environmental awareness and highlighted the type of work undertaken by the Dept. of Environment. This included raising awareness in students with the help of the ENVIS Centre through documentaries. Mr. Neelavan, Project Manager, Environment Management Agency of TN, spoke about the pollution in water bodies and on the latest technologies which can be used for improving the environment's cleanliness. Dr. K.P. Raghuram, Programme Officer, ENVIS Centre, presented on coastal zone management. He explained about the importance of the coastal areas, in particular corals, seaweed, salt pan, mangroves, sand dunes, and fish. He also explained the regulations and the dos and don'ts in coastal areas. More than 200 students participated in this event.

Ozone Day 2007:-

Education on environment is one of the tools for moulding public opinion on aspects of environment and development Environment awareness was also sought to be spread through seminars, workshops and celebrations of different day like World Ozone Day, Earth Day, Water Day, World Environment Day, etc. Sensitivity to environmental problems and a sense of personal environmental responsibility can be created by these type of celebrations. This will also promote greater motivation for environmental protection an commitment towards sustainable development.

“Ozone Day” is celebrated on September 16th of every year to create awareness about the importance of the Ozone layer to the environment, amongst the school children and general public. As a part of celebrations, Department of Environment organized programmes at Government Boys Higher Secondary School, Hosur on 16th September 2007. About 1400 students/teachers from various schools have participated in the programme.

Tamil Nadu State Consultation Workshop for “Climate Change Adaptation for Sustainable Rural Development”:-

This workshop was organized by Department of Environment, Government of Tamil Nadu in association with Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India and GTZ-Climate Change Unit on 4th October 2007 at Chennai. The Chief Secretary to the Government, Thiru L.K. Tripathy, was the chief guest and in his inaugural address said that it is important to sensitise the local community to environmental related issues and creating awareness in combating the issue of climate change and global warming at rural and regional level. Thiru R. Rajagopal, I.A.S., Secretary, Environment and Forests, Thiru C.K. Sreedharan, I.F.S., PCCF, Tamil Nadu, Thiru N. Sundaradevan, I.A.S., Chairman, TNPCB, Dr. S. Kannaiyan, Chairman, National Biodiversity Authority, Ms. Pamposh Bhat, Director, Climate change Unit, GTZ were the other delegates present at the workshop. There were four technical sessions with more than twenty experts from various organizations and department who made presentations on the topic.

National Land resources conservation week 2007:-

The members of the National Green Corps were involved in the celebration of National Land Resources Conservation Week – 2007 which was held during 14-20, November 2007. The student members conducted cultural programmes highlighting the importance of environment. Such cultural programmes were conducted at Dharmapuri, Theni, Karur, Tiruvallur, Tenkasi, Palani, Ramanathapuram and Chennai.

The objective is to create awareness and sensitization among the public and students on negative and positive impact and change in their environment and also to encourage them to take active participation and interest in matters related to environmental problems and to mitigate them using local solutions.

National Green Corps- Master Training Programme:-

A three day training programme for NGC co-ordinators was conducted by Dept. of Environment in collaboration with C.P.R. Environmental Education Centre from 20th – 22nd February 2008. The chief guest Thiru K.S.S.V.P.Reddy, inaugurated the programme and gave the presidential address. On the first day of the programme the staff of the officers of the department of Environment gave talks on Environmental education and awareness. Dr. K.P.Raghuram, Programme Officer, gave a talk on State of Environment and related issues. During his talk he also outlined the preparation of SoE Report and SoE Atlas. Mr. J. D. Marcus Knight, Information Officer, gave a talk on ENVIS web resources and highlighted the various components of the ENVIS website. The other awareness activities of ENVIS centre such as quiz and chat were also highlighted by him. The SoE film was also screened to create awareness on the various issues related to the environment in Tamil Nadu. On the second day the participants were taken for a trekking experience in the Guindy National Park. More than 120 co-ordinators participated in this three day training programme.

Wetlands conservation day:-

Wetlands conservation day was celebrated on 27.02.2008 by organizing a seminar at Pulicat, a famous wetland near Chennai. The seminar was conducted by the Environmental Awareness network of Tiruvallur District. Eco-clubs students from various schools in Tiruvallur district participated in the programme.

Eco-competitions:-

Competitions were held among the NGC Eco-clubs in the State at district level through environmental awareness coordinators. The competitions were held on the following categories.

TITLE : OUR PLANET OUT FUTURE

| Si.No. | CATEGORY | ELIGIBLE VOULUNTEERS |
|---------------|-----------------------|--|
| 1. | PAINTING COMPETITION | FROM 3 rd TO 5 th STANDARD STUDENTS (For Middle Schools) |
| 2. | DRAWING COMPETITION | FROM 6 th TO 8 th STANDARD STUDENTS |
| 3. | ELOCATION COMPETITION | FROM 7 th TO 9 th STANDARD STUDENTS |
| 4. | QUIZ COMPETITION | FROM 8 th , 9 th AND 11 th STANDARD STUDENTS |
| 5. | ENVIRO EXPO EXHIBIT | ONE MODEL FROM EACH SCHOOL |

Enviro camp:-

Seeing is believing – The student members of the National Green Corps are taken to environmental hotspots to sensitize them about the negative and positive impacts on the environment and also to encourage them to take active participation in matters related to environment. Over 3000 students @100 students per district from 30 districts have participated in the said Enviro camps.

Earth day:-

Programmes to celebrate earth day were conducted at Tenkasi by the District Environmental Awareness Coordinator on 30.04.2008 and at Pollachi on 22.04.2008 by the District Environmental Awareness Coordinator.